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PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA

Officials' Mixed Political Backgrounds Noted

42000460 Sydney *THE SYDNEY MORNING*
HERALD in English 23 Jul 88 p 22

[Article by Tom Fawthrop]

[Excerpt] The rebirth of Kampuchea after the killing fields of the Pol Pot regime has been the prime achievement of the Vietnamese-installed People's Republic of Kampuchea.

The Vietnamese "puppet regime" label attached by the West and countries in the Association of South-East Asian Nations has tended to divert attention away from internal debates inside the Phnom Penh Government, and its own plausible claim to represent the nationalist interests of the Khmer people.

Among Western-trained intellectuals who survived the Pol Pot regime, not all fled to the Thai border to escape to the West. One of these was American-educated Mr Kong Sam-ol, who had been a director of rice production under the pro-American Lon Nol regime.

His family perished under Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea. He decided to stay in Kampuchea and, responding to the new Government's appeal to rebuild the nation, was immediately appointed deputy Minister of Agriculture.

Despite his lack of communist credentials, he is now Vice-Premier.

Another Kampuchean intellectual who stayed was Mr Sieng Kim Houn, an engineering graduate from Adelaide University, who now heads the Foreign Ministry's Soviet Union and East European department.

Mr Sieng Kim Houn told of how many of his friends fled to Thailand.

But beyond the top-ranking elite, the Phnom Penh Government was largely a coalition of survivors whose common bond with the PRK leadership was a shared hatred of Pol Pot and a determination to serve any Government that would prevent his return to power.

Mr Sieng Kim Houn said: "A lot of people expected the US would liberate us from Pol Pot.

"When help came it came from Vietnam. Because Vietnam came first was it a reason to condemn us?"

Most non-communist Kampuchean consistently complain about what they see as Western and ASEAN victimization which had denied them economic aid and diplomatic recognition.

The Phnom Penh Government, aware of its own limitations, and wary of alienating the populace, has overruled its own party zealots who wanted to "march towards socialism."

Thus, Marxist-Leninist seminars for government employees coexist with a large private sector that provides more than 70 per cent of consumer goods through unofficial trade with Thailand and Singapore.

Judging by the number of traders eating lobster thermidor in Phnom Penh's many flourishing restaurants, there is far more money floating around in the private sector than in government coffers.

The Information Minister, Mr Chheng Phon, a professor of fine arts at Phnom Penh University in Lon Nol's days, sees himself as "a member of a moderate Government not too left or too right, a Government which thinks of the people."

In another time and place Mr Chheng Phon, the jovial ex-professor, would surely be labelled a liberal. He had no communist background until recently.

Mr Sieng Kim Houn said: "We cannot copy the same old song as other socialist models. You cannot impose a foreign ideology on our people.

"We are receptive to natural socialism springing from Buddhism."

Since Mr Hun Sen became Prime Minister in 1984, the group of pre-1975 non-communist intellectuals associated with previous regimes has enjoyed considerably more influence in both party and government.

Mr Hun Sen has tried to steer a populist course by promoting new faces, regardless of past ideological credentials.

The increasing role of people like Mr Kong Sam-ol and Mr Chheng has helped Mr Hun Sen in pushing for a peaceful settlement, and initiating the Paris peace talks with Prince Sihanouk.

The fact that some noncommunists have already found a place inside a Marxist-led State offers hope that a political settlement with the Khmer factions would lead to a further integration in a Government that, regardless of ideology, is united in its dedication to rebuild the nation.

07310

Finance Minister Sumarlin Briefs Parliament on Foreign Debts

42130151b Jakarta *MERDEKA* in Indonesian
23 Jun 88 pp 1, 11

[Text] Jakarta 22 June, Merdeka—The total of foreign loans that have been arranged or agreed upon was \$67.207 billion at the end of fiscal year 1987/88, of which \$50.492 billion have been drawn.

This was explained by Minister of Finance J.B. Sumarlin in answering questions from members of Parliament [DPR] during a hearing of Parliament's budget committee chaired by Chairman Muharsono Kartodirdjo at the Parliament building last 22 June. The hearing will continue until 25 June.

According to Sumarlin, with \$12.3 billion being repaid last the year, the outstanding debt currently stands at \$38.362 billion, consisting of \$29.871 billion in soft and semisoft loans and \$8.491 billion in commercial loans.

The Minister of Finance said that since March 1975 the amount of soft loans has been limited because the economic situation in Indonesia has improved so much that Indonesia is viewed as being able to borrow on a semisoft basis for its development needs.

For semisoft loans, usually only 85 percent of the cost of a development project is provided in foreign currency, while the remaining 15 percent has to be provided by the government as a down payment through a commercial loan.

According to the minister, semisoft loans are used for a variety of high priority projects, for example oil refineries and cement and fertilizer factories.

He said that semisoft loans are made possible because there is an interest subsidy from the providing country that is passed on to the bank that arranges the loan. Commercial loans are used to strengthen the country's payment position, as well as to make the above-mentioned down payments.

Concerning the reason why all of the agreed upon loans have not been used, the minister explained that projects funded by foreign aid are generally long-term projects and the loans arranged for them cover the whole life of the project.

If the funds are drawn in accordance with the project implementation schedule, then it is certainly possible that not all of the loan would be used in one budget year.

Yet, according to Sumarlin, the drawing down of these foreign loans never exceeds the amount that has been arranged or agreed upon, because of the principle that the realization of the loans has to be made in accordance with the amount agreed upon.

13416

Golkar MP Defends Foreign Aid, Loans

42130154a Jakarta *SUARA PEMBARUAN*
in Indonesian 28 Jun 88 p 1

[Text] Jakarta, 28 June—The Functional Development Faction [Fraksi Karya Pembangunan—FKP] in Parliament considers that the foreign aid or loans obtained by Indonesia are really needed for development. The faction stated: "For this reason the total debt contracted by the New Order [Indonesia since the replacement of Sukarno in 1966] cannot be compared with the debt under the Old Order [Indonesia under Sukarno]."

This was stated by Engr Rachmat Witoelar, secretary of the FKP, in answer to a question at a press conference at the Parliament building in the Senayan section of Jakarta on 27 June.

He said that if one cause of the downfall of the Old Order could be mentioned, it was the rather large debt contracted and the fact that there was no prospect of repaying it. By contrast, at present the government has made a commitment and has set out a schedule for repaying the foreign debt.

Speaking in the name of the leadership of the Functional Development Faction, Rachmat Witoelar said: "Indeed, even a large country like the United States is not free of the burden of foreign debt."

He further declared that our total foreign debt of \$36,362 million may seem to be rather large. However, compared with the Debt Service Ratio (DSR), it is still within proper limits.

For that reason the FKP attitude is that the government should direct its resources toward investment in projects which can repay the debt contracted or, in other words, the loan must be used effectively and properly.

05170

Regional Governments Instructed To Trace PKI Remnants

42130151d Jakarta *KOMPAS* in Indonesian
19 Jun 88 p 1

[Text] Jakarta, Kompas—Minister of Home Affairs Rudini has instructed all local governments to immediately renew their surveillance and tracing of the remnants of the 30 September Movement/PKI [Indonesian Communist Party], because there is a possibility some of them have changed their names or professions.

Answering questions from the press after being received by President Suharto at the Bina Graha [Executive Office Building] last 18 June, Rudini said that these

instructions were issued last week, and in short ordered local governments to reinvestigate all files concerning the PKI remnants given to the local governments by ABRI in 1979.

"They will be reinvestigated. If they have moved, where have they moved to? If they work, where do they work? Because among them are those who have changed their name or profession, and this matter needs to be followed up on," he exclaimed.

He admitted that this tracking will not be easy to do because some of the PKI are not listed. Sometimes they appear to be good citizens, though in fact they are not. "You can't tell if a 'salty egg' is salty or not unless you break it open," he said.

No Need To Be Worried

Concerning the infiltration of the PKI remnants into the local government institutions, Rudini said that there were perhaps two or three cases. But he was optimistic that not all of the local governments had been penetrated. "We do not have to be worried. Government institutions are always prepared, especially ABRI," he emphasized.

Rudini said that the instructions were issued to the local governments with the aim of creating institutions that are clean, have good ideology, and have an attitude that is honest, disciplined, and unwavering.

Because of this, Rudini emphasized that the local governments should reopen all of the files on ex-PKI members. This data will also be prepared to be utilized by computers, including data on employment. Thus there won't be any government employees who are "rotting away" in Irian Jaya, while their colleagues are promoted in other regions. "Employee development must have an element of fairness. There should be no impression that only those people who are known are looked after," he stated firmly.

13416

Biographic Items on Military, Government Leaders

Brig Gen Erie Sudewo, Kodam III/Siliwangi Commander

42130151e Jakarta SUARA PEMBARUAN
in Indonesian 17 Jun 88 pp 1, 16

[Excerpts] Bandung 17 June—Army Chief of Staff General Edi Sudradjat led a ceremony last 17 June for the change in command of Kodam III Siliwangi Command from Army Major General Raja Inal Siregar to Army General Arie Sudewo. Brigadier General Arie Sudewo was born in Bangkalan-Madura on 15 January 1940 and graduated from the National Military Academy in 1962,

a year later than Major General R.I. Siregar who graduated from the academy in 1961. His military career began as a platoon commander in the Combat Engineer Battalion I in 1964, and at age 27 he became commander of Company B of Combat Engineer Battalion 11 with the rank of Captain. He was also stationed in West Java as commander of Infantry Battalion 305 in 1973. After that he was commander of the Military District Command of Ambon, and later was Assistant for Operations of KODAM Hasanuddin in 1982, and Commander of Military Subarea Command 074 of KODAM Diponegoro. Just before serving as Assistant Commander of KODAM Jaya he served as Director of Surveillance at the Armed Forces Strategic Intelligence Agency.

Sjamsubahri Siregar, Director of Foreign Information

42130151e Jakarta SUARA PEMBARUAN
in Indonesian 18 Jun 88 p 4

[Excerpt] Jakarta, 18 June—Sjamsubahri Siregar, SH last 17 June was installed and took the oath as the new Director of Foreign Information, Department of Foreign Affairs. He was sworn in by the Foreign Affairs Director General for Social and Cultural Relations and Information Pieter Damanik in place of Foreign Minister Ali Alatas at the Ministry's Ripta Loka Hall in Palembang.

The echelon II official replaces Achjadi Sjarif, who has served the last two years. He was born in Bandung on 27 February 1938 and graduated from the Law Department of the University of Indonesia in 1963.

His career in the Department of Foreign Affairs began in 1964, and he has been stationed in Ottawa, Vietnam, Washington, and London, and has also been a member of the Indonesian delegation to the Nonaligned Conference in Harare, Zimbabwe (1986), the Islamic Organization Conference in Kuwait (1987), and the Islamic Organization Conference in Amman, Jordan (1988).

He has also completed courses in Press Attache education at the Department of Foreign Affairs (1964), along with work in journalism at the School of Journalism, Charleton University, Ottawa (1969). He has done post-graduate work on international problems at Johns Hopkins University in Washington (1976-77), along with being in Class XX of the National Defense Institute [Lemhannas].

Colonel Muthojib, Kodam Jaya Chief of Staff

42130151e Jakarta SUARA PEMBARUAN
in Indonesian 21 Jun 88 p 12

[Text] Jakarta, 21 June—Calvary Colonel Muthojib was promoted to Chief of Staff of the Jakarta Garrison, replacing Army Brigadier General Harseno. The change of command was carried out the morning of 20 June in Skogar Headquarters on Medan Merdeka Timur Street

in Jakarta, and the ceremony was led by the Commander of Kodam Jaya, Army Maj Gen Suryadi Sudirja, acting as Commander of the Capital City Garrison.

Colonel. Muthajib is a graduate of the National Military Academy class of 1962. Most recently he has been stationed as Commander of Military Subarea 083 in Malang. In the past, he has also been Commander of Military Subarea 131 in Santiago, North Sulawesi, Assistant to the Assistant for Operations, Kodam Brawijaya, Commander of a Calvary Battalion in Medan, and Commander of the Military District Command in Lumajang. The former Chief of Staff, Brig General Harseno, has received a new position in the Department of Defense office of the Inspector General.

Governor Imam Munandar Dies
42130151e Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian
22 Jun 88 p 16

[Excerpt] Surabaya, Kompas—Imam Munandar, governor/chief of Area Riau, died 21 June at about 13:45 Western Indonesia Time. The major general (ret.) who for the past year had been on extended sick leave, died under the care of Dr. Soetomo in the Airlangga Room, Regional General Hospital in Surabaya. For the past 10 days the deceased had been hospitalized for liver and kidney complications.

13416

Investment Coordinating Board Chief Cites Lack of Industrial Parks
42130151a Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian
20 Jun 88 p 1

[Text] Jakarta, Kompas—Indonesia faces a shortage of industrial parks to accommodate the foreign investors who have been visiting in increasing numbers and expressing their interest in investing in Indonesia. They would like industrial parks complete with infrastructure in order to avoid problems in arranging business permits, building permits, and avoid problems with public disturbance regulations.

The head of the Investment Coordinating Board [BKPM], Ir. Sanyoto Sastrowardoyo, addressed this matter to KOMPAS last week in his office.

“There is a good opportunity now that should not be allowed to pass by, because now the government is inviting the private sector, both foreign and domestic, to jointly develop industrial parks. We should not delay, because foreign investors, especially from Japan, are presently looking for places to invest,” said Sanyoto.

Foreign investors desiring these industrial parks are for the most part from Japan and Taiwan. There are also some from Western Europe, and the EC has even provided grants to develop industrial parks in Indonesia. Most of the investment would be for export activities, and therefore would require satisfactory infrastructure.

As a solution to this problem, the government is giving foreign investors the opportunity to invest in developing industrial parks. This opportunity will be stated more clearly in the Investment Priority List [DSP] that will be issued next July. The government would hold a 20 percent share in the industrial estate in order to expedite arranging for real estate. Presently there is already a Japanese party that is interested and is looking for a location near Bekasi.

13416

Economist Sees National Economic Improvement
42130154c Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian
30 Jun 88 p 1

[Excerpt] Prof Sumitro Djojohadikusumo estimates that the rate of growth of the Indonesian economy in 1988 could exceed 4 percent. Furthermore, he is also convinced that there will be no devaluation in the near future in view of the rather encouraging national economic indicators.

Answering press questions in Jakarta on 29 June after opening the annual members meeting of the State Employees Cooperative Center [Induk Koperasi Pegawai Negeri—IKPN] covering accounting year 1987, he said: “The present situation has turned out better than I anticipated 6 months ago. There are good prospects for us over the next 2 to 3 years.”

Doctor Sumitro, the general chairman of the IKPN, also expressed his conviction that the situation in the next few years may be better than the one we are facing now. He said that this was the prospect, provided that, “We do not fool around. We must continue to move ahead.” He meant that the investment climate must continue to be improved and the productive sector must be given increasing freedom of action, or, in more common terms, deregulation and the elimination of bureaucratic barriers must continue to be implemented.

He said that meaningful progress is taking place in the Indonesian economy at this time, compared with what he expected in December 1987. He said: “In view of the situation I estimate that the growth of Gross Domestic Product [Produk Domestik Bruto—PDB] is far higher than was believed 6 months ago. If our PDB in 1987 was 4 percent, in 1988 it will be more than 4 percent.”

05170

Increasing Unemployment in East Timor Reported
Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian 29 Jun 88 p 16

[Text] Dili, KOMPAS—The total number of unemployed workers in East Timor Province has recently jumped sharply. During the 1986/1987 fiscal year the number of those seeking work who were officially registered at the provincial office of the Department of Manpower amounted to 7,616 people in all. However, out of this total it turned out that only 71 persons, or 0.93 percent, were placed in jobs or found permanent work.

This data is officially recorded in the book, "Balance of Population and the Environment in East Timor in 1987."

During fiscal year 1985/1986 the total number of those seeking work in East Timor Province was 4,590. Jobs were found for 1,368 people, or 29.8 percent of those seeking work. The remainder, or 3,222 people, continued to be unemployed.

Mario Viegas Carrascalao, the governor of East Timor, told a reporter last week that the reliability of the total figure of those seeking work who were officially registered at the provincial office of the Department of Manpower was very doubtful. He meant that the total

number of unemployed workers in East Timor is believed to be far larger than the official figure. The government administrative system from the regency to the village level is not yet functioning properly. He said that, as a result, it is possible that most unemployed workers are not registered.

Results of Education

He added that those who are officially regarded as seeking work and who are registered at the provincial office of the Department of Manpower are generally young and have attended junior or senior high school. The public educational system (nonvocational) in the provincial and regency capitals is completely controlled from Jakarta by the Department of Education and Culture. He declared: "As a result, an increasing number of educated people have no vocational skills and are still unemployed. This means that the burden on the provincial government is becoming increasingly heavy."

The most successful educational activity in East Timor Province is only at the level of the village schools [Sekolah Dasar—SD]. The number of people who can read, who know simple arithmetic, and who can speak Indonesian has increased sharply.

05170

Scrap Aluminum From U.S. Planes Sold to Thais
42070147 Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai
22-28 Jun 88 pp 32, 33

[Article by Tommy Kum: "War Waste Crosses the Mekong River; Laos Has Said, 'If You Have Money, Come Pick Up a Load'"]

[Text] During the past 2 months, except for holidays, the people of Mukdahan have seen dozens of old Lao trucks passing through the city every day. These trucks have been filled with certain type of goods from Laos. When they first see this, many people wonder why so much is being brought in. I am referring to scrap iron and scrap aluminum, which can be referred to as "war waste."

This war waste includes fragments of jeeps, GMC vehicles, tanks, track carriers, aircraft, large shell bodies, and so on. This is the inheritance that the Americans left the Lao after the Indochina War ended in 1975. There was such a huge amount of scrap material from this long war that the Lao did not know what to do with all of it. When the Thai government allowed scrap war materials to be imported, the Lao were eager to sell it, even though the price was only 1.7 baht per kg.

A Thai merchant said that in the past, the Thai government refused to allow such materials to be imported. When Gen Chawalit Yongchaiyut went to Vientiane after the fighting at Ban Rom Klao ended, Laos begged Thailand to purchase these scrap materials. After Gen Chawalit returned to Thailand, people were permitted to import scrap iron or aluminum from Laos.

The process of importing these materials is not very complicated. Thai merchants who are interested in buying these materials have to obtain a border transit permit from the governor of Mukdahan Province. On weekdays, Thai cargo boats leave from the Mukdahan customs checkpoint and cross over to Khanthabouli in Savannakhet Province. The merchants ride over on these boats. On the Lao side, Lao merchants wait to sell their scrap iron. If they can agree on a price, the scrap iron is brought back to Thailand that day. The only conditions are that the trucks used to haul the materials must be Lao while the boats must be Thai.

When the ferries carrying the trucks reach the Thai side, the trucks are immediately weighed. There are three weigh stations on the Thai side. Two of these are owned by rice mills and one is owned by a potato mill. After the trucks have been weighed, they head toward the godowns, where the scrap iron is unloaded. The empty trucks then return to the weigh stations in order to determine the weight of the scrap iron.

Figures on the quantity of scrap iron and scrap aluminum entering the country through the Mukdahan checkpoint show that in April, 63 truckloads of scrap

iron weighing a total of 634,667 kg and 95 truckloads of scrap aluminum weighing a total of 259,988 kg were brought in. The taxes on these items were 60,086 and 279,105 baht respectively.

During the period 1-26 May, 201 truckloads of scrap iron weighing 2,439,613 kg and 134 truckloads of scrap aluminum weighing 314,061 kg were brought in. The taxes on these items were 228,633 and 417,728 baht respectively.

The figures for May show that scrap iron imports for May tripled as compared with April while scrap aluminum imports increased only slightly. In May, an average of nine trucks a day brought in scrap iron. The average for scrap aluminum was six trucks a day. Actually, the amounts transported should have been greater than this, but the old 6-wheeled trucks used by Laos could not carry very heavy loads. And it took a lot of time for the Thai ferries to ferry the trucks back and forth across the river.

One merchant who buys scrap iron said that even though he purchases the scrap material for under 2 baht per kg, he can sell it in Bangkok for only 3 baht and so doesn't make much of a profit. That's because transportation costs are high. The Express Transportation Organization of Thailand [ETOT] has a monopoly. Hiring a private truck costs about 5,000 baht, but the ETOT charges twice that amount. You have no choice. There are regulations that must be adhered to.

One daily economic newspaper reported that about 50 tons (50,000 kg) of scrap iron a day is being smuggled into Thailand. Both merchants and officials have admitted that there is smuggling but not on such a huge scale. Their estimate is that smugglers bring in about 50-100 kg of scrap aluminum or scrap iron each time. They can't smuggle in huge amounts. The boats used to smuggle in contraband are small fishing boats. Moreover, the import taxes (meaning the import duty, the trade duty, and the municipal improvement tax) amount to only 158 baht per ton.

Figures on the arrest of scrap iron and aluminum smugglers show that in April, customs officials, marine police, MROU [Mekong River Operations Unit] officials, special operations police, and police officials from the Mukdahan provincial police station in Muang District caught only seven smugglers and seized contraband weighing only 3,161 kg. In May, only one smuggler with 200 kg of contraband was arrested.

A news source said that cattle and buffalo smuggling is another problem. If bovines are allowed to be imported legally, smuggling will gradually decline. Moreover, the government will earn tax revenues. The customs checkpoints are ready to work. But the other units involved refuse to cooperate. Thus, the smuggling of cattle and buffaloes continues.

The news source also talked about the effect that the opening of the Nakhon Phanom border transit point has had on sending consumer goods to Laos. He said that this has resulted in Lao merchants ordering fewer goods, because they are purchasing these goods at transit points where prices are lower.

It's impossible to stop people from smuggling goods across the Thai-Lao border. But this can be reduced if border trading points are opened. The only effect of opening the Chong Mek border point in Ubon Ratchathani Province was that Thai and Lao merchants in Mukdahan and Savannakhet arranged to exchange their goods at Chong Mek because it was more convenient.

However, the bulk of the "war waste" must pass through the checkpoints, because it is so heavy and large. Lao merchants have told Thai merchants that there is enough scrap material to sell for at least another 2 years. They just hope that Thailand does not change its more relaxed policy, because Lao are earning several hundred thousand baht a day from selling this scrap material inherited from the United States.

11943

Thai Police, Army Facilitate Southern Border Smuggling Trade

*42070138a Bangkok KHAO PHISSET in Thai
8-14 Jun 88 pp 22, 23*

[Article by "707 Isan": "Illegal Border Trade in Southern Ubon"]

[Text] Ubon Ratchathani Province recently tried to establish two border crossing points at the Chong Mek Checkpoint in Phibun Mangsahan District and at Wat Khong Chiam in Khong Chiam District in order to promote good relations between the peoples of Thailand and Laos and reduce smuggling, which has increased greatly in the past period. Smuggling is common because along the Thai-Lao border here, there are many points that facilitate the movement of goods. For example, the border in Phibun Mangsahan and Buntharik districts is not blocked by the Mekong River. There is only a land border, which makes it easy to smuggle goods across the border.

The well-known contraband items in this area are cattle and buffaloes from Laos and motorcycles from Thailand. The southern Lao have a great desire for motorcycles. Thus, if you go to a Lao village, it is not at all surprising to see new models of motorcycles advertised in Thailand.

Lao Cattle and Buffaloes Flow Into Thailand

A news source in Ubon Ratchathani City said that most of the cattle and buffaloes are smuggled across the border in Buntharik District. Thai and Lao cooperate in this smuggling operation. Senior officials in the district have

given them the green light. The person who is well known in cattle and buffalo smuggling circles is "S.R.S." Every cattle smuggler along the border knows him very well.

As for the route used to smuggle cattle into Thailand from southern Laos, the cattle are herded together at Ban Non Noi, Ban Nong Saeng, and Ban Non Sung. Lao drive them across the hills into Thailand, where these cattle and buffaloes mix in with Thai cattle and buffaloes. From there, people come and take the cattle and buffaloes to Det Udom District, where cattle and buffalo certificates are obtained. As for the cost of the cattle and buffaloes, if they are purchased from Lao, they cost about 3-4,000 baht per head. They are then sold in Bangkok or the central region for a higher price depending on the characteristics of the cattle and buffaloes.

In Buntharik District, a senior official with the initials "P.S." is the chief culprit in the cattle smuggling business. Besides being the person who gives the green light, he also sends trusted subordinates to meet the cattle merchants in order to demand a percentage. For example, if 30 head of cattle are sent, they ask for 5 head for P.S. After the cattle are delivered, he has his subordinates take them to his fields in Saraburi Province.

Recently, Border Patrol Police [BPP] officials at Ban Non Noi learned that about 1,000 head of cattle and buffalo were going to be smuggled across the border with the help of two senior officials in the district. Thus, this group of BPP officials set an ambush and seized 30 head of cattle. This greatly upset those who had suffered the loss and so they formulated a plan to get even with the BPP officials. They had the owner of the cattle file charges at the provincial police station in Buntharik District. They charged that the BPP officials had stolen their cattle. This case is still in court.

Besides the border area in Buntharik District, cattle are regularly taken across the Mekong River in Khong Chiam, Khemarat, and Chanuman districts. The same is true in Phibun Mangsahan District. The cattle are smuggled across the border near Ban Thung Nong Bua, Ban Hin Sung, and Ban Lao In Paeng. At each crossing point, either police or military officials are involved in this illegal trade.

As a result of selling cattle and buffaloes, the Lao in Champassak, Saravane, and Sitandone provinces hold large sums of Thai currency. It seems that Lao officials allow these Lao to make some money by selling their cattle and buffaloes. Each family sells can sell 100-200 head.

A Brisk Trade in Motorcycles

A report from Khemarat District stated that some police officials there are acting like merchants. They send large numbers of motorcycles, bicycles, video tape recorders, and radios to Laos. The transit points are at Ban Nua, Ban Ubmung, Ban Hat Khi Khwai, and Ban Na Waeng.

A well-known Japanese motorcycle is very popular in Laos. Prices vary. A new motorcycle sells for 40,000 baht while a used one sells for 20-30,000 baht.

In Khong Chiam District, the well-known transit points into Laos are at Ban Kum, Ban Huai Phai, and Ban Woenbuk. About 10 new and used motorcycles are smuggled into Laos every day. Officials from several units are involved in this. That includes officials in "camouflage," or black, "fatigues.

Another worrisome trend is that motorcycle theft is on the increase in Ubon Ratchathani Province. Many people think that these stolen motorcycles are being smuggled across the border into Laos. And some people have observed that car theft may increase, too. But at present, it is difficult to smuggle cars.

Mr Bunsot Wichiasan, the district officer in Phibun Mangsahan district, admitted that motorcycles are being smuggled into Laos. But officials are making a resolute effort to stop this. The border between Phibun Mangsahan District and Laos runs for 70 km, and this is jungle terrain. It is difficult for officials to monitor this area. This is different from where the Mekong River forms the border. There, boats are used. It is easy for the MROU [Mekong River Operations Unit] to patrol the river.

Laos has not shown any interest in stopping this. Lao officials want this in order to reduce the pressure from the Lao people. This is because Laos' socialist economic policies have achieved very little. Thus, local Lao officials do not try to prevent Thai merchants from selling goods in Laos. The more goods sold the better.

The reason why more and more cattle and buffaloes are being smuggled into Thailand is that the Lao have no other means of obtaining Thai currency with which to purchase goods. Thus, they have to sell buffaloes. Thai merchants will not accept kip, because it is practically worthless. It has been observed that the day before the border transit points are opened, large numbers of cattle are smuggled into Thailand, because the Lao need Thai money with which to purchase goods at the open markets.

The security units that oppose opening Thai-Lao markets, or border transit points, are watching to see whether these transit points will be used to carry on illegal trade. For example, at the Chong Mek Checkpoint, on the day that the border was open, smugglers had arranged to smuggle some motorcycles across the border. But the police arrested them. If it is found that this type of activity is on the increase, it will be recommended that the checkpoint be closed. On the other hand, senior administrative officials in Ubon Ratchathani City feel that opening free markets will close the contraband routes. They feel that if permanent border transit points are opened, this will help put a stop to smuggling.

However, smuggling along the Thai-Lao border will probably continue until the problems between Thailand and Laos are solved at the government-to-government level.

11943

Ubon Governor Okays Trade; Contact Thrives
42070138b Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai
8-14 Jun 88 pp 26-28

[Article by Khaen Sarika: "Chong Mek, the Thai-Lao Friendship Pass"]

[Text] Under the burning sun, the iron gate was wide open, like the two arms of Thailand stretched out to welcome fraternal Laos after a separation of more than 22 years. Only a barbed wire fence had separated them, and the iron gate had remained closed. Good relations between these two fraternal countries had been severed in 1975.

Today, thousands of people are passing back and forth freely through this iron gate. In some places, the barbed wire fence has been torn down to allow people to pass through. In the area separated by the barbed wire, the words Thai territory and Lao territory are no longer used. Today, a transit point has been opened at the Chong Mek checkpoint.

I was interested in the activities of merchants from Ubon Ratchathani City, who had asked that the Chong Mek checkpoint be opened permanently so that they could trade with Laos just like at the Nong Khai and Mukdahan checkpoints. A debate was held on this problem at the end of last year. But the appeals by the businessmen were rejected by the 2d Army Region and the National Security Council, who cited "security" as their reason.

Even though there is no open trade, one group of Thai have regularly smuggled goods to Laos. It is well known that people in uniform support these merchants. At the same time, Lao officials have given the green light to this, because Laos needs all types of goods from Thailand.

Bunsot Wichiansan, the district officer in Phibun Mangsahan District, the senior administrative official in this border area, admitted that crossborder smuggling is thriving. Even if transit points are not opened to permit trade on a temporary basis, it's impossible to prevent Thai goods from flowing into Laos.

For this reason, Phibun Mangsahan District requested permission to open a border transit point. The province gave permission immediately, because it felt that this was local trade between Phibun Mangsahan District and Phon Thong District in Champassak Province.

"I wanted to relieve the tension. We want to be friends with the Lao people. Thus, our policy is to open transit points in every district that borders Laos. So far, we have opened transit points in two districts. The other districts will open such points when they are ready," said Sublieutenant Danai Ketusiri, the governor of Ubon Ratchathani Province. But this may not please those who stand to profit from keeping the Thai-Lao border closed.

On 23 May 1988, I went to the Chong Mek transit point. The trip was very easy. Even though the border is 89 km from the provincial seat, buses leave regularly for the border. However, few buses actually go as far as Chong Mek. Most go only as far as Phibun Mangsahan District or the Sirinthon Dam (Lam Dom Noi Dam). Just after you pass the dam, you come to the Ban Lao In Paeng junction. Turning right takes you to Buntharik District. But if you continue straight for another 2 km, you will reach the Chong Mek checkpoint.

When I reached the BPP [Border Patrol Police] checkpoint, which is near this junction, I got out and walked, because traffic was very heavy on both sides of the road the entire 2 km. Looking down the road, I could see a huge number of people. On both sides of the road is mountainous jungle. The Thai-Lao border here is demarcated by a barbed wire fence. Just like other sections of the border in the north, the border here is not demarcated by the Mekong River. It's said that the Thai-Lao border in Phibun Mangsahan District is approximately 70 km long.

By the time I reached the point where goods are traded, I was sweating heavily. The open-air market at the Chong Mek checkpoint on the Thai side looked the same to me as the market at the Red Cross fair held at the Simuang grounds. There were so many people that it was difficult to tell who was Thai and who was Lao. Getting past people was difficult. Some people were sitting underneath wooden umbrellas in front of the Chong Mek customs checkpoint building and the Thai immigration building in order to get out of the sun for awhile. Both of these buildings had been repaired just recently after having been left abandoned for a long time.

The barbed wire fence that demarcates the Thai-Lao border was still in place. But it was very old. Some sections had been removed so that people could get through. I don't know whether it's Thai or Lao who use these gaps in the fence. But the iron gate was wide open, and people could pass through freely. I took this opportunity to cross to the Lao side. It's not often that I go abroad. People should go.

The Lao side was very crowded, too. The two deserted buildings were evidence that this checkpoint had been closed for more than 20 years. Two Lao tax officials were sitting in one of the buildings waiting to collect taxes. In the rear, there was an old auditorium that was being used to park bicycles and motorcycles. What I saw there surprised me. Many of the Lao who live in Champassak

had brandnew motorcycles of various makes and models, including Nang Phaya and Charuat. Even though I knew that such motorcycles are not exported to Laos, I saw the name of a motorcycle shop that is well-known in Ubon Ratchathani City stamped on the sides of motorcycle tanks. Just as I was about to take a picture there, people near me began to tap me. Turning around, I saw a soldier standing there. In a stern voice, he told me that taking pictures in Laos is forbidden. He said that pictures can be taken on the Thai side only. I left without arguing. After all, it was his country.

Talking about vehicles in Laos, there is a great difference between the cars and motorcycles. The cars are all very old, but the motorcycles are all brandnew. A Thai whom I met near the border said that that is because no one dares smuggle cars into Laos. Thus, most of their cars are very old. This is different from motorcycles, which are easy to smuggle across the border. There have recently been many reports of motorcycles being stolen in the border areas. They are probably sold in Laos.

Something else that I noticed was that these southern Lao have a lot of money. Instead of using kip, they use Thai baht to purchase goods, because the Thai merchants at the border transit point won't accept kip. To them, Lao money is worthless. Thus, the Lao have to use Thai money. Where do they get this Thai money? That is an easy question to answer. They get the money from selling cattle and buffaloes to Thai. Thus, it should come as no surprise that the smuggling of cattle and buffaloes is a thriving business along the Thai-Lao border from Phibun Mangsahan District to Buntharik District. Village merchants, urban merchants, and even police and administrative officials are involved in this illegal trade. These are the same people who carry on crossborder trade.

While I am on the subject of Chong Mek, I must also mention something unusual there that made the headlines just after the fighting at Ban Rom Klao ended. I am referring to the construction of a fence to demarcate the Thai-Lao border at Ban Thung Nong Bua (Chong Mek Subdistrict, Phibun Mangsahan District). As for what happened, a former MP from this area told me the details. But I can't report everything he said. That would take up too much space.

Ban Thung Nong Bua is east of the Chong Mek checkpoint. There is an OARD [Office of Accelerated Rural Development] laterite road. Going to the left takes you to Ban Lao In Paeng. If you leave this road and head toward the border, it is about 10 km to Ban Thung Nong Bua. There are two villages located right along the border, Ban Thung Nong Bua and Ban Hin Sung. During the fighting at Ban Rom Klao, a government unit ordered the villagers to build a barbed wire fence to block the Thai-Lao border. After 4 km, they had to stop work on the fence because of appeals by this former MP. A subdistrict chief and village headman in the Chong

Mek area went and informed the 2d Army Region. They said that the construction of this fence concerned Thai and Lao villagers and had nothing to do with government officials.

This matter is still very puzzling. That former MP was implicitly forbidden from saying anything by Prem's dissolving parliament. No one is going to say anything now, because everyone is out campaigning. Hidden forces may have prevented this matter from being brought up in parliament.

There have been reports that Lao officials have asked the Thai villagers to take down the fence completely; otherwise, problems similar to those at Ban Rom Klao may arise. Laos claims that the Thai villagers built the fence on Lao territory. But the fence has not been taken down. It has not been extended either.

This happened just 2 months before the Chong Mek transit point was opened. Thus, many people think that this transit point was opened in an effort to reduce the tension along the border here. It is said that administrative officials didn't know anything about this. All of a sudden, a security unit came and ordered the villagers to build the fence. It was as if they intentionally wanted to stir up trouble along the border here.

Even though an effort has been made to conceal the facts, the villagers in the Chong Mek area all know who was involved in trying to stir up trouble along the border. The villagers in Ban Lao In Paeng, Ban Thung Nong Bua, Ban Hin Sung, and nearby villages all have relatives living in Ban Vang Tao and other villages in Phon Thong District, Champassak Province. The picture of people from both sides meeting each other at the Chong Mek transit point is one of great happiness. This proves that no one can sever relations between the people of Thailand and Laos.

At 1500 hours, the iron gate was shut once more. The Lao and Thai said goodbye to each other with the hope that they would be able to see each other every Monday. They would like to be able to meet every day. But there are still many factors that prevent that. But the fact that the gate at the Chong Mek checkpoint was open that day is a good sign. The day will come when the door will remain open all the time and not close at 1500 hours like today.

11943

Embassy Officials Comment on Thai Election, Media Preferences

42070138c Bangkok MATICHON in Thai
19 May 88 Special p 1

[Text] A senior official from the Lao embassy talked with MATICHON about the coming Thai election. Today, Lao officials assigned to the embassy in Thailand are monitoring things constantly. For the most part, they monitor the news reports broadcast on television and printed in the newspapers. The Lao embassy subscribes to every Thai daily newspaper. The favorite Thai newspapers of Lao embassy personnel are MATICHON, BAN MUANG, and SIAM RAT.

The same official said that in following Thai political matters, the embassy sends daily newspapers and various magazines to Laos once a week. Thus, the news is somewhat old, which presents a problem at present. However, Laos is able to follow the news by watching the news programs on Thai television, which can be received clearly in Vientiane.

"We are interested in the news. But we do not comment, and we do not favor any particular party. Because this is an internal affair of Thailand. We are just following matters. We can't make any predictions."

The same news source said that at present, Laos does not know who will become the next prime minister of Thailand. That is for Thailand to decide. However, Laos hopes that relations between Thailand and Laos will improve. This depends on the policies implemented by the next prime minister. If Gen Prem Tinsulanon is appointed prime minister again, he should revise some of his policies, including his foreign policy. If Gen Kriangsak Chamanan becomes prime minister, that will be fine, because Laos and Gen Kriangsak have had a good relationship and worked together before. For example, a joint communique was issued [when he served as prime minister].

The news source said that no one knows what will happen if Gen Athit Kamlangek becomes the next prime minister of Thailand. Because based on the news reports, Gen Athit's policies are not very clear. But it is thought that if he becomes prime minister, things will be fine. As for MR [royal title] Khukrit Pramot, if he should become prime minister again, it isn't known what relations will be like, because MR Khukrit does not seem to be very happy with Laos. But for the Thai people, it would probably be good if MR Khukrit became prime minister again.

11943

Mahathir: Old UMNO Cannot Be Revived

42130139A Kuala Lumpur BERITA HARIAN in Malay
22 May 88 p 2

[Text] Prime Minister Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the old UMNO [United Malay National Organization] cannot possibly be restored even though various efforts are being and have been made to revive the party since it was declared illegal last February.

He said that if any branch of the party is declared illegal under the act of incorporation then there are no longer any grounds for saying that the illegal status of the party will last only for a certain period.

"When Justice Datuk Harun Hashim declared the UMNO to be an illegal party it meant that the entire organization was illegal.

"So even if he made several additions to his first judgment, we continue to opt for his first judgment, namely, that the UMNO has been declared illegal," he said. The prime minister was speaking to reporters following the meeting of the High Council of the new UMNO in Kuala Lumpur this morning.

According to the prime minister, it is necessary for the new UMNO to take a firm stand regarding this matter.

Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir said that the justice's written findings seem to indicate that the old UMNO can be revived, although this is impossible in the view of the present top leaders.

Consequently, he said, people like Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah are beginning to campaign here and there, saying that it is possible to revive the old UMNO.

The issue did not arise until the justice supplemented his written-judgment, he said.

"Besides that," he added, "people who do not understand the legal judgment are easily influenced by these campaigns."

In response to another question the prime minister said that Malaysia is a democratic state. It is not a police state, as alleged by some foreign media in a recent special report on political tensions in Malaysia.

"We are not a great power with the ability to control the freedom of the foreign press, but we do give an appropriate amount of freedom to the local media. However, I do not know if liars are still roaming about here and there and submitting inaccurate reports on Malaysia.

"The thing that we are able to do is to present a true picture of this country.

"And I do know that investors are still interested in coming to our country. Some of them invest millions of dollars, and one company from the United States has agreed to invest 2.5 billion in our country. So does this provide any proof that we live in chaotic conditions?" he asked.

He said that in Britain the people no longer give any weight to the reports in their press because the reports contain more speculation than fact.

He characterized the press in this country as being more responsible than the foreign press in covering the news.

5458

Comments on Status of Former UMNO Members in Parliament

Speaker of Parliament's Statement

42130138 Kuala Lumpur UTUSAN MALAYSIA
in Malay 14 May 88 p 1

[Text] Speaker of Parliament Tan Sri Mohamed Zahir Ismail said today that all former members of the UMNO [United Malay National Organization] in Parliament would continue in that body as members of Barisan Nasional [National Front].

This is because they were elected to Parliament on the Barisan Nasional ticket rather than the ticket of their former party, he said.

"If Barisan so desires it can nominate just anyone. A person does not have to be from a component party to compete in the election.

"And if the candidates are successful they become members of Parliament from Barisan instead of the UMNO or MCA [Malaysian Chinese Association]," he said, speaking to a reporter from THE STAR in Kuala Lumpur.

Tan Sri Sahir said, "I haven't thought about these matters," when asked if developments in the new UMNO would result in a redistribution of seats in Parliament and about the status of Encik Wang Choon Wing, member of Parliament from Lipis, who lost his MCA membership as a consequence of a 9-month prison sentence.

With regard to Encik Wang, Tan Sri Zahir said that the Election Commission would not accept any instructions from them regarding a by-election for Lipis district because Encik Wang has not been disqualified as a member of Parliament. When asked about Encik Wang's status in Parliament, Tan Sri Zahir said, "He has not yet written me regarding independent member status. I suspect that the MCA leaders themselves will advise me about this matter."

Regarding the case of Mohamed Tawfik Tun Dr Ismail, a member of Parliament from Sungai Benut who has announced that he is an independent member, Tan Sri Zahir said, "He has to write me a letter about his status."

Tan Sri Zahir said that Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad, member of Parliament from Johor Baharu, has sent Parliament a letter concerning the stand he has taken.

When asked if Datuk Shahrir and Encik Tawfik will be considered independent members of Parliament, Tan Sri Zahir said that they are independent members because they no longer represent any political party.

"However, as far as Parliament knows they were elected on the Barisan Nasional ticket. I think it would be correct to consider them Barisan Nasional members of Parliament," he said.

Asked if he agreed that Encik Wang would also be an independent member of Parliament, Tan Sri Zahir said, "He may become an independent member of Parliament now because he no longer represents the MCA, but he won the seat on the Barisan Nasional ticket."

Meanwhile Datuk Radzi Sheikh Ahmad, member of Parliament from Kangar, and other former UMNO members who have not yet become members of the new UMNO have announced their independent status.

"I became an independent member after the UMNO was declared illegal on 12 February and ceased to be a component party of Barisan Nasional.

"The new UMNO was received as a component after the new party was accepted by the Registrar of Societies on 13 February.

"Since then, and in order to be accepted as members of the new UMNO, members of the old UMNO have become independent members of Parliament," Datuk Radzi said.

Statement by Attorney General

42130138 Kuala Lumpur BERITA HARIAN in Malay
20 May 88 p 2

[Text] Attorney General Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman said in Kuala Lumpur today that former members of the old UMNO [United Malay National Organization] who announce that they have independent status as members of Parliament continue to be members of Barisan Nasional [National Front].

He said that they will remain in Barisan Nasional until they resign their positions or are expelled from the organization.

"Since they are not announcing that they are leaving Barisan Nasional nor that they are no longer accepted as NB members then they will continue to be BN members of Parliament," he said.

Tan Sri Abu Talib said that they can be expelled from Barisan Nasional only by the organization's Supreme Council.

He was commenting on a news article which quoted Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, former vice president of the old UMNO, as saying that the matter should be referred to the attorney general for a decision.

Three members of Parliament from the old UMNO, namely, Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad from Johor Baharu, Encik Tawfik Tun Dr Ismail from Sungai Benut and Datuk Radzi Sheikh Ahmad from Kangar, have announced that they are independent members.

When asked for his opinion of the action taken by these members of Parliament, Tan Sri Abu Talib said, "In my opinion their action reflects their attitude toward and opinion of the new UMNO."

"They continue in their position as Barisan Nasional members of Parliament because they were elected on the BN ticket. When they declare themselves to be independent members they are only emphasizing that they are independent members of Parliament from the BN," he said.

Consequently, he said, both by law and the electoral process they remain members of Parliament from Barisan Nasional.

Speaker of Parliament Tan Sri Zahir Ismail said earlier that these members of Parliament still represent Barisan Nasional.

New UMNO's Policy

42130138 Kuala Lumpur UTUSAN MALAYSIA
in Malay 22 May 88 p 1

[Text] Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has affirmed that all members of Parliament and state legislatures who are from the old UMNO [United Malay National Organization] and who oppose or are hesitant about joining the new UMNO will be expelled from Barisan Nasional [National Front].

He said that this decision was reached by the High Council of the new UMNO at a meeting today.

He stated that the matter will be brought before the Supreme Council of Barisan Nasional so the people concerned can be expelled immediately.

The decision means that three members of Parliament from the old UMNO, namely, Datuk Shahrir Samad from Johor Baharu, Tawfik Tun Dr Ismail from Sungai Benut and Datuk Radzi Sheikh Ahmad from Kangar, will be ousted because they have declared that they are independent members.

In addition, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, who is trying to revive the old UMNO, will be expelled from Barisan Nasional together with his supporters.

This means that these people can no longer sit in Parliament and state legislatures as supporters of the government, even if they still consider themselves to be UMNO members.

Speaking at a press conference after chairing a meeting of the High Council at Seri Perdana today, Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir affirmed that members of Parliament and state legislatures who have been quietly expressing reluctance to join the new UMNO or who have announced that they are independent members also will be removed.

The president of the new UMNO said that only a few members of state legislatures are involved in the matter.

The attorney general said recently that members of Parliament from the old UMNO who have declared themselves to be independent members of Parliament will continue in the capacity of members of Parliament from the old UMNO until Barisan Nasional reaches a decision on their status.

The representatives of the new UMNO who are in Barisan Nasional at the present time are Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir; Encik Ghafar Baba, the deputy president; Datuk Paduka Daim Zainuddin, the treasurer; Datuk Amar Wan Mokhtar Ahmad, the chief minister of Trengganu; Encik Anwar Ibrahim, the minister of education; and Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, former minister of defense.

Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir is chairman of Barisan Nasional, Encik Ghafar is secretary general and Datuk Paduka Daim is treasurer.

5458

First General Assembly of New UMNO To Meet
42130139C Kuala Lumpur UTUSAN MALAYSIA
in Malay 22 May 88 p 2

[Text] The first General Assembly of the new UMNO [United Malay National Organization] will be convened in October to determine the tenure of the current High Council and to ratify a new party constitution.

Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the president of the new UMNO, said that it is expected that the present High Council will continue its functions for another 3 years

because, were it not for the court decision that declared the old UMNO illegal, the members elected to the High Council would have performed their duties for the same period of time.

He said the High Council, which is meeting in Kuala Lumpur this morning, has not set a definite date for the new UMNO's first General Assembly.

Speaking to reporters following the meeting of the High Council at Seri Perdana, Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir said that representatives from the division level will not attend the first meeting of the General Assembly in October because the new UMNO is still in the process of forming branches.

"We cannot make appointments at the division level before appointments are made at the branch level.

"Thus, the objective of the first General Assembly will be to ratify the new constitution of the new UMNO and to establish the term of office of the present High Council," he said.

The prime minister explained that this means that only elected members of the provisional committee will act as representatives in the General Assembly.

He said the High Council expects all branch committees to be formed by January of next year. Permanent branch committees can then be elected and can elect representatives to attend division meetings.

Division meetings will be held in April of next year. Branch representatives will appoint members of division committees and representatives to the second General Assembly at these meetings. The second General Assembly may also be held next year.

Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir said that regulations covering meetings of the General Assembly, the representation of divisions and branch meetings have been approved by the Registrar of Societies.

He said that 200,000 applications for membership in the new UMNO have been registered on computers and that the applications are still coming in.

He also said that the welcome given the organization has been very encouraging and has satisfied the High Council. The welcome has been received even though attempts at defamation are being carried out at this level against the new UMNO.

5458

Youth, Women's Movement Heads of New UMNO Named

42130139B Kuala Lumpur *UTUSAN MALAYSIA*
in Malay 22 May 88 p 2

[Text] The High Council of the new UMNO [United Malay National Organization] today appointed Datuk Sri Najib Tun Razak and Datin Paduka Rafidah Aziz respectively to head the new UMNO's Youth Movement and Women's Movement.

In announcing the appointments the president of the new UMNO, Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, stated that they would be responsible for reorganizing the committees that will supervise the formation of the movements.

Datuk Sri Najib, who held a corresponding position in the old UMNO after Encik Anwar Ibrahim withdrew to run for UMNO vice president, said his appointment constituted recognition by the High Council of the struggle of the younger generation.

He said his people are convinced the youth organization will be able to hold its first grand conference next year and elect a new chairman and representatives.

Speaking with reporters at Sri Perdana following the close of the fourth meeting of the High Council, Datuk Sri Najib said that the appointment of the chairpersons of the new UMNO's Youth Movement and Women's Movement meant that the organization's youth wing was fully formed.

Given Mandate

He said the High Council had given him a mandate to select members of a national committee in the near future. The committee will be a provisional committee set up to coordinate activities of the Youth Movement at the national level. State and division committees will be formed later.

He said two criteria must be met to be selected for membership on the new national committee.

First, members must have demonstrated solid support for the new UMNO, and second, they cannot be more than 40 years of age.

"This means that there will be former members of the national committee of the old UMNO's Youth Movement who will not be selected. If they have continually and clearly opposed the new UMNO they will be excluded from the roster of the new committee," he said.

In any case, it does not mean that all of the former members of the old committee will be included.

He said an assistant secretary will soon be appointed to work full time on organizing the administration of the new UMNO's Youth movement.

Datuk Sri Najib also stated that steps are being taken to coordinate the machinery of the Youth Movement at state and division levels.

"When all of the machinery of the Youth Movement is operating, talks and campaigns aimed at the recruitment of new members will be carried out simultaneously throughout the country," he said.

Meanwhile, Datin Paduka Rafidah Aziz, the head of the new UMNO's Women's Movement, said that the movement will conduct an information campaign directed at former members with the aim of establishing the movement at the division level.

She said the members of the national committee of the Women's Movement will be appointed next month.

She does not anticipate any great change in the membership of the national committee.

"The thing now required in the Women's Movement is an equilibrium between the old and the new," she said.

Twenty-one members will be appointed to the movement's national committee.

5458

Report on Gas, Water, Ferry, Bridge Agreements With Singapore

42130168A Kuala Lumpur *BERITA HARIAN* in Malay
29 Jun 88 p 1

[By Jailani Harun and Saodah Elias]

[Text] Kuala Lumpur, Tuesday [28 June]—Singapore has agreed to pay a premium of at least \$20 million [Singapore dollars] (about \$25.4 million Malaysian dollars) for the first year's supply by Malaysia of liquified natural gas (LNG) to that republic.

Under the agreement, Malaysia will supply 53 million cubic meters (150 million cubic feet) of gas daily to Singapore based on a special price formula that will be changed according to the percentage of gas supplied annually.

This agreement is one of three contained in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his Singapore counterpart, Datuk Lee Kuan Yew, at the Prime Ministers Office this morning.

Datuk Mohamad Yusof Hitam, chief secretary of the Foreign Ministry who briefed newsmen after that memorandum was sealed, said further details of the agreement, including how costs for the construction of the gas pipeline to Singapore will be shared, will be determined by officials of PeTRonas [National Petroleum Company] and the Singapore Public Utilities Board.

The memorandum of understanding deals with cooperation on water and gas supplies and a ferry service. However, no date has been set for the commencement of the gas supply.

Filtration Plant

Regarding water, Singapore has expressed its agreement to compensate the Johor government for the dam and reservoir project area on the Lingui River in Kota Tinggi.

According to the agreement, Datuk Yusof said ownership of this area will be retained by the Johor government even though the plant and other installations are constructed by Singapore.

"According to new stipulations in the water agreement, Singapore will not own the dam and reservoir which will remain the property of the Johor government. At the same time, the Singapore Republic will compensate the Johor government for this area.

"These stipulations are far better than those of the 1962 water agreement. Under the earlier agreement, the plant for receiving, impounding, and filtering the water from the Lembah River in Johor was built by Singapore and was owned and operated by that republic," Datuk Yusof said.

According to the present memorandum of understanding, Singapore will also be responsible for the cost of constructing the dam and the pumping station. Singapore also will finance the maintenance and operation of these facilities.

Singapore, however, will own the filtration plant constructed on several hectares of land which will be taxed by the Johor government for the life of the agreement.

Datuk Yusof added that the plant would supply filtered water also to Johor.

He said Malaysia did not change the rates charged for the water because it did not want the price of water piped to Singapore to be the same as that charged for repiping it to Johor. This would have been detrimental to consumers in Johor.

In this connection, the two countries agreed to retain the selling prices for filtered and unfiltered water that were established in the 1962 water agreement.

Singapore made no specific requests in regard to this issue. Johor now supplies about 540 million liters (120 million gallons) of water daily to the republic while Singapore resells 40.5 million liters (9 million gallons) to Johor.

Concerning the new ferry service, Singapore offered Malaysia an area on Changi Point in which a jetty could be constructed at the lowest cost of \$1 [Singapore dollars] (\$1.27 Malaysian dollars) a square foot.

Regarding the new bridge for solving the problem of heavy traffic on the Johor Causeway, Datuk Yusof said Malaysia is still studying Singapore's proposal and has not yet made any decision on it.

6804

Japan Extends \$840 Million Loan for Gas Project 42130168C Kuala Lumpur BERITA HARIAN in Malay 29 Jun 88 p 7

[By Aminuddin Ibrahim]

[Text] The Japanese government agreed to extend a loan valued at 42 billion yen (about \$840 million Malaysian dollars) to Malaysia through the 12th Official Development Aid (ODA) program to finance a Petronas [National Petroleum Company] phase two (PGU 2) natural gas project on the Peninsula.

The note was signed at the Prime Ministers Office (JPM) in Kuala Lumpur last night. Malaysia was represented by Tan Sri Sallehuddin Mohamed, national chief secretary, while the Japanese government was represented by Noboru Nakahira, its ambassador to Malaysia.

ODA aid to Malaysia is channeled through the Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF).

Petronas and the OECF will hold discussions on several matters connected with this loan before a separate agreement is signed on 21 July.

Tan Sri Sallehuddin in his speech said the aid was targeted at financing a Petronas-owned gas project. It includes the installation of a 730-km gas pipeline. The project will give jobs to at least 3,000 local residents.

More jobs will be created when the project, which also includes a petrochemical plant and related facilities, is completed by 1990.

Tan Sri Sallehuddin is confident that when the project is completed, most of the Peninsula will be served with gas, including gas used to power electricity generating stations, factories, and a number of public facilities.

Use of the Loan

According to the chief secretary, it has been determined that about 2,460 hectares of the Peninsula area will be used for the installation of the gas pipeline.

Several tenders for the work have been issued to contractors, and the project is projected to begin as soon as ODA financial aid is received.

Tan Sri Sallehuddin is confident that with the Japanese government aid, the Petronas development project can be completed on schedule.

Since 1966, he said, ODA has extended more than 370 billion yen (about \$7.4 million Malaysian dollars) in aid to Malaysia for various development projects.

Nakahira also said the OECF has offered soft terms for this loan which would enable Malaysia to purchase goods and obtain the services required for the PGU-2 project not only from Japan and developing countries but also from Western countries.

The OECF also agreed to extend this loan at an annual interest rate of 4 percent compared with the 5 percent rate set under the 11th ODA.

Malaysia will repay the loan within 25 years with a 7-year grace period.

A spokesman for the Japanese Information Service said ODA loans which had to be repaid by Malaysia between 1966 and 1987 totaled \$14.4 million [Malaysian dollars], excluding annual interest payments.

Besides Malaysia, ODA has extended aid to Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

As of March 1987, the loans extended to Indonesia totaled 13.29 billion yen, 5.34 billion yen to Thailand, and 3.28 billion yen to the Philippines.

Japan has imported about 6 billion barrels of petroleum from Malaysia every month since 1984.

6804

NANYANG SIANG PAU Appeals for Continuation of GSP Privileges

42050028b Kuala Lumpur NANYANG SIANG PAU
in Chinese 11 Jun 88 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text] Shortly after his release from Taiping Detention Camp, V. David, secretary general of the Malaysian Trades Union Congress [MTUC] and concurrently an MP representing the Democratic Action Party [DAP], was drawn into a controversy involving the AFL-CIO's

appeal with the U.S. government to rescind GSP privileges of Malaysian exports to the United States. Mr David has played the leading role in this controversy and become the target of public criticism, because it was he who strongly recommended to the AFL-CIO for the GSP privileges cancellation on grounds that the Malaysian government is suppressing labor and civil rights in this country.

Although Mr David has repeatedly issued statements to the press clarifying his role and denying his involvement in the AFL-CIO's petition to the U.S. Government, the MTUC has in the past provided the press with evidence of Mr David's earlier statement; however, as these documents have not been officially withdrawn by the MTUC, this has made it difficult for Mr David to justify himself or to escape criticism by various quarters. Due to the magnitude and seriousness of the case, assuming the U.S. Government retracts the GSP privileges for Malaysian exports, it appears that many workers in our budding manufacturing industries will find themselves in extreme misery. This would run counter to the MTUC's principle of safeguarding workers' interests.

Datin Paduka Rafidah, the trade and industry minister, disclosed the other day that if the United States should cancel the GSP privileges, some 75,000 among our labor force would suffer a big blow and some 895 factories would be affected. And if we include agriculture which is related to the manufacturing industry, the losses to our country would be tremendously greater. Last year our goods sent to the United States under the GSP amounted to M\$878.9 million, representing 11.7 percent of our total exports to that country. As we enjoy this kind of export privileges, the four little dragons—Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore—who will lose such privileges next year, will come to invest and build factories in our country so that they can continue to enjoy their exports originating from Malaysia under GSP conditions. This is one of the main reasons for the increase in foreign investment this year, so if we should lose these GSP privileges, the ill effect to our economy and foreign investment in our country can be envisioned.

Leaving aside for the moment the role of Mr David in proposing the cancellation of the GSP privileges, what is more urgent for us to do is how to make the U.S. Government stop its action damaging to our country's interests. Trade and Industry Minister Datin Rafidah has indicated that our government will fight to the very end and has met with U.S. Ambassador John Monjo to clarify Malaysia's policy and stand. Naturally, Mr David's willingness to come out and ask the AFL-CIO to withdraw its appeal would be a big help, for, after all, "whoever started the trouble should end it," so the saying goes. Whether his kind offer is meant to atone for his sin or purely to rectify the prejudicial action of this labor union counterpart, Mr David should do it for the sake of the many workers he represents and in the

national interest. Our only hope is that he carries it out, and that he should not make any more political propaganda and attach any conditions as he did previously.

The U.S. ambassador to Malaysia once pointed out that the U.S. Trade Bureau will consider the labor union's petition in the middle of July, and if the AFL-CIO's demand is well-founded, it will be included in the agenda for deliberation; however, Malaysia may still make suggestions and representations to the U.S. government. According to the ambassador, in doing business with the United States, developing countries are required to adhere to U.S. laws and regulations, for instance, whether labor unions in the countries concerned enjoy labor rights, whether they have the right to collective bargaining, and whether the workers get reasonable wages and are of lawful working age. In reality, nobody will suspect that our government is depriving the workers of the above-mentioned rights. Malaysia has always been a member of international labor institutions and none of them has ever criticized our country for violating workers' rights and interests.

At any rate, we cannot take the AFL-CIO's action lightly, but should speedily take counteraction and block its move; it would be best if we can effectively urge the AFL-CIO to withdraw its petition and save ourselves from unnecessary disputes. The sooner this problem is solved, the greater confidence foreign investors will have in our country. Malaysia is self-confident that it can fully account for itself before international organizations, as far as civil rights and workers' rights are concerned. Furthermore, as Malaysia has not reached the "new industrialized countries" level, the problem of canceling GSP privileges should not have arisen in the first place.

9300/12223

DAP Leader Briefs Auckland's Malaysian Students on National Issues

42050028c Kuala Lumpur NANYANG SIANG PAU in Chinese 13 Jun 88 p 5

[Text] Lee Lam Thye, acting opposition leader in Parliament, appealed to Malaysian citizens studying or working in New Zealand to return to their motherland upon completion of their studies or stint and to rectify the unreasonable phenomena at home together with his party.

Lee, who is also acting secretary general of the Democratic Action Party [DAP], was speaking before 100-odd Malaysian citizens living in New Zealand and studying at Auckland University last night.

During an informal discussion, Mr Lee exchanged views in detail with the participants over a wide range of subjects, Mr Lee exchanged views in detail with the

participants over a wide range of subjects, including the ISA crackdown, the national economic situation, the New Economic Policy, national unity and race relations within Malaysia.

Mr Lee also reaffirmed the DAP's appeal requesting the Malaysian government to form a National Consultative Council to discuss and seek a solution to racial problems in a realistic and sensible manner.

Mr Lee said: "Religion and racial problems cannot be taken lightly, for they could hinder our plan for national unity, while this national unity is the only way out for our multiracial society and nation. The DAP is prepared to make its contributions to the National Consultative Council."

During the meeting, Mr Lee launched a mass signature movement, requesting the government to release all ISA detainees immediately and unconditionally.

Mr Lee also announced in Auckland that since the Malaysian compatriots residing in New Zealand have indicated their support to the DAP, an Auckland DAP branch will be formed. Several Malaysian citizens have, in principle, agreed to carry out the preparatory work.

Mr Lee pointed out: "The current situation has compelled the DAP to strengthen its connections and work abroad, and the Auckland DAP will play an important role on this score, by mobilizing Malaysian compatriots in New Zealand to support DAP's struggle."

9300/12223

Minister Sees Lessening of School Requirements, Discrimination Against Chinese

42050028a Kuala Lumpur NANYANG SIANG PAU in Chinese 3 Jun 88 p 3

[Text] Deputy Education Minister Woon See Chin today disclosed that the Education Ministry does not intend to open a Summer Temporary Teacher Training Course on a long-term basis.

He said that as part of its long-range plan, the ministry intends to slacken the conditions for temporary teachers to enroll in a regular Teachers Training College, so those who qualify can be absorbed into the ranks of temporary teachers by the ministry in due course; in this way, the Summer Temporary Teacher Training Course can be terminated in the shortest time possible.

Speaking about the problem of Chinese-language education, the deputy education minister called on various circles not to sensitize the problem, in order to make it much easier for the government to tackle the matter.

Deputy Education Minister Woon was speaking at a symposium on Chinese-language education problems, which he officiated at (Sa'anam) today.

This forum was organized by the Selangor MCA and the MCA Youth Wing's education bureau, while those invited to have a dialogue at the meeting were principals and vice principals of Chinese primary schools throughout the state of Selangor.

The deputy minister also stressed that Chinese education is gradually getting the government's serious attention.

He said that in general today we are able to feel that Chinese education will no longer be regulated by the government, quite contrary to what some people may think.

He pointed out that on many recent official occasions, our political leaders, while stressing the importance of our national language, also express views that English, Chinese and Tamil languages are equally important.

He added that this point was also emphasized by Prime Minister Datuk Sri Dr Mahathir whenever he promotes the "Love our National Language" movement. Education Minister Anwar similarly stresses the importance of other languages on many occasions.

Deputy Education Minister Woon said he is confident Chinese-language education is gradually receiving the government's serious attention and as long as the problem is not politicized, it can be solved in a relatively easy manner.

Mentioning the matter of teachers' qualifications, he said that the 1,200 Chinese primary schools throughout the land are short 4,000 qualified teachers, while the 4,000-odd national Malay primary schools are short 9,000 qualified teachers.

Although the teacher shortage is more serious in Chinese primary schools, the government is actually doubling the number of qualified candidates to be absorbed and trained as Chinese primary school teachers, he concluded.

9300/12223

Editorial Hails USSR Ties, Sees U.S. Domination
42070145a Bangkok DAO SIAM in Thai 31 May 88 p 5

[Editorial: "We Should Establish Firm Ties With the Soviet Union"]

[Excerpts] In the wake of Gen Prem Tinsulanon's trip to the Soviet Union, some people think that Thailand should establish firm ties with the Soviet Union. To date, our ties with them have been quite casual.

Today, communism has had enough and is gradually changing for the better like other countries. An example of a communist country that is changing is Red China.

Thailand should establish better ties with the communist-bloc countries. These countries are now changing and opening their doors wider. That would benefit Thailand. We have a chance to expand trade and exchange goods and knowledge. The Soviet Union is just as advanced or perhaps even more advanced technologically than the United States.

As for why the present, or next, government should strengthen its ties with the Soviet Union, besides the economic benefits, that would also serve as a warning to the United States. It would show them that they are not our only ally. It would also show them that they do not have power over the Asian countries and that they can no longer oppress us or shamelessly steal things behind our backs.

Thus, it is certainly possible to establish firm ties with the Soviet Union. We can become good friends in the future. Once we have established firm ties, the situation in Asia should gradually improve. The secret activities aimed at stirring up trouble in these countries will definitely decline and eventually come to an end.

11943

Columnist Cites U.S. Support of Dictators, Loss of Influence

*42070144d Bangkok DAILY NEWS in Thai
11 Jun 88 p 2*

["Around the World" column by Trairat Suntharaphat: "Don't Let the Blood Flow"]

[Excerpt] The United States is very concerned about Central and South America. The communists have been very effective in infiltrating these regions. There are guerrilla wars in several countries, and terrorism is widespread. Several countries have implemented anti-American policies or moved away from the United States. The number of countries that oppose American policy has increased even though they are located near the United States and used to be controlled by the United States. In the case of the dictators whom the

United States has supported, if the United States becomes dissatisfied or the dictators begin to show opposition, the CIA contacts a military leader and tries to get him to topple the dictator.

There have been many demonstrations against pro-American governments. This has happened in Peru, Columbia, El Salvador, and other countries. Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico are very unhappy with the United States. The United States has applied great pressure to get these three countries to pay the interest owed on their loans. They countries have stubbornly refused to pay the huge amount of interest owed and are becoming more and more upset with Washington.

El Salvador has been particularly unfortunate. The United States has supported President Jose Duarte, and good results have been achieved in thwarting the communists. But it was suddenly learned that Duarte has a terminal illness. Cancer has spread throughout his body. In particular, the disease has spread to his liver. American doctors have said that an operation would not help. It is thought that he has only a few more months to live. The military in El Salvador is anxious to seize power. Thus, Duarte is in serious trouble. Also, the communists are on the offensive on all fronts. If a civilian replaces Duarte, the military will be unhappy. But the United States is afraid of using the military to fight the communists, because the more they fight the communists, the stronger the communists become.

El Salvador is becoming more and more like Nicaragua even though the United States is providing much support. What is strange is that almost every country in which the United States has meddled has ended up in a civil war. In Thailand, we had the events of 14 October 1973. In the Philippines, there was the struggle between Marcos and Aquino. South Korea is still in turmoil. The best thing is to associate with the United States at just a certain level. Otherwise, there may be bloodshed.

11943

Foreign Ministry Unaware of Defense-PRC Arms Depot Talks

*42070146b Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai
11 Jun 88 pp 3, 2*

[Excerpt] Mr Sarot Chawanawirat, the director-general of the Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not know anything about the negotiations between the military and China on establishing an arms depot. We must wait for the military to confirm that it actually has contacted China.

11943

Army Intelligence Sources See CGDK Weakening, PRK Stronger

*42070139a Bangkok LAK THAI in Thai
16 Jun 88 pp 16, 17*

[Excerpt] With respect to the troop withdrawal, LAK THAI has talked with military news sources, particularly those involved in "intelligence," and learned that if Vietnam does in fact withdraw 50,000 of its troops from Cambodia this year, not only will this be good news in terms of the troops withdrawal, but this will strengthen its position politically. The CGDK is now very weak. Vietnam is relieved that it can withdraw half of its troops presently stationed in Cambodia. This is because politically, the Khmer coalition has serious internal conflicts. Even though the Khmer coalition is supported by ASEAN, China supports the Khieu Samphan faction, and the United Nations sides with the Khmer coalition, the CGDK's role on the world stage is growing weaker. Now that Vietnam realizes that the CGDK has been defeated politically, it can allow the Heng Samrin government, its puppet, to "play politics" with the CGDK by itself. Vietnam no longer needs to play a role openly. If the Khmer coalition is beaten by Heng Samrin politically, that is the end of the matter. There is already an opportunity to solve the Cambodia problem politically in accord with the wishes of ASEAN, including Thailand, and the world community. Vietnam feels that it is already in control of the military situation and that it can gain firm control of the political situation. To do this with the approval of the world community, it must first relieve the military tension.

Our military news source said that Vietnam has now received a large quantity of modern weapons from the Soviet Union. These weapons are much more advanced than those used by China even though they are based on the same models.

LAK THAI has been informed that Vietnam has provided modern weapons to the Heng Samrin forces. As a result, it is believed that even if Vietnam withdraws 50,000 troops, the Heng Samrin forces will be able to handle the situation by themselves. Something worth noting is that before the troop withdrawal issue was raised, Vietnam began withdrawing its forces from the Thai border. Today, they are about 20 km from the border. No Vietnamese forces have been observed opposite Aranyaprathet and Taphraya districts. Only Heng Samrin troops have been seen. The Vietnamese forces have moved deeper into Cambodia. In particular, the division under the command of Maj Gen Nam Va, a Vietnamese general from Hanoi who is only 38 years old, has set up a new front far from the Thai border. As a result, there are no conflicts or confrontations [between Thai and Vietnamese forces].

As for the new weapons provided by the Soviet Union, Vietnam has trained the Heng Samrin forces in the use of these weapons. Among these weapons are RPGs. In the past, the shells were fired directly at the targets, and they

exploded on impact. But now, a new type of shell is used. This shell explodes in the air. These can be used for low-level helicopter attacks or for saturating the target like small artillery. The 100-mm mortars can use shells that explode in the air rather than shells that explode on impact. These mortars can be used in place of artillery that fire shells that explode in the air.

11943

Columnist Wants Less Anticommunism in Foreign Policy

*42070145d Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai
31 May 88 pp 8, 9*

["Views" column by Nilabon: "It's Not Too Late"]

[Text] I would like to express my joy at Vietnam's statement that it intends to withdraw its forces from Cambodia. That probably would have happened 5-6 years ago if we had done what we are doing now, that is, visiting the Soviet Union, turning toward that side, and opening negotiations.

The Soviet Union notified Hungarian officials of this in order to have them inform the Thai representatives, who were visiting there. It's too bad that the Thai minister of foreign affairs did not attach more importance to the Soviet Union when he first took this position. If he had made more trips to the Soviet Union instead of making so many trips to the United States, Vietnam would probably have withdrawn its troops sooner than this.

Thailand's foreign policy sounds great on paper. But in actual practice, we have kept the door closed to the communist countries for many years out of fear that they would meddle in our internal affairs. We have acted as if we didn't know that the Soviet Union has been buying wheat from the United States, Canada, and Australia for more than 10 years even though they are at odds with each other politically.

The United States has taken rice markets away from Thailand. But the Soviet Union has been buying Thai rice, both through Singapore and Hong Kong, and shipping it to Vietnam for many years now. If Thailand had implemented a firm foreign policy, Vietnam would probably have withdrawn its forces sooner than this and we would have been able to sell hundreds of thousands of tons of rice to Vietnam. We would not have gotten into arguments with Laos or had to spend 3 billion baht.

Thailand once faced serious problems because of political interference. Solving the problems on the foreign affairs front is very important, because this will help restore peace and order. We know that those involved in maintaining security are very cautious about contacting communist countries. They are afraid of people being brainwashed and of links that could pose a danger to the country. Thus, they have constantly followed the principle of "hiding in their shell."

One of the methods used by the Soviet Union has been to give scholarships to Thai students directly. And in the past, pro-Chinese communists visited China secretly.

We have not educated the people in the country fully and so some people have left the country in order to find jobs or knowledge. Thus, we have been placed at a disadvantage because of fear or superficial thinking. The minister of foreign affairs has even opposed allowing MPs to visit communist countries. Many have had to cancel their trip.

It was the military that thought of having the wives of important Lao visit Thailand. The military has a more modern policy and wants to establish contact. That is better than closing our eyes and ears or crawling into a shell.

The fighting with Laos ended quickly because of the diplomatic-level contacts established during the time of Gen Kriangsak. Senior Lao representatives were invited to come negotiate and reach an agreement. If contact has been established beforehand, important political negotiations can be held, and an agreement can be reached faster than expected.

We should resolve that from now on, we will have diplomacy lead. There must be firm diplomacy in which the official representatives of other countries are treated with honor. People must not allow themselves to be carried away with emotion.

It is not too late to change. Let's act like Thai and be respectful and modest in order to protect the nation's interests.

11943

Ex-General Swings Timber Operations Trade Deal With Vietnam

*42070146a Bangkok NAEO NA in Thai
14 Jun 88 pp 7, 8*

[Text] A news source in the timber business told NAEO NA that the B.H. Group Company of Gen Chuthai Saengthawip, the former inspector general, is becoming involved in timber operations.

Logs are being brought in from Vietnam and sold to sawmills in Thailand. The first shipment of 787 logs, of approximately 5,000 logs, was brought in last month. Of these 500 were gurjun oil trees and 287 were hardwood trees. They had a market value in Thailand of approximately 20 million baht.

These logs were brought in and stored at a warehouse in Phra Padaeng District, Samut Prakan Province. They are still at this warehouse, which belongs to Siam Cement.

"Efforts are being made to sell the logs to sawmills on the Thonburi-Paktho Highway. A person who works for Thai Airways International is trying to find a buyer," said the news source.

The news source said that besides importing timber from Vietnam, this company also plans to import timber from Burma in cooperation with 1st Lt Suphat Sarasin, the brother of Mr Phong Sarasin, the deputy prime minister from the Social Action Party.

Rumors are rife in logging circles that 1st Lt Suphat helped the B.H. Group Company import this first shipment of logs from Vietnam. "From what I understand, a Thai boat took a load of cement to Vietnam and brought the logs back on the return trip," said the news source.

11943

Editorial: Vietnamese Refugees Economic Migrants

42070145b Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai 11 Jun 88 p 8

[Editorial: "Another Step in Solving the Refugee Problem"]

[Text] It's good to hear that the deputy under secretary of interior, Mr Somphon Klinphongsa, will take a team of ministry officials to visit refugee camps in the other five ASEAN countries and Hong Kong. All of these are the first "port of call" of the Vietnamese boat people. For many years now, even though the war has ended, refugees have continued to pour out of Vietnam.

The reason why this is welcome news is that it shows that the Thai Ministry of Interior has begun taking concrete steps to examine the problem of the boat refugees in order to solve this problem. Because if the visit to the refugee camps in these countries shows that these countries are tired of having to deal with this endless stream of boat refugees from Vietnam, we will be able to take a strong united stance and officially announce that we can no longer bear this burden. Such a statement would definitely attract the attention of third countries that take refugees for resettlement and make them realize that the time has come to limit the number or stop taking in Vietnamese refugees who have fled their homeland for economic rather than political reasons.

Besides this, Mr Somphon's visit to Vietnam to observe the Orderly Departure Program may persuade the Vietnamese government to expand this program in order to help reduce the number of "boat people." But it will probably be difficult to get Vietnam to cooperate unless we have something to offer Vietnam in return. Because in the past, Vietnam has always taken advantage of every possible opportunity to make a profit.

Today, Thailand has to bear a heavy burden because of the flow of refugees into the country. Because besides the Vietnamese, who arrive by boat, we have also had to take

in tens of thousands of Cambodian and Lao refugees, who are now living in several refugee camps along the border. We are responsible for supervising and taking care of them. Even though we receive support funds from various countries, each year Thailand has to spend much of its own money.

Besides this, there is also the problem of national security in the long term. In the future, these refugee camps may again become the target of a military attack. A country with bad intentions toward Thailand may claim that Thailand is supporting its enemies.

The refugee problem, particularly the problem of "boat people" from Vietnam, must be solved as soon as possible. Those people no longer have any reason for fleeing their country. Thus, it's time that we found a way to stop this migration.

11943

Opinion Leaders Debate Over Petition to King

Columnist Supports Petition

42070140 Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai 3 Jun 88 p 8

["Fact and Fancy" column by "Old Soldier"]

[Excerpts] It was SIAM RAT that published the names of the 99 academics who submitted a petition to the king. I was very interested in this and read the names of all the people, which included both men and women. Most are professors, some of whom I know. Many of these are people whom I know and respect as instructors and professors. All of these people are quite well-known and respected, and they are all very honest.

As for their submitting a petition to the king, who is the head of the nation in a democratic system, I feel that this was their legal right. The Thai people are free and have the right to do that. In submitting a petition to the king, they did not reprove or blame anyone.

This group of scholars and instructors showed good intentions toward the parliamentary election. But they did not have a chance or the ability to discuss matters with the administration, which is arranging and managing the election. And looking at what has been going on prior to this election, it's not certain that this will be a fair and honest election. There are many things that indicate that the opposite will be true.

Actually, the administration, which is responsible for arranging and managing the election, is publicly saying that voters should exercise their right to vote in an honest and fair manner. Publicly, it is encouraging all of them to vote. But this may just be propaganda. The administration may be doing this in order to conceal things. Because some of the things that the government has done give rise to doubts.

Out of concern that Thailand will not be a perfect democracy, these academics joined together with a common purpose in mind. That is, they asked that the election be conducted honestly and fairly. They wanted this request to carry weight and so they exercised their right of submitting a petition to the king. I think that what they did was perfectly legal, because submitting this petition was tantamount to reviewing the actions taken by the government so that the government will act in accord with democratic principles. They did not make any charges or criticize anything.

Some people have said that they acted improperly by submitting this petition, because that was tantamount to involving the monarchy in politics, which is contrary to a democratic form of administration.

But I do not feel that submitting this petition involved the monarchy in politics or harmed the monarchy in any way. Rather, this helped build a more perfect democracy, which is in line with the desires of both the government and the candidates in this election. At the very least, the fact that they submitted this petition may result in a more orderly and honest election, which is something that all Thai want.

Submitting a petition to the king before anything has happened, although there is a strong possibility that it might happen, is like making a vow in order to have a fair and honest election. This is because the people believe that the king has supernatural powers. And the Thai people love and respect their king more than any miraculous power.

Namelist of Petitioners

42070140 Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai
1 Jun 88 pp 1, 16

[Text] On 31 May, a report from the Government House revealed the names of the 99 academics who submitted a petition to the king asking that Gen Prem Tinsulanon, the prime minister, remain neutral. The list was as follows:

1. Associate Professor MR [royal title] Sukhumphan Boriphath.
2. Amphon Misuk.
3. Assistant Professor MR Wutiloet Thewakun.
4. Dr. Chitriya Tingsaphat.
5. MR Suphonnopphakhun Sakhonbut.
6. Sutham Yunaitham.
7. Dr. Siraphon Thitathan.
8. Associate Professor Bunsak Uwanno.
9. Thianchai Na Nakhon.
10. Watchai Suwanphanit.
11. Thiraphong Khemrukamphon.
12. Associate Professor Thongthong Chantharangsue.
13. Associate Professor Chuanchai Atchanan.
14. Phophan Uiyanon.
15. Associate Professor Tin Pratchayaphrut.
16. Assistant Professor Isara Suwannabon.
17. Associate Professor Seri Wongmontha.
18. Associate Professor Kesini Hongsanan.
19. Associate Professor Praphanphong Wetchachiwa.
20. Chakkrut Khuaphot.
21. Professor Prawet Wasi.
22. Professor Nikhom Chantharawithun.
23. Professor Sathian Phantharangsi.
24. Professor Chai-anan Samutwanit.
25. Mrs Sasiphath Sawetwattana.

26. Professor Yongyut Yutthawong. 27. Associate Professor Sombat Chanthawong. 28. Chamnan Chaowakiti-phong. 29. Mr Chathin Thepphawan. 30. Mr Phansak Winyarat. 31. Associate Professor Choemsak Pinthong. 32. Assistant Professor Thongchai Wongchaisuan. 33. Mrs Samon Tulawanthana. 34. Dr Pathan Suwannamongkhon. 35. Mr Sansoen Worawitsatthan. 36. Mr Praphan Chimwong. 37. Mr Photman Mahanon. 38. Miss Bunsom Khruttha. 39. Mrs Chuthathip Tetchatitanit. 40. Miss Itchaya Nairua. 41. Dr Chakrit Chumwattana. 42. Miss Ratchanirot Kunthamrong. 43. Mr Aphichat Luasakon. 44. Mr Supri Samutrapraphut. 45. Associate Professor Amara Phongsaphit. 46. Associate Professor Uthai Donyaksem. 47. Associate Professor Phiphat Thai-ari. 48. Miss Phuangthong Rungawatdisap. 49. Miss Waruni Osatharom. 50. Miss Thiranat Kanchana-akson. 51. Associate Professor Wilaiwan Wannithikun. 52. Mr Phairop Ruchirophat. 53. Assistant Professor Atsathan Panikabut. 54. Mr Chakkrut Ruamsin. 55. Mr Ekkarin Simhasan. 56. Miss Thanyathip Siphana. 57. Mr Thirawit Laksanaking. 58. Mr Mana Malaphet. 59. Surachat Bamrungsuk. 60. Assistant Professor Chaichok Chulasiriwong. 61. Associate Professor Withaya Sucharit Thanarak. 62. Assistant Professor Phuwadon Songprasoet. 63. Associate Professor Surichai Wankaeo. 64. Associate Professor Namngoen Bunpiem. 65. Assistant Professor Sirirat Ruangwongwan. 66. Associate Professor Praphatong Bunprasoet. 67. Associate Professor Prasit Kapklon. 68. Dr Chaiyawat Thawonthanasan. 69. Mr Suthat Sukonrattanamethi. 70. Ukrot Phaetnoi. 71. Mr Suphalak Kanchanakhundi. 72. Krai-sak Chunahawan. 73. Assistant Professor Worawit Charoenloet. 74. Assistant Professor Chanet W. Khunthong. 75. Mr Phumitham Wetyachai. 76. Assistant Professor Thira Nutpiam. 77. Ukrot Patmanan. 78. Mr Worasak Mahatthanobon. 79. Miss Nongthet Thanawarat. 80. Miss Suliman Narumon. 81. Associate Professor Thanthong Thongsawat. 82. Miss Wimonphan Pitthawatchai. 83. Miss Rungmani Meksophon. 84. Miss Suthatcha Netrayon. 85. Assistant Professor Suchai Trirat. 86. Mr Thiraphon Kasemsuan. 87. Dr Rungphong Chainam. 88. Associate Professor Runruthai Satchaphan. 89. Associate Professor Mataya Ingkhanarot. 90. Associate Professor Prani Sirichanthaphan. 91. Mrs Araphin Chaiyakan. 92. Mr Phichet Phattanachot. 93. Associate Professor Phunsak Wannaphong. 94. Assistant Professor Khruawan Limophichat. 95. Thawisak Phansura. 96. Associate Professor Songphon Itrowuthakun. 97. Dr Wutichai Duangrat. 98. Miss Duangduan Wilaiphong. 99. Thiraphat Serirangsan.

Editorial Disapproves

42070140 Bangkok NAEO NA in Thai 1 Jun 88 p 5

[Editorial: "Putting on Airs"]

[Excerpts] A group of 99 scholars submitted a petition to the king. They were probably well aware of the fact that this would not accomplish anything except to point out

that they do not trust the acting prime minister. Thus, their real purpose was to generate interest by submitting a petition to the king, which was a very audacious act.

We agree with the statement made by Mr Ukrot Mongkhonawin, the Speaker of the House, who said that even though they had the right to submit a petition, they should have considered the propriety of this. Now that these 99 people have submitted a petition, some other group of 999 or 9,999 people may submit a petition. If a matter concerns a particular individual, a letter should be sent to that person directly. The monarchy should not be involved in the matter.

The fact that they submitted this petition has cast a shadow over all 99 of these people. They are being looked at askance. There is only one way to resolve this matter and that is to beg the king's forgiveness and ask that the petition be returned as quickly as possible. Then, they can express their dissatisfaction with the prime minister or play any political role they want.

Editorial: Politicians Guilty of Lese Majeste

42070140 Bangkok MATICHON in Thai
21 May 88 p 8

[Editorial: "Don't Drag the Sky Down"]

[Excerpt] During the past decade and particularly since the events of 14 October 1973 and the bloody events in the heart of the city on 6 October 1976, there have been various political and military demonstrations that lead us to believe that people have audaciously tried to use the monarchy as a tool for their own purposes. At the same time, this has had a devastating effect on their political opponents. Many of these claims and statements have verged on lese majesty. As MR [royal title] Khukrit Pramot has said, this seems to be a stragem used by people to preserve and expand their political and military power.

Even though the attempt to use the monarchy to benefit politically and militarily and put pressure on opponents is indicative of the king's great prestige, this despicable stratagem has also had the effects described by MR Khukrit, who said that "this is a great insult. They have said that the king is not neutral." This is tantamount to putting a stain on the neutrality and grace of the monarchy, which is like the pure rain that falls from the sky.

In civilized society, whenever there is an ideological or political conflict, those involved wage a struggle using reason and rules, which shows that they are gentlemen. Whoever plays outside the system using dirty methods, such as slandering opponents, using force, or audaciously using the monarchy as a tool in order to raise themselves and destroy their opponents, should be exposed and have their mask pulled off in order to reveal their true identity.

Petitioner Cites Reasons

42070140 Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai
8-14 Jun 88 pp 17-20

[Interview with Associate Professor Thongthong Chantharangsu, a law professor at Chulalongkon University, on 3 June 1988; place not specified]

[Excerpts] SU ANAKHOT note: Associate Professor Thongthong Chantharangsu, age 33, is a law professor at Chulalongkon University. He is the associate dean for administrative affairs of the Faculty of Law and the director of the Historical Institute (Chakraphong Building.) He is also a writer and occasionally hosts educational television programs. Associate Professor Thongthong is one of those who signed the petition submitted to the king on 27 May 1988. Initially, he did not intend to explain his reasons for signing the petition, but when the situation began to grow confused and the main reasons for submitting this petition were distorted, he felt that he could no longer remain silent and that he should give his views and the reasons behind his decision in a responsible and systematic manner. This is what led to this special interview with Associate Professor Thongthong Chantharangsu on 3 June 1988.

[Question] Why did you sign this petition?

[Answer] I would like to discuss why we didn't write a letter to the prime minister and why we chose to send a petition to the king.

We have learned from the experiences of others. The present prime minister has been prime minister for a long time. It's only natural that some people are dissatisfied with his administrative policies. This happens in every country where administrators have been in their positions for a long time. It's impossible to get everyone to agree with your policies. But the response from the government—I am using the word government and am referring to the government faction and not just the prime minister—is often one of anger. They may even refuse to consider the views of others. If someone submits an appeal or expresses views that are not in line with those of the government, at best the government may send the director of a division to accept the appeal. But after that, I have no idea what happens to it. If it is sent by mail, I don't know what happens to it. Thus, this was not a viable option for us.

As for sending the appeal to someone else, such as the Speaker of the House, the president of the Supreme Court, such matters are not their responsibility. This concerns the administration. If you ask how this concerns the king, I have to say that the idea of submitting a petition to the king did not originate with us. Based on the documents available, this originated around the year 1257, that is, during the Sukhothai period. If anyone had a grievance, he could go and ring the bell hung in the opening of the palace gate. The drum of decision used during the reign of King Rama III has been preserved.

Some people may respond to this by saying that those were periods of absolute monarchy and that Thailand has been a democracy with the king at the head since 1932. But the power of the king in this respect has not been reduced at all. The relationship between the king and the people remains unchanged. But we understand. We have not shut our eyes and ears. We know that as far as administration is concerned, the king cannot appoint whoever he wants to the position of prime minister. There are political procedures. And we know that the king cannot remove the prime minister. He cannot treat people like a commander treats his subordinates. But what we thought possible, and what was behind our submitting this petition, was that the majesty of the king would make the prime minister stop and think about this.

After we signed the petition, we submitted it through the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary. Unlike meeting a politician, we could not submit it to the king ourselves. By royal tradition, we had to submit it through the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary. After the petition was submitted, it was up to the king to make a decision on what to do. We had fulfilled our duty and had no further role to play. We thought that when the king received the petition, he would probably turn it over to others for consideration. This is what usually happens.

Thus, to get back to your question of why I signed this petition and what I hoped this would accomplish, I did not hope that the prime minister would resign. And this had nothing to do with revising the constitution. I never thought about those things. This accomplished what I had hoped to accomplish. Thus, personally, I am satisfied with the present situation. I did not think that the prime minister would have to explain matters. But he should consider the matter in accord with the democratic system. Everyone should play his own part and carry out his duties. I have done my duty as a citizen in a democratic system. I am satisfied.

[Question] That is, you and the others who signed the petition thought that your role came to an end when you submitted the petition, is that right?

[Answer] Let me give you the facts as I know them. There is nothing complex about this. There was nothing behind this. No one paid us to do this. People are too suspicious today. They think that there must be something behind everything that is done or that a bribe was given. I have a more positive view. I think that there are many people in Thailand who do things in an effort to benefit the country and who don't have to be bribed. This was not done as a favor to anyone. No one is in my debt. I felt that that was my duty. Thailand has given much to me. At a critical time, I had to call out in warning. I had to voice an opinion.

[Question] You thought that that would end the matter for you. But it hasn't. Why not?

[Answer] This is just a guess. The things that I discussed above concerned my views and decisions. But I can only speculate on why this hasn't come to an end. I think that it should have ended. After I signed the petition and it was submitted to the king, that was the end of it as far as I was concerned. I left on personal business for a few days. When I returned, the matter had still not ended.

It hasn't ended because of the reaction. People may have misunderstood what was in the petition. Because there have been many rumors, such as that we asked the prime minister to resign. I think that many people are still confused. And there has been much talk to the effect that we took improper liberties, because the king is not in a position to dismiss the prime minister. We realized that and did not ask anything like that.

As for those who understand this but who disagree with us, I think that it is normal for people to disagree in a democratic system. I did not expect everyone who read the petition to agree with it. People are different, with different emotions and ideas. It does not surprise me that other scholars and senior administrators disagree with what I did. But what upsets me is that just because people disagree, there is no need to attack each other and try to destroy people's reputations.

I consider this to be a matter of manners among educated people. People who have experienced much in life should stop and think. They should know that if you don't agree with someone, you don't attack the person, charge him with some disciplinary violation, or send agents to spy on him. So far, no one has come to spy on me. I am safe and don't have any problems. But the reaction and the reports that have appeared lead us to think that that could happen. That is, some people seem to think that if we disagree, we can't live in the same world. The prime minister has said that he has received the petition. I am sure that he will consider it carefully.

Some people think that this matter will expand into something like the events of 14 October. I don't think that anything like that will happen again. Fifteen years have passed since then. The economic and social systems have changed greatly since then. A younger generation is fulfilling its duties in society. People know how to compromise and how to discuss matters based on the interests of the country without having to take up arms to attack each other. Fifteen years ago, Mr Khamnun (Khamnun Sitthisaman, the editor of SU ANAKHOT) and I were just freshmen and had not played any role. We don't want to repeat history. We don't want to go down the same path. That was not a happy movie. We don't want to show it again.

[Question] As for the problem of how many people actually signed the petition, what do you think about this?

[Answer] In my view, the number of people is not what is important. Whether 98, 99, 10, or 108 people signed is not the important thing. What is important is what was in the petition that was submitted to the king. The petition contained facts, or observations that need to be considered. If I and just one or two friends had submitted this petition, I think that the outcome would have been exactly the same. That is, we submitted it to the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary and this office submitted it to the king, who gave it to the people concerned. That is what I had hoped would happen, and it did. And that is what should have happened in a democratic system. Thus, it doesn't matter how many people signed. What is important is what was in the petition and how seriously it should be taken. If one more signature is needed, one of you sitting here could sign. I don't think that would cause any problems.

You can ask yourself. Would it be worth it to forge the name of Dr Tin (Dr Tin Pratchayaphrut, the vice rector of Chulalongkon University). If we had wanted to forge someone's signature, there were many others who have political influence and whose name would have carried much greater weight. Could it be possible that this was a technical mistake (after insisting that it was a technical mistake—editor).

I would like all people of good judgment to consider whether it would have been worth it to forge the signature of Dr Tin, whom few people know.

[Question] What do you think will happen in the present political situation?

[Answer] I don't think that we are at an impasse. There is still a way out. Actually, it could be the cabinet, these 99 scholars, or the 50 million people. I am sure that everyone is loyal to the monarchy and has the country's best interests at heart. If everyone has good intentions toward the country and has the same goals, why can't we sit down and discuss matters with each other? We share the same nationality and religion. If the basis of our beliefs was different, the details might be different. We might have different methods and policies. But every policy focuses on the independence and security of the nation. And everyone is loyal to the monarchy.

The paths taken may be different, but they all lead to the same place. That is what I believe.

Editorial Backs Petition

42070140 Bangkok *DAILY NEWS in Thai*
7 Jun 88 p 5

[Editorial: "Why Was It Necessary To Submit a Petition?"]

[Excerpt] Actually, the action taken by these people was perfectly legal. The constitution gives people the right to file grievances. But this petition calls for something that

would violate the constitution. The constitution states that the prime minister and cabinet must continue to carry out their duties until a new cabinet takes office.

These people, most of whom are scholars, are probably well aware of the fact that their demand is unconstitutional. Thus, their real intention was probably something quite different, and it was something for which they were willing to sacrifice their reputations as scholars.

It is clear to everyone that the military is openly playing a role in politics. The military has shown its intention of protecting Gen Prem. The prime minister and the military are very loyal to each other and have great respect for each other. Even though they have the right to have such feelings, as prime minister and as a politician by law and in fact, Gen Prem has certain political duties. Soldiers, on the other hand, are regular government officials whose duty is to defend the country. Each has a different set of duties. They should not express their great respect for each other in such a public manner, because this has led people to believe that the military supports Gen Prem for the position of prime minister, which is something that Gen Prem has openly admitted.

Those who submitted this petition are scholars who do not want to see the military meddling in administrative matters, which are matters for civilians. Thus, they were upset with the behavior of the military. There was no other way for them to solve this problem. And so they submitted a petition.

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Chawalit Appoints Charuai To Head Army Reshuffle Committee

42070143b Bangkok MATICHON in Thai 7 Jun 88 p 2

[Text] An army news report stated that the army recently issued Order 429/2531 establishing a committee to consider the appointment and promotion of battalion commanders. The committee will be chaired by Gen Charuai Wongsayan, the army chief of staff. Lt Gen Kasem Sanguanchatsonkrai, the deputy army chief of staff, will serve as deputy chairman. Committee members include the assistant army chiefs of staff for personnel and operations, the commanders of the four army regions and the Special Warfare Command, the chief of the Army Field Forces Department, the commandant of the Institute of Army Academies, the director of the Operations Department, the inspector general, the commander of the Army Infantry Center, the commander of the Artillery Center, and the commandant of the Army Command and General Staff College. The purpose of this is to ensure that the appointment of combat battalion commanders, which is an important position, is carried on in a deliberate and suitable manner.

Maj Gen Narutdon Detchapratyut, the secretary of the army, said that this order was issued because the army feels that battalion commanders are key personnel who are close to the troops. It is essential that those considered for these positions be screened very carefully. This year's military reshuffle should be very fair, because divisional commanders will be asked to come and give their opinions on who is most qualified. This will help develop the army, too.

The report stated that besides this, the minister of defense issued an order adjusting the rank of officers at the level of assistant director attached to Supreme Command Headquarters. These will now be slots for a major general instead of a colonel. What this means is that eight officers will be promoted to major general. These include Col Chun Adiphaet, the assistant comptroller general, Col Suchin Fufung, the assistant adjutant general, Col Atsaron Suaphaithun, the assistant director of joint personnel, [naval] Cpt Sakon Chanthamat, the assistant director of joint intelligence, Col Itthiphon Sangkhwasi, the assistant director of joint operations, [naval] Cpt Somphon Sumanan, the assistant director of joint logistics, [naval] Cpt Chatuphon Thetprathip, the assistant director of joint communications, and Col Suchat Chulacharit, the director of the Office for Development, National Security Command Headquarters.

11943

Army Aviation Center Operations, Capabilities Noted

*42070150b Bangkok SENASAN in Thai
Jun 88 pp 20-24*

[Article by Maj Suchin Thanchai: "The Army Aviation Center"]

[Excerpts] The mission of the Army Aviation Center is to serve as the leader in the science of army aviation and to carry out air operations in support of the ground forces.

The Army Aviation School is responsible for training and education in order to produce officials who can carry out air operations and work on aircraft. For example, there is the army flying training course, the aircraft mechanics course, the flying course that relies on terrain characteristics, and the course in the use of attack helicopters. In particular, the army flying training course forms the foundation for producing army pilots with combat capabilities. Those who take this course must be commissioned officers or male civilians with a bachelor's degree who have completed the 5th year of military science. They must be below the age of 27 and have the necessary qualifications for being a pilot, that is, they must be in good physical and mental health and be prepared to undergo training to become an army pilot.

The mission of the air battalions is to provide air support for the ground units. The air units to which the army has entrusted command include the 1st, 2d, and 3d helicopter wings, the 9th Helicopter Wing (Mixed), and the Light Wing.

One thing that army pilots are very proud of is that in 1980, the Crown Prince asked the Army Aviation Center to train him in the use of attack helicopters. And ever since then, the Army Aviation Center has kept four helicopters for use by the Crown Prince when he carries out his royal duties in various areas in the country. In 1986 the Army Aviation Center provided him with a model-212 general purpose helicopter in place of the model-1 general purpose helicopter that he had been using. On the occasion that the Crown Prince visited royal hospitals in 21 districts in 21 provinces during the period 9 July-14 August 1987, the Army Aviation Center provided officials and aircraft in support. The men performed very well, and on 17 August 1987 the Crown Prince sent a letter thanking the Army Aviation Center and the officials concerned.

Another mission is to provide support when the Princess Mother visits people in remote areas of the country. The center has been doing this ever since 1972. Besides this, ever since 1968, the center has supported the army's combat plan to defeat the communists by organizing air operations teams and providing one army aviation tactical support unit to each army region.

The Doi Tung development project is an army project aimed at developing Doi Tung and neighboring villages. The Army Aviation Center has been providing personnel and aircraft in support of this project since 1 November 1987. They are based in the Chiang Rai Military District. Besides this, the Army Aviation Center has also provided personnel and aircraft in support of the Royal Center for Helping the People in Order To Develop the Northeast, which is popularly known as the Green Northeast Program. Those involved are based at the Suranari Camp in Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

Because technology in the use of air defense weapons is now much more advanced than before, in carrying on tactical operations, army pilots fly at very low levels in order to reach the targets without being detected or fired at by the enemy. The value of flying like this is that the aircraft can reach the target undetected in order to launch a surprise attack on the enemy or in order to transport men and supplies to the rear of the enemy.

To be able to use such tactical aviation methods, besides the fact that the aircraft and pilots must have excellent capabilities, the war materials must be modern and suited to the operation. Thus, the army has procured 70-inch Hydra rockets. The army also has plans to procure helicopters equipped with tow missiles in order to increase the firepower of the army aviation units. The army and the Army Aviation Center have implemented a program to develop the army aviation units so that they

will be capable of fighting on their own using the firepower of the attack helicopters in conjunction with tactical flying techniques. This is the Combat Pilot Project.

As for safety in the use of aircraft, there are several factors that lead to accidents. These include human error, poor materials, and various environmental factors. As for the human factor, the Army Aviation Center has stipulated that flying standards be set in order to ensure that pilots have the necessary knowledge and capabilities at all times. Also, they are given physical examinations twice a year. As for inferior materials that can lead to an accident, the replacement of parts has received logistics and maintenance support from two lines. In the army, the Department of Transportation is the unit responsible, and in the air force, the Joint Helicopter Logistics Unit is responsible. The environmental factors stem from the nature of the terrain and weather conditions.

Besides flying combat support missions in support of ground forces, the Army Aviation Center has implemented a policy to increase the efficiency of its personnel by relying on two forces, religion and sports. As for the religious force, officials and their families are being encouraged to follow the teachings of the Buddha in order to promote harmony within the Phra Sinakharinthara Camp.

In developing people mentally, the Army Aviation Center attaches great importance to the mental health and capabilities of its men. This is why it has implemented such activities and encouraged officials and their families to practice the teachings at Wat Amphawan in Phrom Buri District, Singburi Province, and at Wat Nikhomsamakkhichai in Nikhom Subdistrict, Muang District, Lopburi Province. Meditation masters provide systematic instruction. Meditation masters have also been invited to come providing training at the Army Aviation Center. As a result of this mental development training, officials are more interested in the dharma and in self-development and they have given up various vices. On the weekends, the Army Aviation Center takes officials to see monks. In order to implant the teachings in their heart, a Buddhist shrine has been built for army aviation personnel. Buddhist ceremonies are performed here, and people are taught the Buddhist precepts. In order to instill in them a sense of morality and responsibility, the various sections in the Army Aviation Center are required to chant together from 0830 to 0845 hours before they begin working. This improves their mental outlook and enables them to work together better.

In order to remind officials of the Buddhist sabbath every week, the Army Aviation Center has stipulated that the offices and barracks in the camp must fly the Buddhist flag every Buddhist sabbath. This is to remind people that on the Buddhist sabbath, they should refrain from certain things and do good in order to make merit.

In order to teach morality to the children of the personnel so that they will grow up properly and have the right attitude, the Army Aviation Center has established a Saturday Buddhist school. It accepts children from Grade 6 through Grade 9. There are five classrooms. The school teaches Buddhist studies, focusing on religious ceremonies and the teachings of the Buddha. The school also teaches English and mathematics. This enhances the knowledge of the students and instills moral values in the children of officials stationed at the Army Aviation Center. The school is now teaching its fifth group of students. There is also the Saturday Buddhist Foundation for Youths, which Gen Chawalit Yongchaiyut, the RTA CINC and acting supreme commander, and army aviation personnel established. And they are the ones who provide financial support. The Army Aviation Center has tried to use Buddhist principles as a line in developing its personnel, who form a large community—approximately 10,000 people including personnel and family members. This is in accord with army orders 959/2530 and 57/2531. The army's policy is to develop moral values and improve morale in military units at all echelons.

As a result of the things done above, there is greater harmony among the officials and their families living at the Phra Sinakharinthara Camp. In 1987, the Organizational Committee To Promote Buddhism on Wisakhabucha Day, which is chaired by Gen Prem Tinsulanon, the prime minister, selected Maj Gen Uthai Rattanak, the commander of the Army Aviation Center, as an outstanding man who had benefited Buddhism by promoting community development using Buddhist principles. He was given an award by Princess Sirinthon, which brought great joy to army aviation personnel.

Besides mental development, there has also been economic development. The Army Aviation Center has two cooperatives, which are legally registered. One is the Army Aviation Center Cooperative Store Ltd. This is like a department store. A share in the cooperative costs 100 baht. Today, there are 1,469 members. The store sells consumer goods to members. In 1977 the king gave the Army Aviation Center a rice mill with a capacity of 20-24 kwian [1 kwian equals 2,000 liters] per day. The Army Aviation Center has carried on activities just like the cooperative store. The other cooperative is the Army Aviation Center Savings Cooperative Ltd. This is a financial institution whose purpose is to encourage its members to save money by purchasing share deposits. Today, it has 1,203 members and working capital of approximately 11 million baht.

The army has authorized the Army Aviation Center to implement a chicken rearing project so that officials and their families can make productive use of their free time and earn some extra money. The army has authorized the center to borrow 1.8 million baht to improve the land, build buildings, and procure equipment. The center has raised five flocks of chickens, 20,000 per flock, and good results have been achieved. The army has authorized funds to expand this project.

The Army Aviation Center is based at the Phra Sinakharinthara Camp in Khao Phra Ngam Subdistrict, Muang District, Lopburi Province.

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Profile of Army Vice Chief of Staff Panya
42070144c Bangkok DAILY NEWS in Thai
30 May 88 p 5

["DAILY NEWS Square" column by Nanthana: "Lt Gen Panya Singsakda, a Member of CRMA Class 1 and a Member of the First Class to Complete the Army MA Program"]

[Text] I would like to introduce a lieutenant general who has an MA degree in military science. He was a member of the first class to take this course, and he was elected class leader. He is now the senior assistant army chief of staff.

Lt Gen Panya Singsakda was born on 22 May 1930. He is married to Samoechai Singsakda. They have three sons and three daughters.

He graduated from Chulachomkiao Royal Military Academy [CRMA], Class 1, in 1954. He graduated from the Army Command and General Staff College, Class 43, in 1965, and from the Army War College, Class 24, in 1979. He attended the National Defense College, Class 26, in 1984. In 1986 he received his MA degree in military science as a member of Class 1. He was the class leader. As for training abroad, he took the platoon leaders course and the communications platoon leaders course at Fort Benning, Georgia. He also attended the Army Command and General Staff College in England in 1969.

He was commissioned as an acting second lieutenant and assigned to the Central Division, Infantry Center, in 1954. In 1955 he was appointed deputy commander of a light weapons company with an infantry battalion, Infantry Center. He then served as an instructor in the Education Division at the Infantry School, Infantry Center. Following that, he served as the deputy commander of an independent company with the 21st Regimental Combat Team, a communications officer with the 21st Infantry Regiment and the 1st King's Guard Infantry Regiment, an operations and training officer with the 3d Infantry Battalion, 1st King's Guard Infantry Regiment, and the deputy commander of the 3d Infantry Battalion. In 1966 he was assigned to the Peacekeeping Center, Supreme Command Headquarters. In 1970 he was appointed operations chief with the Volunteer Division. In 1971 he served as the deputy commander of a support regiment with the 9th Infantry Division. The next year he was appointed deputy chief of staff of the 9th Infantry Division. Following that, he was appointed an instructor and chairman of the Special Subjects Division, Army War College, Institute of Army Academies. In 1975 he served as an aide to the minister of

defense and was also assigned to Army Headquarters. In 1976 he served as logistics chief with the 4th Army Region. That same year, he was transferred and appointed chief of staff of the 5th Infantry Division. In 1980 he was appointed deputy commander of the Infantry Center. In 1981 he made commander of the 5th Infantry Division. Two years later, he was appointed deputy commander of the 4th Army Region. In 1985 he was appointed deputy commandant of the Institute of Army Academies. In 1986 he was promoted to lieutenant general and appointed assistant army chief of staff for operations.

If the position of deputy army chief of staff becomes vacant, he has an excellent chance of being appointed to this position, because he is the senior assistant army chief of staff.

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Satahip Navy Base Commander Profiled
42070144a Bangkok DAILY NEWS in Thai
13 Jun 88 p 5

["DAILY NEWS Square" column by Nanthana: "Rear Admiral Kowit Wattanatham, the deputy commander of the Satahip Naval Base"]

[Text] The naval officer in whom the navy has such great confidence that he has twice been elected president of the Navy Club is Rear Admiral Kowit Wattanatham. He serves as the deputy commander of the Satahip naval base, the navy's most important base.

Rear Admiral Kowit Wattanatham was born on 12 September 1932 at Ban Mo Tayae. His house was behind Wat Thepthidaram near what is now the Bangkok Metropolitan administrative headquarters. He is the son of Mr Uthit, who is from Paet Riu, Wat Sothon, and Mrs Chet, who is from Ban Bang Kacha, Tha Mai District, Chanthaburi Province. He is married to Chinda, the daughter of Mr Plaek and Mrs Somlim Chaloyu. His wife is a native of Tha Chang District, Suphanburi Province. She was born on 10 January 1934. They have three children. The eldest, Mr Wiaya Wattanatham, age 30, graduated with a degree in law from Ramkhamhaeng University. He works at the main headquarters of the Thai Military Bank, Ltd. The second is Miss Thipsuda Wattanatham, age 29, who graduated from a secretarial school. She works as a stewardess for Gulf Air Airlines based in Bahrain. The youngest is naval Lt Kraiwut Wattanatham, who graduated from the Naval Academy. He is on active duty in the navy.

He and his wife met on a bus as the bus was driving by Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy [CRMA] near the Ratchadamnoen boxing stadium. She was on her way to the Ministry of Education. After that, they continued to see each other and were married on 12 August 1955. They have now been married for more than 30 years. They have one granddaughter, Thipchat Wattanatham,

age 6, the daughter of Lt Kraiwut and Thipwadi Phamonbut, who works at the Thai Military Bank, which is where Lt Kraiwut's elder brother works. They are expecting another child.

Rear Admiral Kowit graduated from the Naval Academy in 1954. He has held the following important positions: commander of two naval ships (4 years), director of the communications school, Navy Communications Department (2 years), deputy naval attache in Washington (3 years), commander of "R" 1 (3 years), deputy chief of the Naval Welfare Department (4 years), commander of Mekong River Operations Unit (2 years), assistant director of the Naval Personnel Department (1 year), deputy director of the Naval Personnel Department (1 year), and chief of staff of the Satahip Naval Base. In October 1987, he was appointed deputy commander of the Satahip Naval Base. His salary had remained fixed at 15,500 baht per month since 1981. Recently it was increased to approximately 16,000 baht after he graduated from the National Defence College as a member of Class 29.

He likes to grow flowers and watch the news on television. He gets up at sunrise every day. He drinks in moderation and plays golf moderately well. Even though his military career has not been brilliant, it has not been bad either. He will retire in 4 more years, that is, in September 1992. But nothing is certain, right? He is an able man just like his brother-in-law, Admiral Sangat Chaloyu.

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Squadron Commander for F16s Introduced
42070144b Bangkok DAILY NEWS in Thai
13 Jun 88 p 5

["DAILY NEWS Square" column by Nanthana: "The First F16 Squadron Commander Is a Member of Class 18"]

[Text] I would like to introduce a young air force officer who, together with his men, will be the first to fly the F16 aircraft, which are scheduled to arrive here this June.

Wing Commander Itthaphon Suphawong was born on 6 January 1952. He is now 36 years old. He is the son of Group Cpt Chamrat and Wing Commander Phaonthong Suphawong. He is married to Naphaphon Sathitphithayut. They have two sons ages 8 and 6.

Education: Saint Gabriel School; Military Preparatory School, Class 11; Air Force Academy, Class 18; Squadron Officers School, Class 51 (class leader); and Air Command and Staff College, Class 31 (class leader). Other members of Class 31 were Wing Commander Prichai Hanchenlak and Squadron Leader Wirayut Dit-sayasin.

Military career in brief: Ever since graduating from the Kamphaeng Saen Flying Training School, he has served as an F5 pilot with the 1st Wing in Korat. He is now the leader of the 103d Squadron, the squadron that will fly the new F16 aircraft. Thus, he will be the first leader of the F16 squadron. I would like to applaud this air force officer and his men, who are ready to defend the nation's sovereignty.

11943

Factors in Southern Unrest Discussed
42070139b Bangkok SU ANAKHOT in Thai
11-17 May 88 pp 20, 21

[Excerpt]

There Is Still Unrest Resulting From the "Sailun" Affair

Those who have followed events in the south since the Hiyap affair and read the news reports in SU ANAKHOT have probably heard the name "Sailun." Sailun was a Thai Muslim who played an important role in helping to solve the problems peacefully. Most recently, this prominence resulted in his death.

Sailun was a young Thai intellectual who once played a role at Ramkhamhaeng following the events of 14 October 1973. He attended school both in the Middle East and Malaysia. He was highly respected by young Thai Muslims. He once joined the separatists movement. But after joining the movement, he concluded that the line espoused by the bandit terrorists would make it difficult to hit the target. In particular, he opposed the use of weapons and violence. He felt that making compromises to solve the problems peacefully would lead to a solution and the fulfillment of the basic needs of the Thai Muslims in the southern border provinces. After splitting away from the Bandit terrorists, Sailun established relations with state officials, particularly military officials. He chose to associate with good officials. He provided data to fairminded officials and helped them solve religious and other problems in order to help promote understanding between government officials and Thai Muslims and solve the problems.

An important objective of Sailun as revealed by close associates was to improve the standard of living of the Thai Muslims without splitting away from Thailand.

In the Hiyap affair at the Yala Teachers College, in which a request was made to dress according to the religious customs of female Muslims, Sailun helped resolve the matter. The problem, which was growing worse, was resolved temporarily. He hoped that a permanent solution could be found.

It was the role played by Sailun in this affair that displeased the bandit terrorists who espouse the line of armed struggle and violence. They felt that Sailun and

the line espoused by Sailun posed a danger to their line. Thus, they began taking steps to destroy his position and end his role. But it was not their nature to oppose him openly. Instead, they used another group of government officials who did not have relations with him. They did this by feeding these officials false information. The actions taken by these bandit terrorists led to the death of Sailun.

They also attempted to attack police officials, using the attack on the construction of an OARD [Office of Accelerated Rural Development] bridge in Ruso District as an excuse in order to increase the tension. There were reports that policemen were involved in the death of Sailun. If senior police officials in the locality are killed or attacked, that would be in line with reports concerning a conflict between Sailun and police officials. And it could be claimed that such actions are in retaliation by supporters of Sailun even though Sailun had washed his hands of the bandit terrorists. This would heighten the tension and lead to greater violence, which would benefit the bandit terrorists, who espouse an armed struggle and the use of violence and whose basic desire is to have a separate state.

From This, the Situation Has Not Been Resolved

To all appearances, it seems that the situation following the demonstrations at the Yala Teachers College and at Misayit in the middle of the province has calmed down. But in reality, a ground swell is building. As an expert on this said, it will be difficult to end this. This is the Ramadan period, the holy month of Muslims. After this period, the situation will grow worse again. The first problem stems from the Hiyap affair, which was disposed of only temporarily. The new term has started, but the problem has still not been solved. The conflict is still simmering. Another problem is that the killing of Sailun has lit a fuse that may lead to an explosion and link this to the first problem.

The Sailun problem reflects what has happened in the movement to solve the problems in the southern border provinces, particularly the problems concerning "separatism."

1. A conflict has arisen between military and police officials with respect to the use of local "agents" in order to get at the problems and solve them. This is the main point. As for state officials, there are more details concerning conflicts at different levels. For example, there are conflicts on how to solve the problems between the Ministry of Interior and the military, between various military units, and between government officials and local leaders.

2. A conflict has arisen between the people and officials because of the fact that a person who helped officials solve the problems was killed. Regardless of who actually did this, this has greatly alarmed the people.

3. Religious problems will be cited, because the Hiyap affair, which Sailun helped resolve, is not a political problem. It is a religious problem.

4. An attempt is being made to show people that the peace line as espoused by certain people, which is characterized by compromise, will lead to "death," with Sailun being an example. This is an attempt to destroy the peace line, and it has had an effort on the surrender of bandit terrorists, which has had problems since the very beginning.

Bandit Terrorists Make Adjustments, Launch Political-Military Offensive

The latest intelligence report from the south to reach SU ANAKHOT is very interesting. It stated that:

1. The BRN has restructured itself and formed new forces. It has revised its struggle line and is now placing more emphasis on political activities.

2. PULO has restructured itself, too. It has restructured its organization and reorganized its forces. Tunku Bira Na Wangkhram was dismissed from his position as president and replaced by Arong Muleng. Tunku Bira was appointed head of the foreign affairs section. Haji Sama-eh Tanam was appointed commander of the armed forces. Besides this, the most recent resolution issued by PULO states that its armed forces are to return from Malaysia and carry on operations in Thailand. These forces are already on the move.

3. PULO, the BRN, and the BNPP have established more front organizations, including the Mujahadin. The purpose of this is to change the form of the struggle from simply an armed struggle to a multifaceted struggle, with the emphasis on religion and politics.

The changes in the line and organization are different from those made in the past, when only violence was used and political activities were spurned. As a result of this, it is thought that there will be greater coordination of political, religious, and military matters and that things will become more serious. What this means is that the situation following this year's Ramadan period cannot be ignored. Is Lt Gen Wisit Atkhumwong, the commander of the 4th Military Region, prepared for this?

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PULO Leader Said U.S. University Graduate *42070143a Bangkok MATICHON in Thai* *12 Jun 88 pp 1, 2*

[Excerpts] On 11 June, Col Banchon Chawalasin, the spokesman for the 4th Army Region, issued a statement on the violence perpetrated by bandit terrorists in Narathiwat Province. Most recently, a PULO group, which has definitely been identified as the "Bahari Khokni-bong" group, ambushed police officials and Regional

Security Volunteers who were guarding the construction of a dam at Ban Yalu Tong in Bacho District, Narathiwat Province. Eight officials were killed in the attack, which took place on the morning of 10 June. At noon that day, as soon as it received a report on this, the 4th Army Region immediately ordered Civil-Police-Military Unit 43 to send forces to protect those building the dam at Ban Yalu Tong. It also sent forces to suppress this PULO group. It was thought that this group was still in this area.

As for why these bandit terrorists have carried out such acts of violence, Col Banchon said that one interesting point is that PULO appointed a new leader at the beginning of the year. This new leader, Mr Arong Muleng, has a Ph.D. His nickname is "Arong America." He earned his bachelor's degree from India and his master's and Ph.D degrees from the United States. He is now 46 years old. He is from Pattani Province and earned his certificate in education from a teachers college in a southern border province.

"Mr Arong was elected head of PULO in February 1988 in place of Tunku Bira Kotanila. It is thought that they changed leaders in order to increase efficiency. After Mr Arong was appointed head of PULO, he stepped up the violence," said Col Banchon.

11943

Poll Takers Find Enlisted Men Face Official Vote Pressures

42070146e Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai
29 May 88 pp 1, 2

[Excerpt] On 28 May, THAI RAT began conducting a poll to sound out people's views on the coming general election. Sixty students from Chulalongkon and Thammasat universities interviewed people in Bangkok Metropolitan. The people of Bangkok cooperated well in responding to the questions. The interviewers encountered problems only in military constituencies.

At the light weapons unit of the Cavalry Division on Sam Sen Road in the Dusit zone, which is election constituency No 1, the students began interviewing the soldiers who were on duty at the gate. But a non-commissioned officer arrived and stopped them. He told them that before they can interview soldiers, they must first obtain the permission of the commanding officer. However, the students learned that few of the soldiers knew that there was going to be a general election. And some of those who did know that there was going to be an election did not know the date of the election.

When asked their views on the political parties, these low-ranking soldiers said that they liked and trusted some parties but would not be able to vote for these parties because they have to follow the lead of their superiors.

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Buntheng Thongsawat Comments on Prem, Army
42070149 Bangkok SIAM RAT SAPDA WICHAN in
Thai 5-11 Jun 88 pp 22-24

[Interview with Buntheng Thongsawat, a member of the Ruam Thai Party, on 26 May 1988; place not specified]

[Text] [Question] Why did you join the Ruam Thai Party?

[Answer] I left the United Democracy Party because my views differed from some of those still in that party. I won't mention the names of some of them. I disagreed with Mr Phon and Mr Tamchai (Khamphato). They did not play by the rules of politics. At a time when we were an opposition party, they formed a subgroup within the party and began supporting the administration. That is one reason why I could no longer engage in politics with them. They don't know how to play politics in accord with the system. If we are a government party, we have to support the government. If we are in the opposition, we have to do our duty. But they were acting more like a pro-government party than an opposition party. That upset me. I couldn't get along with them and so I decided that it would be better if I left. I did not try to seize control of the party or do anything. I simply resigned from the party. Those who agreed with me left, too. Those who disagreed stayed. Nothing else happened. Politics cannot proceed smoothly if people don't play by the rules or in accord with the system. That's why I left.

[Question] Your views were not in harmony.

[Answer] That's right. They were not in harmony. There were two times when we were going to hold a no-confidence debate on the cabinet. But they said not to, because the prime minister is a good man. They said to hold the debate on someone else. The opposition's duty is to do this and get to the bottom of matters. We can't just sit by idly and ignore things. We have to take such action. We were not a member of the administration. If you are a member of the opposition, you have to carry out the duties of an opposition party. Similarly, the pro-government parties have to carry out their duties as pro-government parties. Because they didn't want to carry out their duties, I couldn't stay. This is an important issue.

[Question] Before you joined the Ruam Thai Party, were you in contact with this party for very long?

[Answer] Actually, I was in contact with them. When parliament was dissolved, I contacted them. I had intended to establish my own political party. But I wasn't sure that I could do this in time. I knew I couldn't register the party in time. It would have taken about 6 months to register the party. I wanted to find a "party label" [hua phak] by transferring a party label. The first time I tried this, they had already sold the label to

someone else. I contacted one party, but they had already sold the party label to someone else. I contacted all the parties that I knew were not going to field candidates or that were going to join some other party. I asked them, but nothing came of it. I heard about Gen Kriangsak and so I went to ask him. He said that his party was still intact. I asked Mr Prasoet (Sapsunthon), and he agreed to give me his party label. But he asked that two of his men be placed on the party executive committee. That was one condition. We bargained with him and told him that we wanted to appoint the executive committee and formulate the policies ourselves. We were about to conclude the negotiations when Mr Prasoet made a statement at a meeting of the Revolutionary Council. He said that he had turned over the party but that it would follow his policies and carry on his political agenda. We did not agree with the things that he said to the Revolutionary Council. My colleagues said that they wanted nothing more to do with him. Since we didn't have a party label, we joined the Ruam Thai Party. We had already decided on which party to join if we couldn't find a party label. I had already talked to Mr Narong. Mr Narong did not raise any objections. We had already talked about this.

[Question] On what conditions did you and Mr Narong (Wongwan) agree?

[Answer] We are on friendly terms. We didn't really set any conditions. We discussed things in terms of our proportions. We did not set any conditions. We did not set conditions on who is to be this or that. There was no need to talk about such matters. We just had a normal conversation.

[Question] Will you be given the position of chief party advisor?

[Answer] I have not demanded any position. But he talked with the officials who contacted him, and the initial steps have been taken. I probably will be appointed to that position. But I don't think this will happen just now. We have to get past the election first. We have discussed the major problems and issues. We have talked about these prior to the election. We don't know what the results of the election will be. We will have to see what happens. It is my understanding that I will be appointed chief party advisor. I know what my duties will be after the government is formed. But I did not set any conditions. I did not say that things must be like this or that.

[Question] How many party members went with you?

[Answer] About 20. Before we joined this party, we studied the party's platform carefully. We looked at everything carefully. Thus, everything should be fine. I do not have any conflicts with Mr Narong. We understand each other very well.

[Question] Did you agree to remain in the Ruam Thai Party?

[Answer] Yes. We will stay in the party.

[Question] Is there any chance of building the Ruam Thai Party into a major party?

[Answer] Yes. We will all cooperate in building the party. We will look for legitimate ways of turning this party into a major party. We will seek new members and look for ways to build the party's reputation.

[Question] How many seats does the party expect to win in the north?

[Answer] We are very confident. Because for the political party that I founded and the Democrat and Social Action parties, the north is a base. Both the Democrat and Social Action parties are strong in the north. This is a strong base. That is, our base is in the north. Thus, we expect to do very well in the north this time. And this should provide a foundation for building the party in the future.

[Question] It is said that the Ruam Thai Party will be an important variable in forming the new government. People are wondering which parties support Gen Prem for another term as prime minister. Will the Ruam Thai Party support Gen Prem?

[Answer] No, it won't. The Ruam Thai Party can't do that. That is not in accord with democratic principles. You can't anticipate which person will become prime minister. In a democratic system, it depends on which party wins the majority of seats. The leader of the winning party should be prime minister. That is a common principle. It's improper to anticipate that Prem or someone else will be appointed prime minister. If we win a majority of the seats, we will appoint the prime minister. That is the principle. It's improper to support someone who does not belong to a political party.

[Question] But it is almost a certainty that the new government will be a coalition government.

[Answer] Yes, it will be a coalition government. But the largest party can appoint the prime minister. There are four or five large parties. The party with the largest number of MPs can appoint the prime minister. If that party doesn't do so, the one with the next largest number of MPs can appoint the prime minister. And so on until no one can appoint the prime minister. But we don't have any problem. If we win a majority of the seats, we will definitely take the position of prime minister. If we come in second and the party that comes in first doesn't take this position, we will. We can do that, because I have been through that before. The Social Action Party had only 18 seats but still formed a government. I handled things. Thus, this is not a problem.

[Question] There is concern that politicians don't dare risk taking this position.

[Answer] I don't think that's true. These are capable people. The party leaders are capable of serving as prime minister. Serving as prime minister is not that difficult. People misunderstand. People think that you have to be a general. You can do whatever you can. I am a general. You can't become prime minister because of your fear that there will be a coup. If the people are satisfied, they should speak up. If the people want a field marshal, fine. But we should carry out our duties. What is there to be afraid of? It's not that difficult to serve as prime minister. Anyone can serve as prime minister. I certainly can. It's not that difficult. There is something that is very strange. I once served as the deputy minister of interior. Mr Khuang Aphaiwong was the prime minister. When he formed the government, Mr Khuang said that I was still very young. He said that I had the ability to serve as minister of interior but that the people would not accept this. "You have to have seniority before the Thai people will accept you. You have to be a general before they will accept you. Let's make you deputy minister of interior instead." I said that if that was what society wanted, fine. I didn't have to be minister. At that time, I was still very young. I was willing to serve as deputy minister of interior. But I don't think that people think like that any longer. People's thinking has changed. In the past, you had to be of a certain rank. If you weren't, no one respected you. If you were of a certain rank, people respected you. If you weren't, they didn't respect you. There are still vestiges of this today. You have to be a general. What is so special about being a general? There are many retired generals. It's the same. If you hold a position, you do your duty. I think that we are better qualified than generals. I think that I, who have been involved in politics for a long time, can do a better job for the country than some retired general. But society has changed somewhat. Society accords us some respect. If society will accept us, we can serve as prime minister. There is nothing difficult about that.

[Question] But if a civilian becomes prime minister, some incident might occur.

[Answer] Let it happen. We are not afraid. If something is going to happen, then it will happen. There is nothing we can do about it. But it would be difficult for today's soldiers to stage a coup. The military is split into several factions. The soldiers do not serve some warlord. In the past, Thailand's military was like that of China. They did not serve the nation. They served a particular general, such as Gen Hu Paehu and Gen Chiang Kaishek. The soldiers served their general. But today, our soldiers are smarter. They know that they serve the nation and not a particular general. Thus, I don't think that they will stage a coup. Also, it is not easy to stage a coup. The people are smarter, too. They won't allow the military to do this.

[Question] Do you mean that the military is not unified?

[Answer] They can't be. Soldiers must serve the nation. They can't become involved in politics and seek profits. Other soldiers won't permit this. Changes have occurred. And the military must look at the people. If the people approve, the military can do anything it wants. But if the people don't approve, it would be very difficult for the military to do that.

[Question] Do you think that there is any chance of someone staging a coup before the election?

[Answer] No. There is just some talk. No one is going to stage a coup.

[Question] The RTA CINC has said that such talk is aimed at protecting politicians and reputations.

[Answer] That is what is usually said. Normally, they don't say that they are going to stage a coup. There are people who say that the military can't do anything. But if the people give their approval, they can. But this is a common way of talking. They don't really intend to stage a coup. Take what he said, for example. I don't really think that he intends to stage a coup. As for solving the various problems, such as the election problem, I agree with him. But when is something going to be done, and what is going to be done? The constitution should be revised. The constitution is a law. It stipulated how the election is to be carried out. That's too much. We are required to field too many candidates. We have to draft candy peddlers and gas station attendants to run for MP. Why do parties have to field 200 candidates? It's because people want to reduce the number of political parties. But this is unnatural. We must let things run their course. The small parties will eventually disappear. But the constitution, Political Party Law, and Election Law all stipulate that. They are all in accord with each other. This has made things difficult. It's difficult to establish a political party or resign from a party. Take the Democrat Party, for example. It won 100 seats. Later, about 30 left, but they could not form a new political party. The law prevented them. The law says that if you resign from a party, you have to give up your seat in parliament. What kind of a law is that! That shouldn't be the law. Those three laws must be changed. The constitution and the political party and election laws must be changed. If these laws had not been in effect, the 10 January Group would have formed a new party. But the law prevented them from doing that. I don't think that this is right. The prime minister dissolved parliament. Was that correct? I know that the constitution gives him that right and that he has the power to do this in a democratic system. But there must be a reason for this. But as things stand, the prime minister can dissolve parliament whenever he wants. Whether he is right or wrong, he can dissolve parliament at any time. Parliamentary elections tend to lose their meaning, because the prime minister can dissolve parliament at any time. This is a problem. Someone might serve as prime minister for a day and

then dissolve parliament. But he would continue to serve as acting prime minister for another 3 months. I think that this is terrible. This is what our democratic system is like. I am opposed to this. Another point is that given the present constitution and political party and election laws, parties have to spend huge sums of money to buy votes. Financiers invest large sums in buying votes. They buy people and votes and later earn a handsome return on their investment. They ask for positions in the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Industry, or the Ministry of Commerce. Their followers want to be minister. Everyone wants a position in a ministry with money. They don't want to serve in the Ministry of Justice, which doesn't have any money. This damages the democratic system. This election and the next election will produce the same type of MPs as in the past. Thus, nothing will change. Another election won't produce any changes. The new parliament that will convene in 3 months will be just like the old one. This will not benefit anything, because we haven't revised those three laws. People continue to try and pull strings. Everything depends on money. The villagers don't know. Candidates everywhere are spending money. Financiers are paying money to candidates. Once candidates are elected, they think about ways to make a profit. After the election, they fight for ministerial portfolios in order to make money. Nothing will improve. This is something worth thinking about.

[Question] There are rumors that money is pouring in from abroad.

[Answer] I don't know anything about that. That would be quite easy to do. But I don't think you could buy an entire country. From what I have heard, this money comes from foreign companies that want to win bids in Thailand. They pay bribes to help them get contracts. That is what I have heard. But I don't know if this is true. The ISOC [Internal Security Operations Command] has the tools. If the RTA CINC says this, then this may be true. But the RTA CINC should be asked to provide evidence. It's good that he warned us. He may have a source of information. But so far, nothing has been proven. We have to listen, because this could happen. For example, the communists don't need to stir up trouble. They can buy people instead. I am not criticizing anyone. I have been an MP for 50 years. I know. Bribes are paid to MPs. People who want to become MP use money to buy votes. With 5 billion, you can change the system. There is no need to carry out a revolution in Thailand. All you need is 5 billion. The villagers accept money. It's true that some villagers are honest. Not everyone takes the money. But there are many bad villagers. We can't boast about being honest. We have to tell the truth. As for people changing the country, I don't know. Let them do what they can. But it can't be denied that votes are purchased. There are some MPs who haven't purchased votes. But they are very few in number.

[Question] It's said that this is done through the business system.

[Answer] The business system is one of buying and selling. (laughs) They are trying to portray things like that. That's true. They don't know what is happening. It's a business system from the standpoint of buying and selling. It's not like that.

[Question] You talked about revising the constitution. Which sections need to be changed?

[Answer] There are many things that need to be changed. In my opinion, dissolving parliament is too easy. And there are many other things, such as the use of money and the establishment of political parties. All of these things are tied to these three laws. All three need to be changed.

[Question] This is the responsibility of the legislature. Why haven't the MPs taken action on this?

[Answer] Unless they are part of the administration, it's difficult for MPs to take action. It depends on the Senate. There must be joint meetings to revise the constitution. It has to be the administration and the Senate. I don't understand those who drafted the present constitution. They were clever people. They were not stupid. But I don't understand what they were thinking about when they drafted this constitution.

[Question] Perhaps the administration has not taken action on this because the present law serves the interests of the state apparatus.

[Answer] I don't think that those who drafted this law were thinking about that. They were probably thinking about restricting the political parties. They were thinking about how to prevent people from forming a political party, about how to keep people from having other ideas, and about how to have only these ideals. If you have better ideals, I won't allow it because you may do something. The attempt by those who drafted the constitution to restrict the political parties has had negative consequences. They were afraid that people would establish parties. Small parties cause trouble. That may be true, but so what? It doesn't matter. They will eventually disappear by themselves. That's nature. But they went against nature.

[Question] There are some who think that various parties might join together like UMNO [United Malays National Organization].

[Answer] That's fine. The leaders of the various parties understand what the form of politics should be. It's like joining together to form the opposition. This is very efficient. The opposition is very strong and has done a good job. They can join together. It shouldn't be necessary to be a large party. Small parties can join together.

[Question] Why haven't parties been able to join together?

[Answer] Uniting in the form of having similar ideas after parliament is dissolved presents a problem. They would have to disband their parties. Take the parties of Mr Uthai, Mr Bunchu, and Mr Narong, for example. To unite, they would have to disband their own parties. We can't unite like this. We have to join together after the election and be allies like UMNO. If we don't join together like UMNO, it will be like in Japan. Thus, based on the UMNO model, there is no need to merge if the small parties work together.

[Question] There has long been talk about the Ruam Thai and Community Action Party merging. Why haven't they?

[Answer] The problem is that if they merge, Mr Narong and Mr Bunchu must each disband his own party and use the party label of one of the parties. The matter of disbanding parties has proven to be very troublesome. No one wants to disband his party.

[Question] There are rumors that there might not be an election.

[Answer] I don't know what they would do.

[Question] That is, parliament was dissolved in order to throw away the old constitution and draft a new one stipulating a one man-one vote system.

[Answer] That's fine as long as they do things in accord with the law. But can they do that? Is that a violation of the constitution? What can they do to avoid violating the constitution? I support this, because I think that the constitution and the political party and election laws need to be changed. But I can't think of how to do this.

[Question] Academics have suggested that the prime minister resign and return power to the king.

[Answer] If that can be done, that's fine.

[Question] Would that be a violation of the law?

[Answer] That's the question. That's something for legal experts to consider. I don't have enough knowledge about this to answer your question. My feeling is that that can't be done. If it is possible, I think that's fine. But the prime minister is not going to resign.

[Question] What do you think the next administration will be like?

[Answer] I think that it will be the same as before. No single party will win enough seats to form a government by itself. People will buy votes. Parties will buy 40 or 50 seats. People will vote for those who give them money. In the end, no one will win a majority, and they will fight to see who gets to form the government. And eventually, parliament will be dissolved again.

[Question] What do you think of Gen Prem?

[Answer] He is fortunate. He doesn't have to do anything. Everything is done for him. He didn't even have to form a government. The military had already done that for him. Gen Prem doesn't have to do anything. (laughs) Clearly, no previous administration has been as lucky as that of Gen Prem. Gen Prem has Under Secretary Phisan to handle things. Gen Prem is a very lucky person. Under Secretary Phisan does everything.

[Question] If Gen Prem is appointed prime minister again, how long will he last?

[Answer] I don't think he will be reappointed.

[Question] Why?

[Answer] Because the political parties that support him will not be able to form a government. There is no way that they can win a majority. It's the newly formed parties and some of the older opposition parties that will hold the majority of the seats. The people are beginning to understand. Even though they will try to buy votes, there is no way that Gen Prem will gain a majority. He has few supporters. Those who support him have no chance of winning a majority of the seats.

[Question] What about the Thai Nation Party?

[Answer] The Thai Nation Party has no chance of winning a majority of the seats, because it supports Prem and people don't want Prem. It's true that the Thai Nation Party has a lot of money. It was once very poor, but after it joined the government, its situation improved. Mr Banhan has said this. But the Thai Nation Party is not thriving. Other parties are attacking it. There is no chance of that.

[Question] Whom do you think should become prime minister?

[Answer] The party leader whose party wins the most seats. Perhaps Mr Samak will win 30 seats, Mr Chaloen will win 20, Mr Uthai will get 20, and the Ruam Thai will win 60-80. Perhaps Mr Bunchu's party will win a number of seats. But in any case, the leader of the party that wins the most seats should be appointed prime minister.

[Question] What about MR [royal title] Khukrit Pramot?

[Answer] I don't think that either Khukrit or Prem has any chance. Anyone can become prime minister. There is nothing difficult about that.

[Question] Are you ready to serve as prime minister?

[Answer] Yes. Being prime minister is easy, especially if you do things like Prem. He doesn't have to do anything. (laughs)

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Minister Supachai on Economic Expansion, Policy, Stock Market

42070143c Bangkok BAN MUANG in Thai
23 May 88 pp 21, 23, 25

[Interview with Dr Supachai Phanitchaphak; date and place not specified]

[Excerpt] [Question] What economic policies do you think the new administration should implement in order to develop the country's economy? And what will Thailand's economic situation be like in the future?

[Answer] Initially, many people thought that the crash on world stock markets would have a negative impact on business in Thailand. But this actually had very little effect on us, and the effects were of very short duration.

The growth of the Thai economy during the past 2-3 years has been based on a secure foundation. Part of this growth is based on foreign markets dominated by Thai goods. And part is based on the structure of domestic production, which is shifting from a system dependent on agriculture to an agro-industrial system. Thus, we don't have to worry about declines on foreign markets or a reduction in the growth rate in the United States or Europe causing problems here, because our base, which is developing, will help us. We must cling to this base. That is, we must allow the country to grow, because exports are good. This expansion is not the result of purchases here. We must grow through exports. Exports will earn us money with which to pay our old debts. And we can use this money to invest in the future.

We have changed more than 80 percent of our domestic production structure. But today, agricultural products account for only 49 percent of exports. The other 51 percent are non-agricultural goods, and that figure is increasing. This has implications for the security of our base. Last year, the agricultural sector grew only 1-2 percent or perhaps less than that. That is no reason for alarm. But what should concern us is how we are going to find jobs for those who have left the agricultural sector. But we no longer have to rely solely on the agricultural sector. That is the first image of the economy.

Second, we must take steps to ensure that economic expansion is not a temporary thing. In the past, every time that there has been growth, we have not been careful. We have rushed to spend the money. And so we have fallen into recession. Because whenever we spend huge amounts of money, this causes inflation. Thus, I would like to stress that we are now expanding on a proper basis. That is, we have a foreign base. We have made production changes and have a more secure base.

An important point is that we are shifting from growth based on loans and budget and trade deficits to growth based on having fiscal restraint and higher reserves.

Thus today, we are trying to prevent the state enterprises from borrowing large sums of money as in the past. The state enterprises are responsible for about half of the country's \$12 billion foreign debt. Think about that! The 50-60 state enterprises have borrowed at least \$6 billion.

Thus, we are trying to expand without relying on others. From now on, we must grow by accumulating reserves. Today our national reserves stand at approximately \$5.7 billion, the highest ever. When the baht was devalued in 1980-1981, our reserves stood at less than \$2 billion. Thus, this is growth with a proper base.

As for managing the foreign debt, we are now refinancing the debt by changing the loan structure. For example, the Government Housing Bank used to take huge yen loans. But today, all of its loans are in baht. In the future, we will not face this risk. And in the future, growth will proceed simultaneously with the growth of the domestic money markets. If there are insufficient domestic savings, we don't need to expand. Because if we rely on others, our growth will be sporadic. We will end up like other countries, which are deeply in debt and cannot possibly repay these foreign debts.

As for fiscal and monetary restraint, last year and this year are the first two years that the budget deficit was actually less than that stipulated in the budget. For example, last year, the deficit was set at 40 billion baht, but the actual deficit was approximately 20 billion baht. Last year was the first time that government receipts exceeded the target, and it looks like this will be the case again this year.

What we must do is to continue practicing fiscal restraint. That means that if we have a lot of money, we should not spend all the money. Instead, we should use the money to pay off the old debts so that we can have a new future from mobilizing new savings. Part of the money can be used to repay the old debts, and part can be used to invest in needed projects such as ports and industrial parks in the provinces. We want people to move out of the agricultural sector. We have to create other jobs. We have set up a fund of approximately 1.5 billion baht to develop the economy. It is clear that if we have a sum of money, such as this 1.5 billion baht, and spend about 300 million to promote tourism, this will earn us very good revenues. We have been doing this since 1986. That was the first time that the Tourism Authority of Thailand received such a huge sum of money. Thus, now that our situation has improved, we must repay our old debts. We must not become dependent on others again. We have prepared a debt repayment plan for the period 1990-1992 and beyond.

A third image of the country's structure is that today, there is much talk about our becoming a newly industrialized country. With respect to our economic image, I don't think that we should view Thailand like countries such as Korea or Japan. It will be best if we can rely on ourselves. In the past, we relied on foreign markets. We

have to realize that foreign markets can change very quickly. The United States may someday withdraw the GSP. Or Europe may decide to cut our quotas. Thus, we should not tie our structure to the outside.

At a time when we are expanding rapidly and relying more on ourselves, we should not rush to become a fully industrialized country, because we would have to rely on foreign markets totally. We have to take a look at our base and see what it is like.

First, income distribution is not good. This must be corrected.

Second, unemployment is a problem, particularly among educated people and in the poor rural areas. We must solve this problem. To date, we have focused mainly on the central region. We must turn our attention to the northeast and the upper north, where unemployment is very high.

Third, we must change the structure of the public sector, which is carrying a very heavy load for the state enterprises.

Fourth, we must establish a monetary system that can play a major role in developing the economy. The national bank is taking the lead in providing agricultural credits to rural areas. This will continue.

That gives you a broad picture of this year. As for next year, there is another problem that will require some thought. I am referring to inflation. We have been used to an inflation rate near zero. This year, inflation may reach 4 percent. Next year it may increase somewhat, because the economy is expanding. We must monitor this and take steps to ensure that inflation does not increase too much. That is, we must monitor government spending, which could generate inflation. Spending must be aimed at creating jobs and promoting production. We must not spend money on providing support or reducing the deficits of the state enterprises. We can build ports, power plants, roads, and other such things. But we shouldn't spend money reducing deficits.

[Question] What are your views on agricultural processing industries, which can help develop the country?

[Answer] These have expanded greatly, and the products have been received quite well abroad. Once these industries expand, they will help other industries. For example, the canned food industry will help the steel and steel rolling industries. Today, much money has been invested in this. Steel plate is used to make cans. Chemicals must be used to coat the cans to prevent them from rusting, to sweeten foods, and so on. This will lead to developments in the chemical industry. And this will create a packaging industry, which is a very advanced industry. Because to sell goods, you have to package them attractively.

Besides these industries, there is the matter of communications and transportation. There will have to be large vehicles and modern ports, like containerization.

[Question] Will this lead to over industrialization?

[Answer] As for this policy, if we do not create industries, the agricultural sector will have to rely on the import of steel, chemicals, and so on. It would be better to produce these things ourselves. For example, the government is now promoting the machine industry, because it feels that this industry will enable us to produce steel and small steel machine goods such as "itaen" vehicles and tractors. We will have to produce these for the agricultural sectors, because we must start using less land. We can't keep cutting down our forests. We have to use less land and make the best use possible of it by using machinery. But we can stop there. We shouldn't think about large smelting and petrochemical plants. We should consider only those things that can be linked to the items that we need. We can think about those major projects once our situation is better. But today, we still have many problems that need to be solved.

As for large projects, unless it is an important project, such as a port, I feel that it would be better to wait. We should not try to do everything at once. What I am afraid of is that if we have some money, people will want to spend huge sums of money. We have to monitor this. When we didn't have enough, it was easy to say that we didn't have the money to do this and that. But now that we have some money, we must make sure that we use it wisely.

[Question] Is there any chance that the next administration will not follow the economic line already established?

[Answer] I can't speak on behalf of the next administration. But personally, I hope that it will follow this line or continue moving in this direction. Thailand and other countries agree that this is the proper course. Businessmen and investors all agree with this. I hope that the next administration does not change course. Several other countries, including neighboring countries, have encountered this problem. That is, after people have invested money, the government has changed course. As a result, the long-term investors have not been able to change course in time. As for the direction that we have set, it's all right to make minor adjustments. But we should not change direction. Take the fiscal and monetary system, for example. I am very concerned about the possibility of people trying to implement a large number of projects all at once during the period that revenues are good. I think that we should be careful. We don't need to rush. In another 2-3 years, we will be able to see things more clearly, because we are on the right path.

As for the structural changes now being made, I hope that people don't make the wrong changes, such as placing too much emphasis on developing industry and forgetting agriculture. Agriculture and semiagriculture are doing fine now. We can gradually develop related industries.

Another thing is that we should implement strong policies freely without worrying about whether this will interfere with this or that. Because some people take office with the idea of managing things on a short-term basis. I am very concerned about this. I am concerned that politicians will think about short-term management in order to win votes. They will try to do too many things and forget about the long-term problems. This is a problem facing developing countries, and much damage can be done. Even though politicians may need to do such things, I hope that they will be aware of this and think about the long term. I hope that they don't think just about the short term in order to win votes.

[Question] If the next administration changes the economic line or makes a mistake, will this ruin everything?

[Answer] Yes, it will. Some people think that they can do this and that without it having any effect. But that is incorrect. That is, if you make changes here and there, that will generate momentum in another direction that will be difficult to stop. Take the stock market 3-4 years ago, for example. The momentum was lost, and it took us 3-4 years to restore things to what they are today. Around the middle of last year, I had to speak out and tell people not to turn the market into a place for speculators. I was very angry, because it takes a long time to improve the market. But it can be destroyed very quickly. I am very concerned about this.

A bad government can ruin the economy in just a few months. But it takes a good government years to rebuild the economy. This is what worries me.

[Question] In the near future, will the stock market undergo any changes?

[Answer] The main feature about the stock market that we are trying to change is to increase the number of companies listed on the stock market. In the past, there have been years when no new companies have been registered. Today, there must be at least 20 a year in order to provide a source of capital to help develop the business activities of these companies. You can't have 1 million and go and borrow another 20 million. You should have approximately 5 million. You can then borrow another 5 million for a total of 10 million. Thus, we are now trying to get more companies into the market. We have established a second board to enable smaller growth companies to get into the market. This is different from in the past when a company had to have made a profit for 5 consecutive years and have at least 10 million in capital. There are few such companies in

Thailand. We have to increase the number of companies listed on the stock market, because we know that more and more foreigners are going to come here in the future.

[Question] As for funds becoming involved in the stock market, if these are foreign funds, what effect will this have on the market?

[Answer] We welcome foreign funds, because we would like to see small numbers of share purchased through funds. That is better than having foreigners purchase shares directly. This is the method that we are using now. It is like establishing a buffer. This is why it is necessary to have many unit trusts. We want diversification. We don't want them to join together and make large purchases. This has an open character. Thus, they cannot withdraw their money immediately. There is always a term. This is nothing to worry about. The first thing to worry about is finding more companies to list on the stock market. Second, we must monitor the transfer of shares, because at present, there is a huge backlog. This gives people a chance to cheat and forge share certificates. We have to have a place to store the certificates. Actual physical transfers must be limited as much as possible. The transfers must take place on paper. It's better to have a center to store the stock certificates. Third, the data system must be improved. The data system has not been developed. The data system must show which shares are doing well and which aren't. There must be clear services. We will try to establish something like a share analysis institute to provide the people with complete data. The fourth point concerns providing information. We must quickly develop computer software and have trained personnel. Because in the future, we certainly won't be able to write everything on the boards. Everything must go into the computers so that people can retrieve data by themselves.

[Question] Is there anything to worry about as far as laws and regulations are concerned?

[Answer] This year, everything is fine, because we know what the period of the money is. I am sure that things will still be all right in 1989. Unless the political changes produce effects, things will be fine and more people will become interested. We must be careful and act. As I said, the share certificate center must have a computerized system. There must be a data system, and more companies must be listed on the market. Otherwise, prices will fluctuate wildly.

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Commerce Minister Views Problems, Achievements

42070146d Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai 30 May 88 p 8

[Interview with Montri Phongphanit, the minister of commerce; date and place not specified]

[Excerpts] [Question] About which problems and obstacles are you most concerned?

[Answer] The most serious problem is the rice problem. The day that I took office, the 1987 wet rice crop was just going to market. The price of paddy at that time was 2,000 baht. I knew that the previous minister had had to leave office because of the rice problem. The price of paddy had not increased. I held daily meetings with senior government officials, including the under secretary of the ministry and the directors-general concerned. I also submitted a proposal to the cabinet calling for the establishment of a rice policy committee chaired by the prime minister. In the past, the minister of commerce had been the chariman, and he did not receive very good cooperation. The prime minister appointed Admiral Sonthi Bunyachai chairman. We have received good cooperation from all the ministries concerned.

As far as the Ministry of Commerce is concerned, we are doing our best to make people understand that the price of rice on world markets is very low. People must understand that the price of our exported rice is lower than the domestic price. We have to make people understand that exporting rice forces up domestic paddy prices. We have to get people to purchase paddy. I am trying to figure out ways of doing these things. Reporters have asked me many times what I plan to do. All that I can say is that we are going to export this or that amount of rice. I tell them that this is a secret and that I cannot reveal what has been discussed at meetings. I tell them that criteria have been set but that this is a secret so that we can stockpile as much rice as possible. Increasing the amount of rice in the stockpile pushes up paddy prices. We sell the rice and then stockpile new shipments. As a result, those who hope to make a profit go and purchase paddy, mill it, and sell it to us. But the ministry has to receive documents. That is, when [paddy] is purchased at leading prices and everyone profits, the price of paddy will increase. The ministry exports this rice. If we didn't, things would come to a stop. People don't understand this. That is, you lose 1 to gain 10. By exporting rice, we lose 1 but gain 10, right?

Let me give you a simple example. Suppose that we didn't purchase rice or do anything. Of the 17 million tons produced during this 3-month period, Thai consume only about 2 million tons. If we didn't purchase this rice, who would? Who would ensure that things get done? The merchants would have to buy the remaining 14 million tons, mill it, and sell it people, and export it. Merchants must consider things carefully from the very beginning. Suppose that there are 1,400 merchants and that each one buys 1 million tons. And suppose that they have to stockpile the rice for 5 months. They would have to pay interest, improvement fees, labor costs, and the cost of the gunny bags. All these costs plus their profit margin means that they would have to purchase the paddy at a very low price. Because they don't know to whom they will be able to sell the rice. They have to wait until people have consumed the rice on hand, with about 800,000 tons consumed per month. They have to pay a variety of fees and costs. In the end, their profits are not that large. Suppose that they purchased paddy for 2,000

baht per kwian [1 kwian equals 2,000 liters]. They may be able to sell this for 2,800 baht per kwian. But out of that 800 baht, they may make a profit of only 200 baht.

Without the present system, the farmers would have to sell their paddy for only 2,000 baht just like before. But what I have done is to offer to buy all their paddy. I pay them 2,300 baht per kwian. Merchants scramble to purchase and sell paddy. But they aren't aware that I will demand delivery within 5-7 days. They set the price at 2,400 baht, but the purchase price has increased to 2,300 baht, leaving them a profit of only 100 baht. Within just 2 weeks, they have to adjust their profit figures. We have to stockpile rice. It's true that we have to pay costs. But we have to take responsibility. We also purchase standard rice. I make purchases every week, buying millions of tons. The price of rice has risen steadily. The farmers no longer rush to sell their paddy but wait to see what the price is. During a 3-month period, the price of 10 million tons of rice jumped from 2,000 baht to 3,000 baht per kwian. And the remaining rice is selling for 4,000 baht. Thus, altogether the farmers will receive approximately 2 billion. Initially, when buying the rice, the ministry has to spend about 200 million. But around the middle of the year when foreigners make purchases, we make a profit of 50-70 million baht. The ministry gets its money back, and the farmers have money to spend.

[Question] Since you have held this position, of what achievements are you most proud?

[Answer] I am most proud of how we have handled the rice problem. I am proud of everything that we have done. I am proud of how we have handled the rice, cassava, soybean, and palm issues. I am proud of everything concerned, including exporting goods, controlling the price of goods, and requesting cooperation. I think that I have done an excellent job and that what I have done has benefited the people. I am proud of having had a chance to work for the people. There have been obstacles. There always are. And although my rice policy has hurt some people, that is, the consumers, the poor people of the country have benefited. The country's economy has improved greatly. This balances out the losses.

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Industry Minister Discusses Priorities, Connections

42070146c Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai 13 Jun 88 p 11

[Interview with Pramuan Saphawasu, the minister of industry; date and place not specified]

[Text] [Question] Since you became minister of industry at the end of 1986, what achievements have you scored?

[Answer] One thing that we have done is to consider revising the Petroleum Act. The present petroleum law is rather outdated and does not facilitate investment. I had

the Department of Mineral Resources invite the private companies concerned to come discuss ways to correct the weaknesses and shortcomings now that the world price of oil has declined in order to promote domestic oil exploration. After obtaining sufficient supporting data, we took steps to revise the petroleum law and sought the approval of the government. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate approved this. But then parliament was dissolved, with the result that the revised Petroleum Act failed, too.

The policy on opening gold mines is another issue. The Ministry of Industry took up this issue because there were many rumors about Thailand having gold deposits. I was not sure about this and wanted to wait for the results of the surveys to see if any gold was actually found. Thus, at the end of last year, we allowed people in the private sector to request exploration rights and stake gold mining claims. But there are still some obstacles and problems in doing this. In particular, most people in the private sector did not feel that the selection criteria and conditions were suitable. Thus, I have ordered that new bids be submitted. I have listened to the views of various groups.

As for the Department of Industrial Works, one of the major problems that has been solved, at least partly, is the liquor problem, which has been a chronic problem for a long time. We have revised the contract between the Maharatsadon Distillery and the Department of Industrial Works. The original contract called for the company to pay a tax on each bottle. This has been changed to a yearly lump sum in a contract system. The Ministry of Industry has proposed that the contracts of some distilleries be extended to match the contracts of the Excise Department. But the cabinet has not taken any action on this. However, even though the problem has not been solved completely, the financial positions of the companies have improved greatly. This is evident from the fact that they are paying more tax. And these companies are paying off their bank loans.

As for textiles, which are now important export goods of Thailand, the policy has always been to prohibit establishing or expanding textile plants. But the Ministry of Industry feels that this policy is no longer in accord with the situation, because markets are expanding. Thus, we are considering allowing such plants to be built and expanded. Together with the BOI [Board of Investment], we are trying to determine a suitable building-to-expansion ratio. In doing this, we are considering the stability of the textile industry in the future.

Another problem that we have tackled is the sugarcane and sugar problem. This problem became particularly acute when the temporary provisions in the 1984 Sugarcane and Sugar Act expired last September. We tried to bargain with the sugar mills and sugarcane growers and get them to compromise by extending the temporary provisions until the permanent regulation went into effect.

[Question] How successful have you been in dispersing investments to the rural areas?

[Answer] We have done everything possible to do this. But it must be admitted that the rural areas are, in many ways, still not ready for industrial development. A very clear example is that communications and transportation are not convenient. The electricity goes out often. There are not enough telephones or telecommunications facilities to meet the needs of the private sector. Thus, this will have to be carried on gradually.

In my view, how much success is achieved in dispersing investments to the rural areas depends on how clear the government's operational targets are. That is, if there are clear targets, such as the eastern seaboard development plan, I think that developing industry in the rural areas by designating specific areas will be easier than scattering target areas throughout the country.

[Question] What do you consider to be your greatest success during your 2 years as minister of industry?

[Answer] Frankly, I don't think that any task has been completed. Most of the tasks that I have implemented will take 3-5 years to complete. But I have been in office for less than 2 years. You know what has been accomplished. I have never wasted time going abroad, even to observe activities abroad.

[Question] During the New Year period this year, the Government House press corps graded the ministers, and you were nicknamed the "financiers' minister." How do you feel about this nickname?

[Answer] It doesn't bother me. Just the opposite. I feel pleased, because the Ministry of Industry works with financiers. If I am loved by the financiers, that indicates that the financiers are pleased with what I have done. I should be pleased by the honor you have given me.

It's not strange that I am close to financiers. If I didn't associate with financiers, how could I learn about the problems and find ways to solve them? It's easy to criticize but difficult to actually take action. If I didn't associate with anyone, people would accuse me of remaining aloof.

But I meet with everyone, Chinese, Thai, Indian, Westerner, and Japanese. I receive everyone. You can't accuse me of being too credulous. I think that it's better to look at the results. Also, I don't see what is wrong with being liked by financiers. If I try to please the financiers or businessmen and they are successful, this should help everyone from the standpoint of creating jobs, because the businessmen will be secure and strong.

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Columnist: GSP Issue No Threat

42070145c Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai 30 May 88 p 8

[Article by Wichai Tantikulanan: "Was It Worth Dissolving Parliament Because of the Copyright Act?"]

[Excerpts] At the beginning of May 1988, the U.S. Congress voted 420 to 0 to pass the bill to have the U.S. government join the Berne Convention.

Thailand became a member of the Berne Convention on 17 July 1931. It signed the Berne Convention of 1886 and the four revisions.

The United States never joined the Berne Convention. This is why works copyrighted based on U.S. law have not been protected by Thai law. Thus, the United States has been doing everything possible to get Thailand to revise its 1978 Copyright Act, particularly Article 42. If we don't, the United States has threatened to cut the GSP, that is, it will not grant a tax exemption on certain types of imports from Thailand.

If the United States does withdraw GSP rights on Thai goods, the Thai goods exported to the United States will become more expensive. But that does not mean that we won't be able to sell goods there. This is because the ability to sell goods depends on the nature of the competition based on the needs of American markets.

Also, the GSP principles are just the principles of a developed country in an effort to help developing countries by granting special tariff rights on certain types of imports. The country granting these special rights is under no obligation to do this. That is, the United States can withdraw these rights whenever it wants.

The United States has asked Thailand to revise Article 42 of the Copyright Act, claiming that Thailand has an obligation to do this based on the "1978 Treaty of Amity and Economic Relations." Actually, this obligation already exists based on Article 6 of the present Copyright Act. But the protection afforded the copyrighted works of Americans is limited and there are conditions. That is, Thai law gives less protection to the copyrighted works of Americans than to works of citizens of countries that are members of the Berne Convention.

The Thai administration submitted a draft copyright act (which did not pass) in order to revise Article 42. That act would have afforded greater protection to the copyrighted works of Americans than to those of citizens of the 76 countries that are members of the Berne Convention. It would have afforded full protection to Americans. There would not have been any restrictions. Under this act, computer software would have been protected, too. If that draft act had been passed by the Thai parliament, it would have had a great impact on the Thai economy. We would have lost tens of billions of baht over the course of the next 10 years.

This draft act was not passed because parliament was dissolved. In effect, that protected Thailand's interests. Those who played a role in the defeat of this draft act and who deserve praise for this include the 10 January Group, the 16 Democrat ministers, and Prime Minister Prem.

The dissolution of parliament has brought democracy to a temporary halt and forced the state to spend approximately 200 million baht to hold a national election. But wasn't it worth it to defeat this draft copyright act?

Once the United States becomes a member of the Berne Convention, copyrighted works of Americans will, based on Article 42 of the 1978 Copyright Act, receive the same protection as the works of citizens of the other 76 countries. The Berne Convention is considered to be a universal principle and a standard for affording equal protection to the copyrighted works of all countries.

The fact that the United States has decided to join the Berne Convention means that it accepts this universal principle, that is, that all countries are equal.

If parliament had not been dissolved and this draft copyright act had been passed and the United States had later joined the Berne Convention, Thailand would have suffered doubly. The other 76 members of this convention would certainly have laughed at us. Thus, we have to thank those who helped bring about the dissolution of parliament on 29 April 1988.

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Narong Wongwan Comments on Political, Business Ties

42070151 Bangkok MATICHON SUT SAPDA in Thai 5 Jun 88 pp 4-10

[Article by Kosum Hakthongkhwang: "Narong Wongwan, the Billion Baht Business Foundation of the 17th Prime Minister?"]

[Excerpt] The Wongwan family traces its lineage back to Mr Saen Wonwan, the son of Mr Phutthawong and Mrs Keowan, who were wealthy farmers in Phrae Province. Mr Saen Wonwan began his business career by selling paddy to Chinese merchants at the Den Chan train station. At the end of 1929, he became engaged in timber operations for the East Asiatic Company Ltd in Phrae.

Later on, he worked as the timber representative of Prince Wongsasiriphan, who had been granted the Mae Ta timber concession in Long District, Phrae Province. He then became a sublessee of the East Asiatic Company Ltd and carried on timber operations in Mae Khampong, Rong Khwang District, Phrae Province. Both before and after the Second World War, he expanded his timber operations throughout the north.

During the Second World War, he continued to carry on timber operations and built the Thepphawong Sawmill in Den Chai District. Later on, he became the manager of the Phrae Timber Company, which had been established by the head of the Zone Timber Office and the provincial governor. In 1954 he began operating Virginia tobacco curing sheds. Later on, all these operations were passed on to his sons, Mr Narong Wongwan and Mr Sangwan Wongwan.

Mr Narong Wongwan graduated from Assumption Commerce. After working for a year, he went to the United States to study agricultural economics. After he returned, he took over the timber operations of the Thepphawong Company Ltd. He was stung by politics for the first time when almost all the timber concessions were withdrawn in 1960. He then became deeply involved in the tobacco trade.

In 1962 the Wongwan family encountered problems with the Excise Department. From this, they concluded that family business activities could not be carried on smoothly unless they had political prestige to provide protection. Thus, in the election of 1968, the Wongwan family supported Mr Phachon Phathong, who ran for parliament as an independent candidate. In the election of 1979, Mr Narong Wongwan ran for election and won more votes than any candidate in the country. He served as a minister in the "last gasp" government of Gen Kriangsak Chamanan. He also joined the Prem 2, 3, and 4 governments, serving as the minister of agriculture and cooperatives.

Plai-oh Chananon, the author of "Merchants and the Development of Capitalism in the North, 1921-1980," wrote the following about the activities of the Wongwan family:

"The tobacco operations of the Wongwan family enabled the Thepphawong Company Ltd to expand greatly. It became the largest tobacco exporter in the country, accounting for 40-49 percent of the country's total tobacco exports during the period 1975-1980."

A competitor of the Thepphawong Company Ltd was a multinational company that had been the first company to purchase tobacco from Thailand when Thailand first began exporting tobacco. This was the Transcontinental Leaf Tobacco Company Ltd. This company and the Thepphawong Company jointly invested in building a large tobacco curing company named the Siam Tobacco Exporter Corporation.

The Ruam Thai Party was formed when agro-industrial financiers from the north formed an alliance with some old politicians from the northeast. Initially, the party was strongest in the north (11 seats) and northeast (7 seats).

Now, Mr Buntheng Thongsawat, Mr Sawat Khamprakop, and more than 10 other former MPs from the United Democracy Party have joined the this party. As a result, the Ruam Thai Party is now much stronger in the north.

In particular, the Ruan Thai Party has attracted Mr Udonphan Chantharawiro, "the prominent playboy" who is a direct descendant of "Mong Chan Ong" and "Mong Ta U," or Mr Phanasit Chantharawiro of Mo Lamloeng, who used to be the timber kingpin of Mae Lao in Viang Pa Pao District, Chiang Rai Province, and who owned more than half the forests in Mae Hong Son Province. In the past, this family was the economic and political base of the Social Action Party. Thus, the fact that the Wongwan and Chantharawiro families have joined together and that they now have the political experience of such people as Mr Buntheng Thongsawat and Mr Sawat Khamprakop to draw on has had a great impact in the north.

Activities of the Wongwan Family

Thepphawong Company Ltd: founded, 1949; type of activity, sawmill and tobacco; assets, no data.

Don Mun Tobacco Curing Partnership: founded, 1959; assets, 1.05 million baht.

Si Thepphawong Company Ltd: founded, 1966; assets, 1 million baht.

Wongsakunthong Mining Company Ltd: founded, 1969; type of activity, mining; assets, 1.78 million baht (1973).

Tobacco Industry Company Ltd: founded, 1970; type of activity, tobacco; assets, 9.76 million baht (1972).

Chiang Mai Mining Company Ltd: founded, 1974; type of activity, mining; assets, 1.06 million baht (1975).

Pa Daeng Tobacco Curing Limited Partnership: founded, 1973; assets, 1.5 million baht.

On Lui Si-ngam Tobacco Curing Limited Partnership: founded, 1973; assets, 2.6 million baht.

Universal Tobacco Company Ltd: founded, 1974; type of activity, tobacco; assets, 18.61 million baht.

Siam Wat Compnay Ltd: founded, 1977; type of activity, buy and sell machinery; assets, 7.72 million baht (1979).

Northern Oil Cured Tobacco Limited Partnership: founded, 1978; assets, 1 million baht.

Siam Coffee Export Company Ltd: founded, 1979; assets, 5 million baht.

Anusonprasoet Limited Partnership: founded, 1980; type of activity, unknown; assets, no data.

Sombunbaep Agricultural Company Ltd (joint venture with the Mitsui-Takasako group of Japan): type of activity, animal husbandry.

Siam Business Reporters Company Ltd: type of activity, publishing.

Natural Products Company Ltd: type of activity, agricultural processing industry.

Chiang Mai Chatumit Company Ltd: type of activity, construction contracting.

More than 140 tobacco curing plants throughout the north: type of activity, tobacco curing.

A and P Company Ltd: type of activity, hotels.

Source: 1. Plai-oh Chananon, "Merchants and the Development of Capitalism in the North, 1921-1980," Institute of Social Research, Chulalongkon University, 1987, p. 150.

2. Phairot Chantharanimi, "Chiang Mai, Half a Century of Cause and Effect," manager, Year 5, Issue 48, September 1987, p. 61.

[Interview with Mr Narong Wongwan, the leader of the Ruam Thai Party, by Worasak Prayurasuk; date and place not specified]

[Question] When did you first decide to establish your own party?

[Answer] That dates back to when MR [royal title] Khukrit resigned as leader of the Social Action Party. I felt that there were major splits within the party. The party leader could not control things. After the new party leader took over, I resigned. But I did not think about establishing a party. I intended to get out of politics. I didn't want to join some other party, because I had always been a member of the Social Action Party. I formed my own party as an immediate expedient only. I did not think that this would be permanent. It was a matter of saving face. But a few months after establishing the party, I realized that we could not do this on just a temporary basis. And so we tried to turn this into a real party.

We are very strict about the people that we allow to join the party. Party members must have special qualities, particularly concerning behavior and knowledge. We screen potential members very carefully. Initially, we thought that we would win 20-30 seats. As the election approached, we thought that we would win 21 seats. But as it turned out, we did not win that many seats. That is of great importance. Because to submit a bill or motion, you have to have at least 20 seats. What that means in effect is that you have to have 21 seats. We thought that

we would win 21 seats. But as it turned out, we won only 19. We discussed this. Committee members said that we should continue to use the same system and screen members and candidates.

Many people warned us that this was not the right time to make an appearance. They said that people would try to attack or buy us. I thought that was common. In view of our showing, I wondered whether our requirements were too strict. We did not have the financial backing of other parties, which spent much money during election campaigns. But not one of our members left the party to join another party. That was the case 50 days later. I felt that our members were honorable people and that all of them were qualified to serve as MPs. We did our best and helped members campaign.

It was felt that our platform was too short and that it needed to be clarified so that party members could campaign on the party platform. People said that statements could be issued on the day of application and that it wasn't even necessary to issue a statement. I felt that our members were all honorable people and that no one would split away. I wanted to reveal things, because I wanted people to see the party's position and to see what percentage of our members were good people. Personally, I felt that all of our members were good people.

If we had established the party just for some special purpose, that wouldn't have mattered. But because we wanted to build a real party, we had to build a reputation or build a good image in the eyes of the people. That is difficult to do. The party members all increased my willpower as party leader. We were a small party, but we were highly unified. All of our members were creative and innovative.

[Question] Have you received financial support from anyone?

[Answer] So far, I have paid almost all the expenses. Some subsidiary companies of mine have donated money. In helping the party, I have never thought about profiting from this. My intention has been to help build the reputation of the party and help the country. Thus, companies and important people have not supported us. We have little money to spend. Whenever someone wants to join the party, they have to know how much we will be able to help them. They must be able to help themselves. In most cases, party members must help themselves. This is easier. After an election, I have never used any money. We have not spent any money on conferences. In this party, members donate money to the party from their salaries. Most of the party's supporters in the north are relatives.

[Question] Are expenditures per person very great?

[Answer] Yes. An election poses a heavy burden. You never know what tomorrow will be like. And after the election, you don't know how long you will serve as an

MP. That's something you can't predict. You can't tell how many seats you will win. All you can do is make an estimate. But you never know what is going to happen.

[Question] There are those who say that your party receives more financial support than other parties.

[Answer] That's not true. I don't know how other parties pay, but the Ruan Thai Party pays according to the circumstances. If we have 19 people, we pay so much. If there are 60-80 candidates, we pay so much. And there are expenses for bringing in new members.

[Question] What is the party's target in this election?

[Answer] We have a target, but it is not as exact as in the beginning, when we hoped to win 25 seats. This time, our target is 50 seats. We have the trust of new and old party members. Old members feel that they should be able to win a greater number of seats. And we are confident that the new members will be able to expand their base using both the party's and their own financial resources. These people know that our party is a small party and that it does not play politics in order to make a living. The party exists in order to provide a forum and help protect the interests of the country.

[Question] What are your own personal objectives?

[Answer] Things are different for me. When the term ended, I realized that I cannot stay with the party forever. There are others who are better and who have greater capabilities. I can't monopolize administration or anything else. We must help each other.

[Question] The party will probably win a large number of seats and play an important role in forming the government.

[Answer] I am well educated. At meetings, I have told those members who are running for parliament that if elected, our duty is to serve as MPs. No one is forcing us to run for election. We have voluntarily decided to serve the country. Thus, our duty is to be good MPs and work for the benefit of the country. We must try to improve the lot of those who are poor and in trouble. Each person must work to carry out the party's policies and their own personal resolutions aimed at helping the people.

As for becoming a minister, there is no need to consider that now. We have not thought about clinging to this person or that party. We won't act like that. Those who have joined our party feel that we have acted properly. If others feel that we are capable of carrying out our duties in the government, it will be because of our good qualities and not because we have tried to pull strings. MPs in my party have never tried to pull strings. Newspapers have occasionally said that we have tried to join the government. But that is not true. I have read such stories. What has been done during the past 2 years?

Actually, very little. If we had joined with them, we would not have been able to do very much, because they are bigger than us. We can't make a loud splash.

[Question] Will Gen Prem become prime minister again?

[Answer] That's up to him to decide. As for the parties deciding who is most suited to this position, in a democratic form of administration, normally it is up to the majority party to form a government. But if there are many parties and they can't agree, it will be necessary to ask a neutral person or Gen Prem to serve as prime minister. But we don't know who will be asked, because there are many new people who have good capabilities and who are willing to make sacrifices for the country.

[Question] Whom do you think will become prime minister?

[Answer] That's difficult to say. We will have to wait and see who is elected to parliament. People are not running for the office of prime minister but for the position of MP.

[Question] How closely tied to Gen Prem is the party?

[Answer] We are not bound to him. As I told you, I have never tried to pull strings. It's up to the party leaders. We haven't formed a coalition with anyone. The benefits must go to the people. If our party conducts itself properly and works to benefit the country and people, if they invite us, we will consider it. But we won't rush in headlong.

[Question] If your party should win a majority of the seats, will you accept the position of prime minister?

[Answer] I think that every party leader must be prepared to accept this position. That should be a prerequisite for being a party leader. But others don't agree. Normally, the leader of the majority party is appointed prime minister. But I have a different view. If a party member is well qualified in all respects and has good morals, I might tell him to try for the position and see what the party thinks.

[Question] After this election, will the time have come to agree on appointing a party leader to the position of prime minister?

[Answer] It depends on the vote. If a party wins a majority of the seats, it can form the government. But if it is a coalition government, this will have to be considered. We would have to consider whether the leader of the party that won the most seats is qualified to serve as prime minister. If he isn't, we can discuss this in order to find a more qualified person. But reaching an agreement is another matter.

[Question] Do you think the parties will be able to reach an agreement?

[Answer] If we can't, we will have to find a neutral person as in the past. Everyone has different strengths. This is a difficult matter.

[Question] Based on relations with the people in the north, do people want a prime minister from the north?

[Answer] Every region is the same. Each one supports people from the region. They all want people from their region to hold high office. This is common to all the regions, not just the north. This makes the people in the region proud. People in the northeast, the central region, and the south all feel the same way.

[Question] If that is the case, have any preparations been made to satisfy this desire?

[Answer] We are doing our duty. As I said, at present we are running for the position of MP. We won't discuss other positions. But the people have hopes, and we can evaluate ourselves.

[Question] Academics have submitted a petition against the appointment of Gen Prem. This supposedly stemmed in part from the people, who are tired of him. As someone who is in touch with the people, is that really the case?

[Answer] The majority of the people have their own way of thinking. But MPs have their own views. MPs are closer to the administration and know what the administration has done, whether rightly or wrongly. They are closer than the people. Although the people or academics may be dissatisfied, they are not in close contact with Prime Minister Prem. They have probably looked at what he has done to benefit the country. Second, people may feel that Gen Prem has been in office for too long. They probably have that general feeling rather than any specific complaint. But actually, even though they submitted a petition to replace or dismiss the prime minister, that can't be done. He is an acting prime minister. The only grounds for dismissing an acting prime minister is if he does something to bias the election. In that case, he should be dismissed and someone who is not a politician should be appointed to replace him. There are two views. They had the right to submit a petition to the king. But he probably told them that Prem is the acting prime minister and that there is nothing that can be done.

[Question] What do the people really think about Gen Prem?

[Answer] As I said, there are people who don't like him and who are tired of him. But there are also many people who like him, because they feel that he is an honest person. Thus, you can't use this as an indicator.

[Question] How do you feel about him?

[Answer] I respect him. I have observed the bad actions of the government. But I don't dislike the prime minister. I respect him. I have been with the government for a long time. I don't consider him to be a bad person. He is a good person. If you want me to criticize him, I have to have reasons. In the past period, I supported the motion to hold a no-confidence debate on one person. Why? Because I wanted people to see what mistakes he and the cabinet had made. I wanted to point out those things, but I didn't want him to leave. If the government admits that something is wrong, I am willing to work with it to correct things. But that is my personal view. The other opposition parties may not be willing to do this. But I am willing to try and correct the matter. The opposition has not tried to drive him out of office without making suggestions on what needs to be done. We have criticized him in a responsible manner. We have made suggestions during the debates.

[Question] In the past, there were rumors that the Ruam Thai and Community Action parties were going to merge. But then Gen Prem urged you not to do this, because that would reduce your chances of joining the government.

[Answer] I would like to state categorically that the prime minister was not involved in any way. As someone who has worked with him for many years, I know that he is not like that. He would never do anything like that. Mr Bunchu Rotchanasathian and I share similar views. But there are several ways to solve problems. Conflicts might have arisen later on.

I had to be very careful about this. I wanted to keep my friends. Mr Bunchu had problems within his party, and I had problems within my party. For example, if we had merged, what would we have called the party? That was a major issue. Our party members felt that it was important to use our name. The members of Mr Bunchu's party felt that it was important to use the name of their party. There were several such minor matters. Besides that, certain members who came from various provinces would not have been allowed to run there. I was not the head of the group. This caused friction, which was not good.

Originally, Mr Bunchu and I wanted to form a single party. But we realized that the various problems would lead to splits rather than unity. And so we decided not to merge. We had planned to let the majority decide what to do. We were going to let the members decide which policies to use or whether to use a combination of policies from both parties. That would have been possible. But the major stumbling block was that MPs in many provinces didn't want anyone else getting involved. I used my own discretion in looking at this.

I and Mr Bunchu have been involved with each other politically for many years. By forming a single opposition party, we could have saved money and increased our effectiveness in the House of Representatives. But when we tried to merge our parties, problems arose. This was not a marriage just between the two party leaders. This involved the members of our two parties. Conflicts would probably have arisen in trying to solve problems. Thus, we told Mr Bunchu that even though we couldn't merge, we could still be allies, although how close is something that needs to be reconsidered. Take fielding candidates, for example. Each side feels that its candidate can win. Thus, there are problems concerning which people to field. It's better to stay as we are.

[Question] Some of your allies feel that Gen Prem should not be reappointed prime minister. Does the Ruam Thai Party agree?

[Answer] There are two aspects to this: not wanting Gen Prem under any circumstances and not wanting him if your party wins a majority of the seats. Some people are resolutely opposed to him. Others like him because they feel that they have a chance to form a coalition government. Thus, conflicts have arisen. We could probably find someone else to serve as prime minister. There are other capable people. We could try this. But the administration of the country is not something with which we want to experiment. A definite decision has to be made. And if a mistake is made, everyone is responsible. Thus, it is not easy to bring in this or that person.

[Question] The party's view on this issue is not to take a definite position against Gen Prem, is that right?

[Answer] We have not said that. We have not said anything about opposing this or that person. At this particular moment in time our duty is to campaign for MP. If a party is not unified, no one will want to work with it. If we should win a majority, others will be glad to join us. We will have to talk about this later.

[Question] If you do form a government, have you decided to unite with this or that party or with old allies?

[Answer] It's fine if we can do that. But sometimes, you can't get along. You may be allies but unable to get along. Sometimes a new party joins. We have participated in various rites. They may not be satisfied. As I said, some are opposed to Gen Prem. If the members of the Ruam Thai Party say that they want Gen Prem, there would be a split, right? Many parties say that they oppose this or that person but later have to change their minds. Thus, I don't want to tell you whom I support for prime minister. That is my secret.

[Question] What is your yearly income?

[Answer] Not very much. My income comes from my shareholdings. Actually, I am losing millions each year. I lose at least 10 million from not being able to serve as an

advisor to various foreign companies. I gave that up to engage in politics. I can't engage in politics and work for them, too. They said that being involved in politics makes it even better. But I have told them that I can't mix the two.

[Question] Now that you are out of business, does that mean that you will stay in politics?

[Answer] For the moment. I might return to business. Business might be a new branch for me. I have not stopped. I have company officials that study and analyze things and work abroad. Anything that will benefit the country and the farmers. We will take action soon.

[Question] When will you get out of politics?

[Answer] I plan to stay in for just one more term.

[Question] Why are you going to get out so soon? You are just 63 years old.

[Answer] I'm 62. I won't be 63 until 25 December 1988. The country won't deteriorate just because I leave politics.

[Question] Your two sons are involved in politics, too, isn't that right?

[Answer] They aren't involved right now. They aren't running for office. They are still young.

[Question] Do you want them to become involved in politics?

[Answer] I would like them to gain more experience so that they know more about politics. They should have enough money to play politics without having to ask their parents for help or getting money from the companies. This must be a personal matter. Our companies cannot be involved in this. Business is business, and politics is politics.

[Question] Then you don't want them to take over the party from you.

[Answer] No. It's up to them. This is not an inheritance. The party doesn't belong to me. I can't pass this on to my children. It's up to the party members. It is the party central committee that will decide who is most suited to succeed me as party leader. I can't dictate that one of my sons will follow me as party leader. I founded the party, but the party belongs to all the people. We must all help build the party. During the time that I have served as party leader, I have been able to do this much. The next party leader may be able to do much more. We can't think of this as personal property.

POLITICAL

Ambassador Le Mai Views Cambodia Problem, Negotiations

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[Interview with Le Mai, the Vietnamese ambassador to Thailand, by Thiphayang Sahatsanon on 2 June: "Vietnam Is Prepared To Cooperate With ASEAN; place not specified]

[Text] Note: The reports that Vietnam is withdrawing 50,000 troops from Cambodia have generated widespread interest in many countries, particularly Thailand and the other ASEAN countries, which have been involved with this problem since the very beginning. On 2 June, Thiphayang Sahatsanon, a KHAO PHISET reporter, had a chance to interview Mr Le Mai, the Vietnamese ambassador to Thailand, about this and other matters pertaining to the Cambodia problem. The remarks made by Mr Le Mai are very interesting and well worth considering. The interview was taped and is printed here.

[Question] As you probably know, the prime minister of Thailand visited the Soviet Union. Thailand's leader and Mr Gorbachev are in agreement on the Cambodia problem. I would like to know what you think about the situation, particularly the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops before 1990.

[Answer] From what we have learned from Thai officials, Thailand and the Soviet Union share similar views on solving the Cambodia problem. Vietnam is happy about this. Because in the past, our views were different. Prime Minister Prem's visit to the Soviet Union has narrowed the gap between the two countries. His visit to the Soviet Union was a great success.

[Question] In your view, does the fact that the leaders of Thailand and the Soviet Union agree on the Cambodia problem represent new movement or progress? Because in Thailand, there are many people who say that this was just an "agreement based on diplomatic custom" rather than a "real agreement."

[Answer] The peoples of Vietnam and Cambodia are sincere about wanting to find a solution to the Cambodia problem. We are taking steps to solve the problem. If there is no other way out, Vietnam and the people and government of Cambodia have decided that all Vietnamese troops will be withdrawn from Cambodia before 1990. That will probably resolve the problem. Even if a political solution is not found, we are resolved to withdraw our forces in order to solve the Cambodia problem.

But a better way is to solve the problem using political means. We are doing our best to find a political solution. Because reaching an agreement means that the various factions will have to accept each other. This will bring

about peace and security in this region. This will also foster a better atmosphere throughout the region. This is why we have tried to get the various factions to take the political path. Last year, progress was made on two matters. That is, in July 1987, an agreement was reached between the foreign affairs ministers of Indonesia and Vietnam to hold informal talks in two stages. During the first stage, the talks will be between the four Cambodian factions. During the second stage, Vietnam will join the talks. This was an important agreement. Indonesia was representing ASEAN, and Vietnam was representing Indochina. This agreement is still in force.

Another agreement was reached between Sihanouk and Hun Sen in December 1987 in Paris. After the first round of talks, they reached an agreement on the Cambodia problem. They agreed that Cambodia should be allowed to solve its own problems and that the international community should guarantee the agreement reached by the Cambodian factions. That was the progress made in 1987, which has carried over into 1988.

You probably know that about 2-3 years ago, Vietnam decided to withdraw 50,000 troops, including the headquarters of the Vietnamese volunteers, from Cambodia. They will be withdrawn during the second half of this year. That will leave approximately 50,000 Vietnamese troops in Cambodia. The remaining 50,000 troops will be withdrawn before 1990, which is the deadline that was announced previously. Many countries, including Thailand, are in favor of this troop withdrawal. The reaction by Thai officials to this troops withdrawal has been quite favorable. Thai leaders have stated that Vietnam is sincere about withdrawing its forces from Cambodia and that this is a real withdrawal. Such statements are indicative of the constructive atmosphere regarding the Cambodia problem. What we are trying to do in Cambodia at present is to withdraw all our troops by 1990. To hit this target, we and the government of Cambodia are trying to strengthen Cambodia's political, military, and economic forces so that Cambodia will be able to defend itself after 1990.

We are sincere about wanting to reach an agreement using political means. Our position on this issue is correct. At the same time, we are showing flexibility. The governments of Vietnam and Cambodia hope that all factions will reach a peaceful agreement. Personally, I believe that the Cambodia problem can be solved within the next several years, or by 1990 at the latest. That will definitely be possible if we work together sincerely. It may even be possible to solve this problem much sooner. But even if an agreement is not reached, Vietnam will still withdraw all its forces from Cambodia by 1990.

[Question] Hun Sen has suggested that there be a partial solution first and that the remaining problems be solved later.

[Answer] I am not exactly sure what he meant by that. He may have meant that it may be difficult for us to reach an agreement on everything all at once. Thus, we will have to discuss things issue by issue. That is probably what he meant. I am not sure.

[Question] Recently, Vietnamese leaders have tended to play a very small role with respect to the Cambodia problem. We would like to know your new views on the way to solve the Cambodia problem. In particular, Hun Sen has asked Prince Sihanouk to play a role in solving the Cambodia problem. What is Vietnam's view on this?

[Answer] Our position is that Cambodia must find a way to reach an agreement. Sihanouk and Hun Sen should be able to find a way out. As you know, there are four factions. Two or three of the factions are prepared to reach an agreement. The others are waiting for the Khmer Rouge to join the negotiations. That will be the final stage, that is, an agreement by the four factions, or global solution. That is probably what Hun Sen meant.

As for Vietnam playing a minor role, actually, Vietnam is playing a very active role. We are now withdrawing 50,000 troops from Cambodia in an effort to solve the Cambodia problem. Also, our foreign affairs minister, Mr Nguyen Co Thach, is now in New York. He will meet with Indonesia's minister of foreign affairs, Dr Alatas, in order to discuss the cocktail party and other such matters. What is certain is that Vietnam will play a very active role in solving the Cambodia problem. We don't want to interfere in Cambodia's internal affairs. Our position on the Cambodia problem is that the Cambodian factions must find a way to reach an agreement. That is why it is necessary for the various factions to get together and discuss how things are to be formed and how to reach a compromise. These are matters for the four Cambodian factions to discuss. These things are up to them. We won't play a role in this. We will respect the outcome of the negotiations between Sihanouk and Hun Sen or between the four Cambodian factions. If they reach an agreement on some issue, we will respect their decision. That is their right. That is one reason why we are waiting for all the Cambodian factions to join the talks. The meetings between Sihanouk and Hun Sen are very important. We support this. If the two factions reach an agreement on something, we will respect their decision. In the future, if all four factions sit down at the negotiating table together and reach some agreement, we will respect their decision.

Thus, there are two things. First, all the factions concerned must find a way to reach an agreement and cooperate in looking for a way out using political methods. Second, they must determine their own future.

[Question] Can what has taken place in Afghanistan serve as a lesson in looking for a way to solve the Cambodia problem?

[Answer] An agreement was reached in Afghanistan in the interests of peace. It was a matter of reducing the tension. An effort was made to reach an agreement in one of the world's hot spots in order to serve as an example in solving the problems in other hot spots in the world. It's good if that line can be used. Afghanistan can serve as an example in solving the problems in other hot spots in the world. But as you know, the problems in Afghanistan and Cambodia are very different. The two countries each have their own special characteristics.

Afghanistan, for example, did not have a problem concerning genocide. But Cambodia did. Furthermore, the Cambodian people are afraid that there will be a repeat of that genocidal period. For Cambodians, genocide can be compared to a nightmare. Cambodia has many complex problems. It is not just a matter of withdrawing troops. The various Cambodian factions must reach an agreement. A way must be found to bring about unity within the nation. There must be national reconciliation. And what is most important is that steps must be taken to ensure that that genocidal government does not return to power again. Cambodia must not experience that nightmare again. This is the difference between these two countries.

In Afghanistan, they carried on negotiations and finally succeeded in finding a peaceful solution instead of using force to solve the problem. In Cambodia, we are trying to find a peaceful solution, just as was done in Afghanistan. The only thing is that in Afghanistan, there were no talks like those between Sihanouk and Hun Sen. There were direct negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. But so far, that has not happened in Cambodia. That is because the two countries have different environments and different characteristics. The meetings and negotiations have been different. The people are different. But what is the same is that peace will be restored through peaceful negotiations. This is the real heart of the matter. But when you get to the details, things are very different.

[Question] Are Soviet reforms and compromises in the age of Gorbachev putting "pressure" on the Soviet Union's allies to follow the lead of the Soviet Union or adjust their policies to place greater emphasis on domestic reform and to increase the role of compromise at the international level?

[Answer] It's not a matter of pressure. Vietnam is a supporting element. This is an effort like a restoration. Perestroika is in accord with what we are doing. In the past, our economy was quite depressed. We had to change our management. This is similar to what China did. We have learned from their experiences. We have had to compare some of these experiences with reality. We agree with the things that are happening in the socialist countries today and support these things. We began withdrawing our troops in 1982 before the Soviet

Union began withdrawing its forces from Afghanistan. We have reached decisions on our own on many matters. It's not a matter of imitating or following the lead of the Soviet Union.

[Question] I would like to ask about relations between Vietnam and the United States. Have relations improved or worsened recently? And what is the trend for the near future?

[Answer] Both sides are cooperating on the MIA issue. Locating those missing in action is a humanitarian issue, ODP. There is also cooperation concerning victims of the war. We are presently holding negotiations on both issues. We hope that bilateral relations and mutual cooperation will improve. We think that the United States will realize that restoring normal bilateral relations will benefit both countries and help bring about peace and security in Southeast Asia. I feel that relations are moving in the right direction and that new progress will be made in the future.

[Question] An important point frequently cited by Vietnam in withdrawing its forces from Cambodia is that it does not want other countries, particularly China, to interfere in or gain influence over Cambodia. In the present situation, is there now less concern that a third country may make use of this opportunity, that is, Vietnam's troop withdrawal, to play a greater role in Cambodia?

[Answer] Not only Vietnam but the world community is very concerned about the return of the age of genocide in Cambodia. Cambodia and Vietnam are not the only countries working to ensure that this does not happen again. This is the responsibility of the world community. There are two choices.

The first is to reach a political solution. One important element of a political solution is a guarantee that the age of genocide will not return. Even if there is no political solution, we will still be able to withdraw our troops, and the government will be able to control matters. Nevertheless, this is the responsibility of the international community, which must help the Cambodian people find a way to prevent the return of the genocidal Khmer Rouge. Those who support the return of the genocidal Khmer Rouge must be strongly condemned. I think that the people in that country should protest if their government does that and implements such a policy.

If a political solution is reached, there will be an agreement on what to do with the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge may again play a part in the political life of Cambodia as a political force but not as a military force. Because if the Khmer Rouge are armed, that would be very dangerous. Cambodia is not the only country that opposes this. Most people in the world oppose that. Today, the people of the world are demanding that the Khmer Rouge desist from such activities.

[Question] How strong is each faction today? Which faction is strongest?

[Answer] The Heng Samrin faction is definitely the strongest faction. The forces of Heng Samrin are in control of the entire country. The other three factions have small forces along the border, and most of these are in camps in Thailand. However, the forces of Heng Samrin are still the strongest. The Heng Samrin government and Vietnam both agreed that Vietnam could withdraw 50,000 troops, which is half the number of Vietnamese troops stationed in Cambodia. This shows that the Heng Samrin forces are very strong. Of the Son Sann, Sihanouk, and Khmer Rouge factions, I think that the Khmer Rouge has the largest number of troops. But I am not sure that you can say that they are very strong, because strong forces should have the support of most of the people.

The people are afraid of the Khmer Rouge. Strong forces must not only know how to fight but also how to build up their strength. I don't think that the Khmer Rouge are both politically and militarily strong. Moreover, the three Khmer factions are still fighting among themselves. Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and two or three of their close associates are evil people. They are criminals. Phnom Penh's policy is to allow the Khmer Rouge to participate in activities concerning national reconciliation. And the Khmer Rouge, minus Pol Pot and his close associates, will be permitted to participate as a party in a four-faction Khmer coalition. During the coming meeting between the four factions, the Khmer Rouge may send representatives. But it won't be Pol Pot or Ieng Sary. If they send Pol Pot or Ieng Sary, no one would accept that. They will have to send someone else. Perhaps Pol Pot and his close associates will be allowed to go live elsewhere for the rest of their lives. Intellectuals living in the United States and in the West are trying to have Pol Pot and Ieng Sary tried in the World Court. Because the crimes that they committed resulted in the deaths of millions of people. This would serve as an example for future generations and help prevent something like this from happening again.

[Question] What do you think about the meeting of the ASEAN foreign ministers to be held in Jakarta in July? They will discuss the Cambodia problem and peace in this region. Does Vietnam want to participate in this meeting in some capacity? And does Vietnam really want this meeting to focus on solutions to the Cambodia problem?

[Answer] Some Thai officials have stated that the next meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers will focus on the Cambodia problem. This meeting follows the meeting between Foreign Minister Alatas and our minister of foreign affairs in New York. We have been asked to wait in case anything positive transpires at the ASEAN meeting. As for Vietnam's attitude toward ASEAN, we are

delighted that countries in this region are cooperating. This is why the ASEAN countries are promoting cooperation on the economic, peace, and security fronts in this region.

This would provide an opportunity for every country in the region to work together in a single organization. Vietnam is ready to cooperate with ASEAN in economic development, not just with respect to Vietnam but with respect to all the countries in this region. This will benefit us, too. Because if there are two organizations in this region, that will give other countries an opportunity to interfere. That could lead to conflict between the two organizations. It would be better if there is only one organization in this region. We are still considering joining ASEAN. As for the next meeting, we have not been invited to attend. We were informed that the ASEAN foreign ministers will hold a meeting. Also, the European Community, Japan, and the United States have not allowed every country to participate.

As for the three Indochina countries, we have not formed any cooperative organization. But relations between us are good. We are all working to develop our countries. This depends on each country's environment. We do not have any joint organization. But we are cooperating on the economic front and in various other ways, such as building roads. There is international cooperation, such as cooperation between Vietnam and Laos, Laos and Cambodia, and Cambodia and Vietnam. It should be noted that it was France, not Vietnam, that created Indochina. After France invaded Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, the three countries were under the control of the French governor-general. Later on, we joined forces to oppose the French. But in 1950, the Indochinese Communist Party was dissolved. In its place, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam each had its own communist party. Until now, there has never been any talk of a tripartite organization.

As I said, as the gap between the Soviet Union and Thailand has narrowed, so has the gap between Vietnam and Thailand. We are delighted by the recent progress made in solving the Cambodia problem. Thailand has participated in this attempt. First, Thai leaders have reacted positively to Vietnam's withdrawal of 50,000 troops from Cambodia. Second, Thailand has expressed a willingness to meet our minister of foreign affairs in Bangkok. This is an appropriate time to hold talks and begin cooperating in an attempt to solve the Cambodia problem. These are good signals from Thailand. We are trying to do the same thing. We are trying to talk to them and give them some good news. Now that we have announced that we are going to withdraw 50,000 troops from Cambodia and withdraw all our forces at least 30 km from the Thai border, once Thailand is sure that we will actually do this, I am sure that it won't be long before Thailand and Vietnam are cooperating well with each other. That is in accord with the hopes of the peoples of both countries.

I hope that the Cambodia problem can be solved before 1990. I have a positive view. There is a strong political chance of this happening.

11943

Date of National Population, Housing Census Set
42090215A Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
10 Jun 88 p 1

[Text] On 8 and 9 June the Central General Population Census Guidance Committee convened a meeting of heads of population census guidance committees of the provinces, municipalities, and special zones directly under the central echelon to study and discuss documents in order to begin a general population census, on a nationwide scale, on 1 August 1989.

The scope of the census will include both Vietnamese and foreigners who are permanent residents in all localities within the territory of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Vietnamese who have been sent to work, study, and participate in cooperative programs abroad.

The contents of the census include 24 principal questions on two census forms: a population census form and a housing census form.

In order to do a good job of carrying out the preparatory tasks between now and April 1989, the delegates agreed unanimously that the party committee echelons and governmental administrations must strengthen the census committees in the provinces and districts and coordinate closely with the process of reorganizing the organizational apparatus of the party and government at all levels, so that the cadres in the population census committees will not be greatly affected.

It will be a basic census carried out on a large scale, with many complicated tasks, so it is necessary to organize sufficient training in the professional contents and train instructors for the village and subward population census committee members, census team leaders, census takers, and people who write code numbers on the census forms.

Comrade Vo Van Kiet, a member of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee, acting chairman of the Council of Ministers, and head of the Central General Population Census Guidance Committee, was in attendance and addressed the conference. He stated that "Our country's last general population census was carried out in 1979. Since then there have been many changes in the population census, with regard to quantity, quality, and structure. Therefore, we must carry out a general population census in 1989 to accurately determine the population and the work force, in order to serve the drafting of 5-year plans and draft an economic-social development strategy and population policies for the 1990-2000 decade.

"In order to victoriously fulfill that central ad hoc mission, all echelons and sectors must be concerned with doing a good job of leading and guiding the census within their unit or sector, and overcome subjective manifestations and regarding it as a simple task and then turning it over to the census cadres."

A representative of the U.N. Population Fund in Hanoi also attended the conference.

5616

MILITARY

Mass Mobilization, Participation in Northern Border Defense

42090219 Hanoi *QUAN DOI NHAN DAN* in Vietnamese 27 May 88 p 2

[Article by Phuc Nguyen: "Border Defense Troops and Militia in Frontier Protection Disposition"]

[Text] Lang Son has a long battle front—the border that the Chinese reactionaries have been seeking in every way for the past 10 years to destroy. They have waged a war of encroachment and sabotage at many points, using many cunning and insidious stratagems. They have expanded their "trade war" in many forms and levels to destroy us politically and economically, have sought means to collect military information, and have done everything to break us down. Clearly recognizing the intentions, plots and stratagems of the enemy, Lang Son has given special attention to the mission of building a disposition perfect in ideology, organization, politics, military, economy and social culture, a disposition of all the people firmly protecting the border.

The experience of Lang Son during the past several years has shown that to firmly protect the border, it is necessary to properly develop the composite strength of the local armed forces: the militia, border defense troops, local troops and main force units in the local area. These forces join in close coordination to firmly manage the border area while simultaneously mobilizing and educating all the people to participate in protecting the frontier. The enemy daily and hourly takes advantage of the difficult terrain to launch forces in sabotage activity and to make invasion preparations. A disposition of several layers and levels is necessary to spot and stop the enemy from infiltrating our interior and to stop their lackeys from crossing from our country into theirs. The spread of goods into our country by the enemy also additionally complicates the border management situation.

To firmly protect the border, the border defense troops, militia and public security forces deployed along the border must be regularly consolidated and strengthened. These forces mutually assist and coordinate with each other in their mission. Recently, discovering that the enemy had a scheme to divide these forces in order to

carry out their plots, party committee and administrative echelons in districts and villages next to the border implemented many methods to increase the strength of the armed forces in the border area. Militia units were strengthened along a course of complete political reliability. Border defense posts were increased to maintain control of the local area and people, maintaining close relations with the local party committee and government, and coordinating assignments. In Loc Binh District, the border defense posts are responsible for providing combat training to the village militia, and join the militia and other forces in coordination to formulate combat plans, and to conduct mutual patrol and guard actions to block the enemy from operating in the villages and hamlets. The system of combat hamlets and villages is perfect and complete. Thanks to good coordination of forces and knowing how to rely on the vigilance of the people, Lang Son during past years has captured hundreds of raiders and spies by both brave and clever actions.

To expand the land for production development, Lang Son advocates reallocating the production area of forward villages near the border belt area. The border defense line receives total concern. Not only are the armed forces fully and strongly organized but a widespread front of all the people producing and protecting the border has been formed. Each family and each individual living and working in the border area must be simultaneously concerned about production, life and good national defense and security. Each small field, hill, orchard, production team and residential group must be a link in a complete system of all the people protecting the border. While engaged in production, the local armed forces join the people in properly organizing sentries to protect property and life. No matter where he is engaged in production, each individual must be concerned about protecting himself when the enemy shells or launches a lightning or protracted ground attack. Only in this way will the strength of our forces on the front line become increasingly stronger.

In Tu Mich, a village with up to 20 kilometers bordering on China, we had members of the party committee, people's committee and village unit tell us that a complex situation was daily and hourly occurring in the border area. Indeed, the enemy has many dangerous plans. The trade war they have so resolutely waged for countless years is at times more dangerous than the shelling. The enemy's efforts to attract the people in the village by arousing their curiosity and attacking through the profit seeking of a number of individuals are aimed both at adversely affecting production and creating political turmoil. The village party committee secretary stated that the enemy can operate only in those locations where we have weaknesses and a loss of vigilance. In those places where the militia and border defense troops have properly united, coordinated and mobilized all the people to participate in border protection, they have no way to set foot on our land and not one can slip into the border belt area.

Also in the border village of Tu Mich, the party, local government and military leaders unanimously agree on the viewpoint of "using the people as the supporting base" in border protection. The party committee secretary, a native of the village who understands in a fairly profound manner the situation of each mountain village and hamlet, believes it is necessary to hold small-scale and sporadic conferences and exchanges of opinion with the people, especially the old and middle-aged, on national defense in general and border protection in particular. A great many of these elders thoroughly and profoundly understand the psychological characteristics of the ethnic minority people, their voices are listened to by the people, and there especially are many with a firm grasp of the enemy's evil plots and stratagems. These elders themselves are the ones conducting the best recruiting and mobilization, causing the entire people to clearly understand the enemy and to further increase their responsibility toward maintaining security and order in the village and firmly protecting the border.

While working with the border defense agency of Lang Son Province, we also received similar opinions. It is true that the enemy can only sabotage those locations where we have weaknesses, where the border defense forces are not closely connected with each other, and where the implementation of mass mobilization is substandard. Because the border between Lang Son and China is fairly long and the population distribution is disproportionate, each district and village must have plans to organize different forces. However, combat strength can be achieved only when the border protection mission becomes the responsibility of each individual, civilian as well as military.

7300

Military Region No 9 Strengthens Training of Troops for Cambodia

42090208b Hanoi *QUAN DOI NHAN DAN*
in Vietnamese 24 May 88 pp 1, 4

[Article by La Son Nhung: "Military Region No 9—Overcome Weaknesses in Training Detachments of Units Engaged in International Obligation in Cambodia"]

[Text] In past years, volunteer units within the jurisdiction of Military Region No 9 have not paid adequate attention to individual training and tactical training at detachment level in defensive and offensive fighting as well as in patrolling, guarding and protecting targets. The Command of Military Region No 9 has determined that, to raise combat and work efficiency we should, first of all, focus on practical training at the basic level, training each soldier and each detachment thoroughly. During inspection, some units were found slighting the training of small detachments operating as commandos. Others conducted training just to have something to fill their reports with or to satisfy their craving for performances. Still others engaged in perfunctory training. Worse yet,

there were units failing to carry out training programs and plans strictly as assigned, causing them to hold urgent and hurried drills, "working against time" to meet emergency needs.

A main cause for that phenomenon is a failure to understand thoroughly orders on combat training, unrealistic planning, unsynchronized measures, a lack of dynamism and innovation in training organization, and unclear division of responsibilities between command and management. Units were also found tampering with training time to increase production, granting furloughs without respect for official percentages, displaying laxity in managing troop strength and training time, giving little attention to training methods, and remunerating and training detachment leaders not in accordance with regulations. Another reason is that units have not been able to get rid of bureaucratic tendencies, still relying heavily on state assistance, drawing comfort from the fact that their troops were stationed across a large area, and failing to implement their training plans and training curricula.

Since the beginning of the year, the command of Military Region No 9 has changed its leadership and command approach, sending more specialized cadres along with assistants to grassroots units. With the regular assistance of staff, political, rear service, technical, and reconnaissance organs of the military region, units of our volunteer army in Cambodia have promptly overcome weaknesses in detachment training at the basic level. Through inspection, military region officials have assessed the quality of training with accuracy, being able to classify cadres and combatants of the reserves according to their technical skills. Right at the outset of the training season, 95 percent of detachment leaders attended training camps. In units operating as commandos on a large area, up to 100 percent of leading detachment cadres have received thorough technical training, enabling them to grasp and improve training methods. Those combatants recently assigned to hard and complex spots have especially received basic and practical training, making them familiar with combat practices. Management of training time and troop attendance was stricter than it was in years past. Units B26, S12, T13, S6, and N1 have devised plans for detachment training in line with the new program. They have completed Stage I with high-quality results.

9213/12232

Registration of Do Luong Reservists Grows 'From Compulsion to Voluntarism'

42090208a Hanoi *QUAN DOI NHAN DAN*
in Vietnamese 23 May 88 p 2

[Article by Nguyen Dinh Thai: "Do Luong District Registers, Manages Reservists—From Mandatory to Voluntary Registration; Formerly, A Single Echelon Was Involved; Now, All Three Echelons Take Care of Reservist Registration"]

[Excerpts] Do Luong is a midland district of Nghe Tinh Province with 160,000 inhabitants. Each year, it bids

farewell to over 500 youths joining the army and welcomes home hundreds of others who have fulfilled their military obligations. In the face of such a large number of demobilized and discharged military personnel, what has it done to manage them and encourage them to return to active service in case of need? Looking into facts, we saw a new remarkable and heartening trait in its effort to register and manage the reserves, maturing from compulsion into voluntarism under close coordination of all three echelons in charge of management of the reserves.

From Compulsion to Voluntarism

According to Hoang Van Trac, Do Luong armed forces commander, reservist registration was once a very tough undertaking. District military organs did not know the exact number of prospective reservists with technical skills—a situation leading to lax management. There were two main causes:

—Upon fulfilling their military obligations, nearly all returnees from both sexes were unwilling to sign for the reserves, preferring instead to take a break and shun control by military organs. That shyness was exacerbated by the contract system in agriculture, making it more profitable for former military personnel to avoid registration and engage in business, “giving a boost” to their family economy following years of being outpaced by friends.

—The district subcommittee on the reserves was poorly organized and has not done its task properly. Some prospective reservists did show up, but only to find out that registration cadres were busy with other jobs. Repeated registration failures eventually forced all of them to stay home.

In light of that situation, the district military committee asked standing committees of the district CPV and people's committees to hold a joint conference of local representatives of army, public security, grain, trade and public health organs and leading village cadres to discuss coordination for better management. The conference unanimously agreed on the mandatory approach, directing all demobilized and discharged military personnel to sign up for the reserves with the district military committee. After submitting information and records on the services they formerly belonged to and on their technical skills, discharges receive a reservist registration receipt. On the basis of that receipt, the district public security organ will begin procedures to grant residency status, the grain sector will sell quota rice, the trade corporation will issue coupons for staple commodities and production installations will provide employment. The district military committee has assigned two competent cadres to the reservist registration and management desk. The committee on the reserves made public the names of these cadres and set office space aside for registration activities every Friday. Working with diligence, meticulousness, joy, and courteousness, it has registered with

success all former military personnel, classifying them according to their skills, age brackets and health conditions before sending them over to the reserve forces depending on annual quotas. The district military committee has taken care to put reservists in contact with their new units.

Reservist registration in Do Luong has gradually become a standard procedure, growing from compulsion to voluntarism.

The district military committee now has full knowledge of the political and cultural skills and strengths of reservists, creating conditions for organs, mass organizations and villages to discover, select, train and employ them as local cadres. Currently in Do Luong, former military personnel accounts for 49.5 percent of district and village people's councils and for 49 percent of local CPV committees.

Three-Pronged Management

A striking feature in the movement to manage the reserves in Do Luong is that it has expanded both in width and in depth. Its efficacy was reflected in the promptness with which reservists responded to roll calls and took in annual training camps—a result of the close cooperation between three echelons: units that receive reservists, the district military committee and villages and wards.

9213/12232

Military Unit C-82 Changes Training Focus 42090208c Hanoi QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in Vietnamese 25 May 88 p 2

[Article by Phuc Nguyen: “From Combat to Training—There Can Be No Combat Efficiency With Improper Training”]

[Text] We have had opportunities to visit training camps and talk with local commanders about training to suit combat and frontline realities. But after observing cadres and combatants of Group No 6 in combat at the H battlefield, we felt it necessary to assert, once again, that training does not accommodate displays of formalism, no matter how small, and that there can be no combat efficiency with improper training—must be true to the core before his most difficult and demanding teacher—the front. What he has learned in training, he will practice on the battleground.

Nguyen Duc Co, C-82 commander, stated: “Combat realities do make cadres and combatants more serious about training.” Formerly, some detachments conducted perfunctory training and often simulated battlefronts were newly harvested ricefields with no camouflage, no mountains, no obstacles, no trenches, and no fortifications. Detachment commanders trained their men about oversimplified, often absurd, situations, omitting the

enemy factor and frequently putting together a disorderly and illogical setup. In some instances, commanders ordered target practice while offering virtually no guidance and allowing trainees to discharge their rifles at will until ammunition was exhausted. Because commanders did not follow their men closely and because training was not meticulous, trainees could not grasp the basics of combat. Training with insufficient time schedules punched holes in the knowledge of combatants, creating a situation in which bad troops mixed with good ones.

And these are not isolated phenomena. Clearly, the quality of training cannot depend on results of marksmanship alone (not to speak of contests with falsified figures). We have condemned attempts to chase performances and to focus on appearances at the expense of substance. We must continue to do that. In combat, these evils will be our first and very dangerous enemy.

Most detachment commanders in Unit C-82 have had no combat experience; however, they have matured at a fast pace. The unit has taken the initiative to teach them combat experience and knowledge about the enemy and frontline activities. Shortcomings in command, in handling combat situations and in evaluating the enemy were reviewed promptly, complete with analyses and assessments. After a short time, command skills of cadres from platoon to company levels have clearly increased. In training, some combat situations were close to reality. Due to this and to lessons learned from solving rather complex training factors, cadres at various levels were able to cut down the time needed to get the feel of actual combat situations, addressing them serenely, firmly, and creatively. Nevertheless, unlike technical training, tactical training does not yield visible results, thus requiring of cadres and combatants a high degree of self-awareness, with which they can predict what will happen next while examining combat situations and taking follow up steps. If training were oversimplified and frivolous, they would experience surprise while facing combat before losing heart.

About combat skills of his men, Unit C-82 Commander Co said that they were developed in training and continued to be strengthened in combat. Combat skills are made up of many factors but they must include proper technical and tactical training. Only when the combatant masters various kinds of weapons at his disposal, individual combat skills and detachment tactics will he be able to build trust, defend frontline targets in confidence and fight until the last drop of blood. An idea is that, despite the "high-sounding" effect of training camps, the combatant will learn from A to Z on the battlefield. True, in combat military personnel mature continually in many respects; but without proper training they cannot stand firm. Only in experiencing combat do we realize that basic training is extremely necessary. Not much time is left for retraining combatants on such trifling practices as standing guard, throwing hand-grenades, discovering enemy targets, etc. Through actual fighting, we can see more clearly the need to set standards for

technical and tactical training. Field and nighttime training should account for an appropriate amount of time. Marksmanship and use of incendiary and explosive devices improve combat techniques while acquainting trainees gradually with frontline realities.

Nguyen Duc Co and other combatants in the unit were asked to comment on seminars which were usually held at the close of a training stage or year, focusing more on form than on substance. Co said: "To hold seminars to assess the unit's performance with accuracy is an imperative need; but in practice, only the cream of the crop is sent out to participate, with the belief that their performance can reflect that of the unit. The truth, however, is otherwise. It is preposterous to see that performance as a yardstick to measure the unit's combat strength."

In the judgment of these combatants, superficial and lax training is unacceptable. Trainees will have to foot that bill with their own lives and that of their comrades-in-arms. And attempts to give attention to form and to play false will lead to similar consequences.

Finally, Nguyen Duc Co urged all units to teach combatants more about the enemy, to disseminate more experience on various battlefields, and to analyze more deeply the enemy's weaknesses so as to seize the initiative in fighting the enemy with the highest efficiency. Training in conformity with realities and with combat targets is an important factor in guaranteeing success.

9213/12232

Hai Phong Military School Improves Quality of Education

*42090207 Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
13 Jun 88 p 3*

[Article by Duy Phuc: "The Quality of Education at Hai Phong Military School"]

[Text] Many leadership cadres of the Ministry of National Defense, military command cadres of the military regions, provinces, and municipalities, and instructors at the officers' schools and local military schools all over the nation come to the Hai Phong Military School to study, and exchange experiences regarding, improving the quality of instruction and study at, and organizing and developing, the local military schools.

The school has held 322 training classes for 30,544 students, from gun crew leaders to reserve officers and students of colleges and specialized secondary schools, and from full-time military cadres in the villages, sub-wards, wards, and districts to personnel of the party, civilian, and governmental organs at the local level. Each class and category of student has different requirements and contents, but must have good study practices and activities. Between 91 and 99.62 percent of the students have met the training requirements and after returning

to the local level have fulfilled their responsibilities and contributed to building up the people's armed forces and teaching consciousness of national defense by all the people.

The school concentrates on studying the creation and improvement of programs and contents that are in correct accordance with the training functions and goals and are practical and appropriate to responsibilities, and pays attention to improving the students' actual ability. During the recent period, the school has prepared and printed more than 2,000 pieces of material, concentrating on the most essential matters of the local military work. Attention has been paid to raising the level of the instructors with regard to military science, science and technology, and education science. During the time between the training classes, the school trains instructors in military and political subjects and in the methodology of managing students and giving lectures, sends instructors to do practical work, and adds researchers and instructors to the self-produced weapons class.

All of the school's cadres and instructor have been commended and 263 have become Warriors of Emulation and Determined-to-Win Warriors. The school has provided more than 1,000 instructors and management cadres to the units and to fulfill international missions, and has helped our friends set up local military schools.

The Hai Phong Military School has effectively used the state's investment capital, has been assisted by the local party organization, governmental administration, and people, has utilized local capabilities, and has gradually constructed a complete system of classroom buildings, specialized classrooms, libraries, work areas, drill fields, and living quarters. The combat methods classroom and the self-produced weapons classroom have been evaluated highly and are regarded as models for study and emulation by the local military schools. In the combat methods classroom, the instructors introduce in a concentrated manner the principal matters regarding the local military work. At the same time, the students grasp the principles and theories and their position and role at the basic level, in both peacetime and wartime, when fighting independently as well as when engaged in coordinated combat. The Hai Phong Military School is the first unit to have complete organization and facilities, and a system of contents, programs, and specific materials for a self-produced weapons classroom, and a movement for the cadres, instructors, and students to come up with innovations and improve classroom aids. The Ministry of National Defense has used that classroom as the basis for preparing uniform materials for the local military schools. The school has helped Military Region 1 and Hai Phong Province organize and set up self-produced weapons classrooms.

The school has built good military-civilian solidarity relations. As a managing unit, the school has organized many meetings with local party and governmental cadres, and with key cadres of 30 organs, in order to draft

and complete plans to coordinate in combat, combine national defense with security and security with national defense, and build localities that are strong with regard to economics, national defense, and security. Recently the school has also contributed to projects to clear wasteland, reclaim land from the sea, build roads, and build water conservancy projects. By contributing nearly 10,000 work-days and excavating 8,000 cubic meters of earth and rock, it has contributed positively to economic development in Hai Phong. The school has created "brotherhood" ties with, and sent instructors to, general schools to guide the creation of a military way of life for the students, and met with representatives of families in areas in which troops are stationed to encourage the people to contribute opinions.

The Hai Phong Military School has trained skilled local military cadres and met practical requirements at the basic level. With the results attained in instruction, study, and construction, for 15 consecutive years the school has been a Determined-to-Win Unit, and for 7 years its party organization has been recognized as "pure and strong." The school is worthy of being allowed to keep the circulating "Best in Study" emulation flag bestowed by our beloved Uncle Ho.

5616

ECONOMIC

Thanh Hoa Experiences 'Serious' Famine
42090218 Hanoi LAO DONG in Vietnamese
16 Jun 88 p 5

[Article by Chinh Tam and Van Ba: "A Question Requiring an Answer"]

[Text] When we arrived in Thanh Hoa at the end of May, the rice had begun to ripen and sporadic harvesting was being conducted by the farmers in a few locations. This signalled that the famine had been overcome! Our hearts were partially relieved of concerns held for some time. No matter what, there was something to eat. The people who had left Thanh Hoa Province in search of a living were moving back to their native villages.

However, while working with some members of the provincial party committee as well as visiting farmers in the rural area, we tried to understand one thing, or to state it more accurately, tried to find an answer for the question: Why did a famine occur in Thanh Hoa? If this question cannot be answered in a clear and accurate manner, there is nothing to ensure that the recent painful situation will not recur in a number of inherently populous and prosperous locations.

A Famine in Truth

No one now any longer denies the severity of the famine in Thanh Hoa. "That there was a famine this year can no longer be denied," Le Huu Hinh, Vice Chairman of the

Agricultural Bloc, Provincial People's Committee, told us and we noted that he was correct. A few figures: of the 2.3 million people living in the rural area, 1.6 million were short of food, including 900,000 who suffered severe shortages or as it is called here, "missed meals for months on end." The people had to search everywhere for a bite to eat and a most shameful thing occurred for the people of Thanh Hoa Province: many had to move somewhere else and beg for food.

Everyone unanimously agrees on the serious nature of the famine but no one makes similar statements about its abruptness. Working with a number of comrades in the province, we often heard said that the famine "abruptly and surprisingly" arrived. However, when we asked the farmers, they all said they had seen the hunger long before. All of them were telling the truth.

Someone listening only to the situation as reported by the provincial leadership committee and Grain Service Director would clearly be surprised. According to these reports, grain output during 1986 was 263,200 tons and 1987 was considered a bumper crop year (one newspaper printed an article stating that Thanh Hoa had an unprecedented bumper crop!). The amount of paddy procured during 1986 was more than 200,000 tons and during 1987 was 164,000 tons (reported up to 31 March 1988). Clearly these figures never signalled an approaching famine. How could there be hunger when the grain average per capita during 1987 was announced as 283.1 kilograms? As someone analyzed, the average during 1983 was only 267.6 kilograms but no famine occurred in 1984.

As for the farmers, whose hands produce the paddy seed and who must turn in so much and retain so much, the understanding was clear: to them, there was nothing surprising about the famine at all. They felt it after the 5th-month spring crop and especially after the "surplus" 10th-month crop which was actually a great loss, they had no doubt that a famine would surely occur.

Thanh Hoa's recent battle against famine was truly violent with not a few examples of sharing one's food and clothing with others and helping one another between the people and between the highlanders and lowlanders. (Here must be recorded the wholehearted assistance of Thanh Hoa's highlanders. Without the "staghorn manioc" brought down from upland districts, the danger would have been much greater). In this article however, we will not touch upon this story but wish to relate some others.

Lying Is a Crime

Yes, the famine in Thanh Hoa, when the direct cause is examined, was the result of lying.

It is possible in Thanh Hoa to encounter two major lies.

First is the lying about grain procurement. In a session of the Provincial People's Council on 26 April 1988, Grain Service Director Luong Ngoc Bich reported that 164,000

tons of paddy were procured during 1987. By adding the more than 46,000 tons of paddy brought forward from the previous year, the total amount of paddy during 1987 was more than 210,000 tons. The volume of paddy disbursed within the province during 1987 (according to reports up to 31 December 1987) was 118,410 tons, 8,941 tons was allocated to the central government, and more than 20,000 tons remained for transfer to the following year. However, when the famine occurred, the Grain Service honestly stood with hands tied. The central government had to issue Thanh Hoa thousands of tons to resist hunger. Even those under the purview of grain supply were unable to purchase their full grain ration during recent months. Where did the grain go?

It is necessary to think back several years. Thanh Hoa was considered a locality that did well in grain procurement and the province held a ceremony every year to announce the achievements made! The famine raises some major questions: Where is the procured grain located? Or were those only phantom figures to report achievements while in reality, that procurement level could not be attained? However, if that is so, on what were the grain purchase funds and exchange goods spent? A major investigation is necessary before these questions can be answered.

Second is the lying about grain yields and outputs. The famine also raises the question of whether the grain yields and outputs of Thanh Hoa during the past several years have attained the officially reported levels or not? Investigation indicates the truth that during the first few years of the eighties, Thanh Hoa agricultural production rose, primarily due to application of a new contract system to stimulate the production interest of farmers. Later however, agricultural production increasingly marked time and partially declined (as said here, the contract mechanism had "aged" and its effect was gradually lost, primarily due to elevation of contract levels). Meanwhile, the grain collection levels rose unceasingly: the 1982 collection level of 117,000 tons rose to 205,854 tons in 1986! Reserve levels among the farmers gradually dried up. Grain dredging resulted in series of cooperatives without any significant reserves at all. Cooperatives with a previous average of 50 to 100 tons in reserve now had none. The situation was totally contrary to the picture drawn for upper echelons: Thanh Hoa enjoyed a bumper crop for years on end and even 1987, during which the crops suffered fairly serious losses, was declared by a vice chairman of the Provincial People's Committee as an unprecedented bumper crop year.

Comrades in Thanh Hoa said that sharp disputes occasionally occurred within the provincial leadership ranks concerning designation of the province's grain yields and outputs. Due to toadyism and the pursuit of achievement, Provincial Party Committee Chairman Ha Trong Hoa usually "jacked up" grain yields over their actual

level and initiated actions to confront anyone who did not support him (when the Deputy Director of the Statistics Branch presented a yield level lower than that estimated by the Standing Committee of the Provincial People's Committee, he was collared by Ha Trong Hoa, and Ha Trong Hoa himself once said, "A number of people constantly speak of low yields with an objective of negating the achievements of the provincial leadership committee and echoing the Beijing expansionists!").

Naturally, many other factors led to the famine. Recently, famine was not exclusive to Thanh Hoa since a number of other localities were also on the verge of the same condition in varying degrees. Many issues about the rural area, agriculture and farmers must be examined on the plane of overall policy on a nationwide scope, especially on relations between the state and the farmers and on agricultural production cooperatives (we will have an occasion to return to these burning issues). However, in an examination within the scope of Thanh Hoa Province alone, we still note other additional factors created by the province's leadership, including lying of a systematic nature. This is one of reasons that the famine here was a "surprise" to many people (Le Bach Lan, a Provincial People's Council delegate, told us, "I was also deceived"!), and it caused the famine to become increasingly severe.

For a long time, in the struggle against negative occurrences in society, we have usually emphasized corruption. This is a necessity and must be further emphasized but if we only emphasize this and ignore the irresponsibility of managers and those with position and power, it is wrong. A cadre misappropriating a few million dong leads to social consequences that are at times not as serious as a cadre with position and power lying. It has been seen what things evolved from lying in Thanh Hoa. The time has come for us to consider lying as a fault of responsibility and in all cases lying itself as a crime.

A Great Challenge

The recent famine in Thanh Hoa was a great challenge to the party and administrative organizations there. Although only a period of several months, there is sufficient basis for reexamining the quality and ability of each individual. We know there were many examples of truly moving service to the people. Not only revolving around the immediate problem of grain to resist hunger but also efforts to look after and protect the rice fields threatened by all kinds of disaster: drought, disease and harmful insects, especially mealy bug infestation.

However, also through this great challenge, a number of agencies and cadres (including even party members) found ways to harmfully and unforgivably take advantage of and exploit the property of the people. Among those purchasing the immature rice of the farmers at a cheap price were even some cooperative management cadres. Gouging the people during normal times was not enough so they took advantage of this perilous situation

to swiftly enrich themselves. Most blameworthy of all was that right during these months of famine, a number of grain cadres sought means to steal paddy from the state. The secretary of the Nong Cong District Party Committee confirmed that the granary custodian of that district misappropriated 43 tons of grain! The culprit was apprehended. Similar incidents occurred in a number of other locations.

In our hands in a letter from a number of cadres in the Thanh Hoa internal affairs bloc that accuses the Thanh Hoa People's Organ of Control [4 lines illegible] purchasing grain at a supervised price in a large volume. The agency has about 50 people. Besides grain bought in accordance with allowances, an additional 20 tons of paddy were purchased from January to April 1988, meaning during the worst period of the famine.

Corruption under normal conditions is unforgivable but is even more so under conditions of a famine.

It is unnecessary to look far. In our opinion, it is only necessary to examine the actions and bearing of cadres and party members during the period of this famine in order to purify the party ranks and the state apparatus to a no small degree.

The question, "Why did such a serious famine occur in Thanh Hoa?" can only be accurately and specifically answered by the people, cadres and party members of this province. As for ourselves, we left Thanh Hoa with new hope. Thanh Hoa has the foundation for a strong change after promulgation of Party Central Committee Secretariat Notice 74. Surely, the active elements in this province will awaken and Thanh Hoa will advance from darkness to light.

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SOCIAL

Recommendations for Raising Professional Level of Legal Cadres

42090212A Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
10 Jun 88 p 3

[Article by Nguyen Quoc Thuy of the Ministry of Justice: "Raise the Level and Professional Consciousness of the Cadres of Investigation, Prosecution, and Trial Organs"]

[Text] Recently the situation of violations and crimes has undergone complicated changes and in places and at times has been very serious. In the work of struggling against crime, which is carried out at the basic level, combining mass forces with the specialized, professional forces of the functional sectors has created new, basic transformations and advances, maintained political security and social order, and effectively resisted the negative phenomena in society.

The investigation, prosecution, and trial work of the public security, control, and court organs are, fundamentally, legally correct and have the confidence of the masses. In addition to the strict and just verdicts, in some localities there are still serious deficiencies and mistakes. According to reports of many local people's courts, in 1987 159 people were investigated, prosecuted, and tried unjustly. People have been sentenced to 20 years, life in prison, or death for such serious crimes as murder, but when retried in the appeal phase the judge or review director has acquitted them because they were found innocent. Some of them had been in jail many years.

Those mistakes brought about for those people and their families many losses with regard to morale and honor, physical suffering, and losses of property.

What are the reasons for such serious mistakes? To answer that question, the echelons, sectors, and cadres engaged in investigation, prosecution, and trial work must review their work sharply, truthfully, and sincerely.

Everyone acknowledges that legally correct investigation, prosecution, and trial work is always difficult and complicated because of the time and space conditions of events. Some cases and incidents have just occurred, while others occurred a decade or decades ago, some occurred in the air, underground, or under the sea, and there is direct evidence for some but only indirect evidence for others. Those difficulties exist in all countries. In Vietnam the difficulties are even greater because science in general and legal science specifically—such as the underdevelopment of the public defender and inspector systems and the low level of investigation, setting up files, and judging (not to mention the negative manifestations). The educational levels of the litigants and the masses are still low, which limits their ability to observe and evaluate in order to serve as objective witnesses. The psychology of the people, of those who are directly concerned, are still constricted by customs, education, religion, rank, and economics, which prevents them from telling the truth and even causes them to speak untruths.

A number of cadres who do investigatory work do not fully realize those difficulties and are subjective and superficial, as manifested in the initial investigation phase, arbitrary arrests, coached testimony, testimony obtained by trickery, forced testimony, and even beatings of the accused to obtain confessions that conform to the opinions of the cadres. In the investigation, prosecution, and trial phase there is also subjectivism in accordance with the concept "trying on the basis of dossiers," which is too remote from actual life and society, and not in accordance with the principle "placing more emphasis on evidence than on testimony." There is a lack of energy in uncovering contradictions in files to find

objective truth. "Imposed" subjectivism, from the inception of the trial and indictment of the defendant to the carrying out of the trial is a crime that must be brought to an end.

For example, a typical trial that was covered by the press was the trial of Nguyen Van Nhien in Hao Luu village, Vi Thanh District, Hau Giang Province, who was sentenced by the People's Court of Hau Giang Province to 12 years in prison for killing his wife's younger brother, Le Van To, 13 years old. The provincial public security, control, and people's court organs sentenced Nguyen Van Nhien to prison only on the basis of his testimony that he killed To. Nguyen Van Nhien made that confession because he was beaten while in jail. His confession was full of contradictions with the actual circumstances. In the course of the trial, the court did not discover the contradictions and confused the body of a child 3 or 4 years old with that of To, was 13 years old, and did not pay attention to public opinion where the crime took place.

The sentence was not appealed. Nhien spent 3 years in jail before the people discovered that To was still alive and was raising ducks in another district of Hau Giang Province.

Thus it was not the functional organ, but the masses, who discovered the unjust sentence. The court of first instance was not sufficiently capable to uncover the mistakes of the investigation and prosecution organs, and the chief judge did not pay sufficient attention to discover the mistakes of the court of first instance decision, which had legal effect.

An aspiration of our people and a requirement of the socialist legal system is that in the struggle against crime the investigation, prosecution, and trial organs must strictly observe the principles emphasized by the Sixth Party Congress: "The law must be strictly enforced and everyone is equal before the law." People who are guilty of crimes against the people must be tried and punished fairly and sternly, in accordance with the law, and innocent people must not be arrested, incarcerated, or imprisoned.

To fulfill the people's aspiration and maintain state discipline, we recommend the following:

1. The National Assembly must promptly approve and promulgate a Criminal Legal Proceedings Code which stipulates a number of uniform procedures which are compulsory in carrying out the activities of the investigation organ, the control organ, and the court in struggling against crime. It will be an important legal guarantee that in criminal trials the right person is tried for the right crime in accordance with the law, in order to end mistakes similar to those mentioned above.

2. That the political, legal, and professional ability, and moral quality and professional consciousness, of the cadres of the investigation, control, and court organs be improved urgently and by means of many appropriate forms. The echelons and sectors must review the cases in which serious mistakes have been made in order to resolutely rectify them, and expel from the public security, control, and court cadres of insufficient moral quality and ability, whose deficiencies have resulted in the unjust trying of innocent people. There must be a strong corps of cadres. As the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress emphasized, "More cadres with good moral quality and ability must be added to the legal sphere" to enable that apparatus to be capable of assimilating and effectively enforcing the Criminal Proceedings Code.

3. At the same time, it is necessary to step up the activities of the other legal organizations, such as lawyers, public defenders, inspectors, and the other criminal sciences, to contribute to enabling investigations, prosecutions, and trials to be proper and have solid scientific, legal, and political bases.

5616

'Fatherland Front' Committees Aid Hungry Families

42090194A Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
13 May 88 p 1

[Text] The Fatherland Front committees at all levels have launched a campaign for all the people to unite in assisting hungry families during the interseasonal period and to intensify the tending, fertilizing, and production of rice and subsidiary food crops.

Thanh Hoa has mobilized 6,000 tons of grain to sell to the people to fight hunger. Of that amount, 1,000 tons were sold to the peasants and 500 tons were sold to the people in areas growing industrial crops. The districts and cities persuaded the people with surplus rice to lend 2,395 tons. The Fatherland Front committees at the district and basic levels organized "rice bins to fight hunger" and collected 23,675 kg of rice, 6,518 kg of manioc, and 34,442 kg of potatoes to help 67,125 households overcome difficulties during the interseasonal period.

Mr Ngo Van Mien of Quang Thanh village in Quang Xuong District lent 27 households 1,200 kg of rice, 250 kg of potatoes, and 500 kg of corn. Mrs Kieu Thi Nhung in Dong Van village, Dong Son District lent some families 1,220 kg of paddy. Mr Lai Van Cau of Dong Tan village in Dong Son District lent 23 households 1,600 kg of paddy and 200 kg of husked rice without interest. Mr Cau also gave 200 kg of potatoes to the people to fight hunger.

In Ha Bac, the Provincial Fatherland Front Committee and its component organizations organized 48 mobile famine relief teams to go to the residential areas. As a result, they mobilized 27,868 kilograms of rice, 834 kg of corn, and 853,977 dong to help the hungry families. In Yen Phong District many families volunteered to give food. Mr Nang gave 500 kg of dried manioc and 250,000 dong. Mr Phong voluntarily lent 700 kg of paddy without interest. Five governmental organs in the districts set aside 195 kg of rice to help families experiencing difficulties and 583 basic-level cadres saved 171 kg of rice to help hungry families during the interseasonal period.

The Fatherland Front committees of Quang Ninh, Ha Nam Ninh, Ha Son Binh, and Vinh Phu provinces also sent cadres to the basic level to encourage the people to assist one another in many different forms, to meet their own needs at the local level, to lend without interest, and to provide one another with breeding stock, seeds, and grain, so that they could tend the 10th-month rice crop and continue to promote production.

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