



TEMPORARY SOLDIERS

1. The Organization of the Free Siamese in England

During World War II (and for a short period thereafter,) or from August 1942 until January 1946, I was a temporary soldier. The way in which those of my Siamese compatriots and I (who found ourselves in England when war broke out) enlisted was quite unusual. Because Great Britain and the United States were at war with Japan, we had to enlist in the British army. When the Japanese invaded Siam and the Siamese government agreed to ally with the Japanese, all Siamese living abroad were recalled to Siam. However, some refused to return to their country. They were told that if they did not return, they would be stripped of their nationality. Nevertheless they banded together, calling themselves the Free Siamese, and refused to accept loss of their nationality.

In the United States, M.R. Seni Pramot, the Siamese Minister (to Washington) became the leader of the Free Siamese

Movement there. He asked the United States to recognize the Free Siamese and permit the formation of Free Siamese military units. Hence Siamese soldiers in the United States were allowed to organize themselves into their own units, wear Siamese military uniforms and have their own Siamese commanders, and in essence remained Siamese in almost every way. This was not the case in Great Britain, where the Free Siamese were not able to organize in this way. The Minister to England was called back to Siam, and (H.R.H.) Prince Chula Chakrabongse,⁽³⁾ who was then residing in England, declined the invitation to be our leader, saying that he did not want to get involved in Siamese politics, and that besides he was already in the British Home Guard. (The former) Queen Rambai Barni⁽⁴⁾ and her brother, M.C. Suphasawatwongsanit Svasti, were interested (in being the leaders of the Free Siamese movement in England), but if either of them had filled this role it might have created misunderstandings in internal Siamese politics. Thus the Free Siamese in England never had a definite leader, and was not as organized a group as that in the United States. Members of the Free Siamese who enlisted (in England) had to join the British army, wear British uniform and be subject to the command of British officers. The Siamese who were in England at that time were also treated as enemy aliens. Siamese who enlisted in the British forces were assigned to the Pioneer Corps like other enemy aliens such as the Germans, Austrians, Italians, etc.

I would like to leave the subject of the Pioneer Corps and of our lives in the military until the next section, however, and at this point go back and complete my description of the early organization of the Free Siamese in England.

At the beginning of the War, when Britain had declared war on Germany but not yet entered the war in Asia, Siamese citizens in England were treated as aliens but not as enemy aliens. They were not interned, although their movements were somewhat restricted. Legation officials were, moreover, exempted from such restrictions. After Siam declared war on the Allies, however, the Siamese in England were declared enemy aliens, and legation officials as well as the Siamese community in general were subjected to stricter regulations. They were not interned, but were asked not to leave their living quarters after dark. Legation officials still had some money to live on as a result of a mutual arrangement between British officials in Siam and Siamese officials in Great Britain, but Siamese students found themselves cut off from financial support from Siam, and had to depend on their own earnings in Great Britain for their living. Those who were on British scholarships did not suffer, but others had to work in the fields or in factories to support themselves.

At that time Siamese students were scattered over different parts of Britain. However, a number of students, including both regular students there such as Nai Sano Tanbunyun, Nai Sano Ninkamhaeng, M.L. Cirayu Nophawong, Nai Yimyon Taesuci and M.C. Phitsadet Ratchani and students who moved there because of the War, including economics students from London (such as myself) and a number of medical students, settled in Cambridge. After the news that Siam, following her alliance with Japan, had declared war on Britain was announced, Cambridge was one of the first places where the Siamese community congregated.

As with most such groups of people, the Siamese students at Cambridge were of diverse backgrounds and positions. All of them were, however, concerned about the freedom and independence of Siam. When the Japanese first occupied Siam, we hoped that somehow the Japanese would withdraw from our country. Then when Siam took the next steps of signing a treaty with Japan and then declaring war on the United States and Britain, we were afraid of what would happen should Siam lose the war together with the Japanese. Siam would be in a very dangerous position if everyone was to follow its leaders slavishly. When the order came for us to return to Siam in exchange for (Allied) prisoners-of-war, we had to decide whether to return home, or whether we could serve our country better by staying on (in England).

Those who were most concerned about the situation were Nai Sano Tanbunyun, Nai Sano Ninkamhaeng and Nai Sawang Samkoset. They contacted a number of different people inviting them to become the leader of the Free Siamese movement in England. Nai Sano (Tanbunyun) was intelligent and very active. We often gathered in his room to hear him tell us about the course the War was taking. In particular he wrote to M.R. Seni Pramot informing him of the situation in England, and inviting him to come to England to take on the leadership of the Free Siamese movement in England in addition to that of the Free Siamese in the United States. M.R. Seni was very busy and totally unable to leave the United States, but he agreed to send a representative in his place. Soon afterwards (although it seemed a very long time to those of us who were waiting) Nai Mani Sanasen arrived. The Siamese students at Cambridge delegated Nai Sano Tanbunyun and myself to be their representatives in contacting Nai Mani

Sanasen in London. This was in about April or May of 1942.

We had not met Nai Mani up till then, and only knew that he had worked in the League of Nations for a long time. After we became acquainted, he told us he had lived in England when he was very young, when his father had been Siamese Minister to London. After completing his secondary education in England, he had received a law degree and had worked for the League of Nations from then on. When the war broke out he had been told to return to Siam to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, on his way home via the United States he had run into certain complications due to wartime conditions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had therefore instructed him to remain in Washington, D.C. and to work in the legation there. Since Nai Mani was acquainted with many British officials, both military and civilian, M.R. Seni had asked him to go to England to help organize the Free Siamese movement there. (After the war Nai Mani worked for a United Nations agency until he retired, and has since been living in Switzerland.)

Nai Mani set up an office in Brown's Hotel, London. From there he contacted British officials, and tried to get the British government to recognize the Free Siamese Movement in the same way that the United States had done in America. The British government refused to grant such recognition, however, until they learned that there were more than forty Free Siamese in England, none of whom intended to go back to Siam until after the war, and all of whom had determined on working for their country by enlisting in the British army regardless of the positions and duties (which might be assigned to them). The British government then began to accord recognition to the Free Siamese

in England under Nai Mani Sanasen's leadership, although they indicated clearly that this did not imply recognition of a government-in-exile.

Nai Mani Sanasen depended on us to contact other Siamese. At the time that contacts were first made between M.R. Seni Pramot and Siamese students at Cambridge, Nai Sano Tanbunyun circulated letters to Siamese within and outside the legation informing them of the organization of the Free Siamese in England and of its contacts with M.R. Seni in the United States. Equally, when radio stations picked up news from Siam, this was relayed to Nai Sano. After Nai Mani set up an office in London, Nai Sano and I sent out a newsletter informing the Siamese community of actions that were taking place at the time, and also calling for recruits. After we were recognized by the British government we made formal requests for such volunteers. However, the information on each volunteer was kept confidential so that those who elected to return to Siam in exchange for prisoners-of-war could not carry any information back to Bangkok. In the newsletter we made it clear that we were requesting strictly volunteers, and were not attempting to place pressure on those trying to make a decision on whether to return to Siam or whether to stay in England. The ship carrying Siamese citizens who wished to be exchanged for prisoners-of-war was about to leave. Many of our friends who could not remain in England for personal reasons were on board. Some of them, such as Nai Mala Bunyapraphatson, later on worked for the Free Siamese in Bangkok.

More than fifty applications gradually came in as more and more people decided to join the Free Siamese. They ranged from former Queen Rambai Barni and her followers to private

students, many of whom we had not met previously. These last included Nai Bunphop Phamonsing (*see Sinlapa Thai nai Yurop (Siamese Artists in Europe), Nippon Co. 1952.*) They also included a number of legation officials, some of as high a rank as First Secretary or its equivalent.

The Free Siamese in England were officially called upon to join the British armed forces on August 7th 1942. A physical examination was called for in accordance with British law. Certain of the volunteers were found to be unfit, and so were exempted from military service. Others were exempted for other reasons. For the benefit of future generations, I am here copying down the list of Free Siamese who were in England at this period, dividing them into those who had civilian duties, and those who enlisted in the army.

A. Free Siamese Who Were Not Enlisted in the Army

1. Queen Rambai Barni.
2. M.C. Phong Phatsamani Svasti (Cakraphan).
3. Nai Mani Sanasen.
4. Nai Sano Tanbunyun.
5. Luang Camnong Ditthakan.
6. Nai Yim Phungphrakhun.
7. Nai Sombun Palasathian.
8. Nai Phrom Watcharakhup.
9. Nai Kasem Phalachiwa.
10. Nai Teklim Khunwisan.
11. Nai Camnong Sumsawat.
12. Nai Saman Mantraphon.

13. Nai Kasem Lamsam.
14. Nai Wari Wirangkun.
15. Miss Suphap Raktapracit (Yotsunthorn).*
16. Miss Buppha Taesuci.
17. Miss Anong Taesuci.

*Miss Suphap Raktapracit was later sent to India to help with broadcasting work. Numbers 5-7 were officials at the legation in London.

B. Free Siamese Who Were Enlisted as Soldiers

1. Luang At Phisankit.
2. Luang Phatthara Wathi.
3. Nai Klin Thephatsadin Na Ayutthaya.
4. Nai Prasoet Pathummanon ("Pao").
5. M.C. Karawik Cakraphan ("Rasami").
6. M.C. Kokasat Svasti.
7. M.C. Phitsadet Ratchani ("Man").
8. M.C. Ciridanai Kitiyakon ("Ri").
9. M.R. Kitinadda Kitiyakon.
10. M.L. Cirayu Nophawong.
11. Nai Sawat Sisuk ("Raven").
12. Nai Cunkheng (Phatpong) Rinthakun ("Phong").
13. Nai Prathan Premkamon ("Daeng").
14. Nai Puey Ungphakorn ("Khem").
15. Nai Prem Buri ("Di").
16. Nai Racit Buri ("Kham").
17. Nai Samran Wannaphruk ("Kheng").

18. Nai Thana Posayanon ("Kon").
19. Nai Krit Tosayanon ("Khong").
20. Nai Sano Ninkamhaeng ("Cio").
21. Nai Praphot Paorohit ("Nun").
22. Nai Thep Semathiti ("Nu").
23. Nai Kamhaeng Phalangkun ("Lo").
24. Nai Arun Sarathet ("Kai Fa").
25. Nai Yimyon Taesuci.
26. Nai Bunphop Phamonsing.
27. Nai Bunlut Kasemsuwan.
28. Nai To Bunnak.
29. Nai Pat Patthamasathan ("Na").
30. Nai Bunsong Phung Sunthon ("Chai").
31. Nai Thot Phanthumsen ("Bun").
32. Nai Watthana Chitwari ("Thuam").
33. Nai Praphrit Na Nakhon ("Lek").
34. Nai Pracit Kongsanon (Yotsunthon) ("Kae").
35. Nai Wiwat Na Pomphet.
36. Nai Sawang Samkoset.
37. M.C. Suphasawatwongsanit Svasti ("Arun").*

Nos. 1-4 were officials of the legation in London.

No. 8 joined the army after the date of August 7th 1942.

*No. 37. The British government accepted him as a soldier under a separate arrangement.

2. General Goals of the Free Siamese in England

Those who volunteered to join the Free Siamese did so for a number of reasons. Some said they did so because of their desire to free their country, some joined out of a desire for

freedom and a sense of humanity. Others had no particular aim, but joined from a sense of duty. Many parents had sent their sons to study in England so that their children could avoid the draft and the hardships connected with military life, yet these same men volunteered and met with hardships much more severe than those they might have undergone in the Siamese army. In any event, the general principles governing our group might be summarized as follows:

a. We enlisted in the British army not to help the British but in order to serve our country through the help of Britain.

b. We had no intention of becoming involved in the internal politics of Siam and did not wish to be used by any party. We planned to join up with the Free Siamese in Siam who were opposed to the Japanese, and our group would disband at the end of the War.

c. The Free Siamese would not use the situation to seek recognition or personal benefits.

d. From the time that the Free Siamese was first organized in England we made it clear to the British government that whatever we did during the war would be carried out under military auspices, and that we would wear military uniforms and bear military titles, even as privates. Any intelligence work we carried out would be conducted while we were in military uniform, or in other words we would not serve as spies or secret agents.

In practice, members of the Free Siamese Movement joined the army as privates on August 7th (1942). By October 1943, after having trained and worked in India, most had become second lieutenants. Our group was unusual in that we were recognized as being of higher status than others in the

Pioneer Corps. Of the thirty-six of us (not including M.C. Suphasawatwongsanit, who did not join our group till later), there were thirty who had degrees or certificates of higher education or who were in their final year of education. Our British officers therefore allowed us to direct ourselves. Under British regulations this meant that we were permitted to elect our own leaders and representatives, and that when we moved to a new camp, our new British commanding officer would officially accept those we had chosen. Although we might only be privates, our leaders were officially entitled "Local, temporary, unpaid Lance Corporals," a long title of little (apparent) importance, but in fact of considerable significance in that it denoted a favorable attitude towards us on the part of the British forces.

I suspect that the British put us in the Pioneer Corps in order to test our dedication and stability, since this unit was one of low prestige. Most men in this unit were either enemy aliens or unskilled British laborers of low rank.⁽⁵⁾ The motto of the unit was "Labor omnia vincit." The British themselves were assigned in such a way that engineers joined engineering corps, doctors joined military medical units, and men of other skills went into the artillery, tank corps or joined the Guards, and so on. The duties of the Pioneer Corps, however, were not specific. They included such tasks as digging potatoes, cleaning latrines, mess halls and living quarters, guard duty and other such jobs. All of us Free Siamese did all these jobs mentioned above even though some of us were government officials, heads of departments, diplomats, or persons of royal rank or importance. We composed a poem in memory of this period. To quote a portion:

We must part from our homely tents to live in a strange

building.⁽⁶⁾

We must abandon our familiar ground to sleep on beds like ladies.

We preferred cold water, which did not remove the grease from dirty dishes, but which freshened us up.

To heated warm water to wash our faces.

Rust on plates added flavor to the food we had to eat.

Now no one cares if we finish up our food.

Fortunately "fatigues" taught us ways to avoid our supervisors.

Corporal Mills, the engineer with a broom in his hand, orders us janitors.

To scrub the floor, clean the latrines.

Wash the tables and carry out guard duties.

Now every day we learn how to wipe the tables.

Night guards use guns and bayonets, while day guards use clubs.

We go outside to dig up potatoes and complain and sing.

While our supervisors, unaware, are happy with us.

The Free Siamese underwent training in England from August 7th 1942 until the middle of January 1943, when we were sent to India from England by way of Africa. We arrived in Bombay at the end of April 1943. From then on the thirty-six of us were dispersed according to the duties assigned us by the British. A description of our lives in the military up to this period has been recorded in some detail by Khun Bunphop Phamonsing in chapters 7-12 of his *Siamese Artists in Europe* mentioned earlier.

Once we reached India we were separated as follows:

one group was sent to Delhi to work on radio communications and mapping; one group went to Karachi (Khun Bunphop's group, as he records in his book); one group was sent to work on espionage; and the largest group, which included myself, was sent to a camp outside Poona to work on guerrilla tactics. We were called "White Elephants," and were located near a lake in a sub-district the name of which translates as "Love Nest." Later on we learned that we were in the division of "Siam Force 136 of the Special Operations Executive" (S.O.E.) in the Ministry of Economic Warfare.

3. The First Radio Station in Siam to Communicate with the united Nations⁽⁷⁾

In order to (get on to) discuss the work of the Free Siamese in Siam in detail, I will make the discussion of my training brief, and present our training schedule at that time shortly and without elaboration.

May 1943 - September 1943.

Trained at Rangrak ("Love Nest") near Poona.

October 1943.

Trainees became Second Lieutenants.

October 1943 - November 1943.

Nai Samran Wannaphruk ("Kheng") and I were trained in espionage in Calcutta.

November 1943.

Nai Samran Wannaphruk, Nai Prathan Premkamon ("Daeng") and I boarded a submarine from Ceylon to land at Phangnga, Tukua Pa, but were unable to land because we did not

receive a signal from our men.

December 1943.

The three of us rested at Nilgiri in southern India.

January 1944.

Joined with a larger group for training in hiking at the Singha mountain range in the Poona area.

February 1944.

Trained in parachuting at Rawalpindi in the Punjab with Nai Prathan Premkamon, Nai Samran Wannaphruk, Nai Prem Buri ("Di"), Nai Racit Buri ("Kham") and Nai Thana Posayanon ("Kon").

March 1944.

Parachuted into Siam to perform our duty.

The following is an account of events leading up to the establishment of the first radio station in Siam to communicate with the Allies during the time the Japanese were still occupying Siam.

In incorporating the Free Siamese into their troops, the Allies hoped to use us to aid United Nations troops behind the Japanese lines militarily, politically and in communication work. The Siamese joined the Allies for the sake of Siam without any conditions, but we also planned to try to contact the members of the underground movement in Siam to explain the situation to them.

By the middle of 1943 it had been confirmed that there was an underground organization in Siam. It was known that some of its members had been sent to Chungking to contact

United Nations" representatives there.⁽⁸⁾

Most of the Free Siamese from England, known as "White Elephants," were training in guerrilla warfare tactics outside Poona in India when we heard that M.C. Suphasawatwongsanit Svasti had been sent to Chungking to make contact with Nai Kamcat Phalangkun, who had escaped from Siam secretly.⁽⁹⁾ Later on we learned that M.C. Suphasawatwongsanit had been authorized by the British to organize a group to enter Siam from Yunnan. Messages were sent by the British forces via this group in Yunnan, asking "Ruth," i.e. Nai Pridi Phanomyong, the King's Regent and leader of the Free Siamese in Siam, to receive the first group of "White Elephants" who would be coming in by submarine and expected to land on the shores of western Siam in December 1943. They would be bringing in radio equipment so that a station could be set up in Siam and contact with British forces in India made.

I received orders from my commanding officer that I was to be one of the people boarding the submarine, and that the name of my unit was to be "Pritchard." Our unit included Nai Prathan Premkamon ("Daeng"), the radio man, Nai Samran Wannaphruk ("Khen") and myself. "Daeng" was sent to Meerut for more training on radio systems, while "Kheng" and I were sent to school outside Calcutta for special training.

After "Daeng" joined us in Calcutta in November, we were trained to land from a submarine both during the daytime and by night. Our training station was Trincomalee in Ceylon. We boarded the submarine at Colombo. Two naval officers and one sergeant were sent to help us land.

We reached the designated location and remained about four to five miles off shore for about one week, staying under

water during the day and coming up above water at night to receive any signals which might have been sent to us. However, we waited in vain. Later we learned that the Chinese group from Yunnan did not reach Bangkok until June 1944.

The submarine trip was not without incident, however. There was considerable excitement when we located a large ship floating above water quite near to the place where we were submerged. It could have been either a Japanese or a Siamese ship. Since we were unable to detect whether we had been seen or not, we had to remain very quiet for safety reasons. I myself almost did not dare breathe, as I felt that the sound of our breath coming out made an unbelievably loud noise. However, we were not torpedoed. The last day we remained in station the British sergeant decided to go on shore in a small boat. (We Siamese did not go as we had been given orders not to land under any circumstances unless we saw people coming for us). Our British friend had never been to Siam. However, he went to spy out the land, but reported that he saw nobody on shore, and that it would be useless to wait any longer. One night after we were headed back to Ceylon, we saw a small fishing boat and decided to surface. We knew this would frighten all the Chinese who were on the boat, but all we wanted was some money and documents (faked identity cards) for which we produced Siamese money and food in return.

I should not take up too much space describing our life in the submarine. Suffice it to say that it was hot and boring. There was nothing to do except eat, sleep and play dice. We slept during the day and got up at night when the submarine came to the surface. At night we could go on deck, and this was the only occasion on which we were allowed to smoke. I can

still remember the time when I gazed at our beloved country through a pair of binoculars. The white shore line, the fishermen's huts and the tall trees stood out vividly. The village at which we were supposed to land was quite deserted. Although I had never been to that village, I felt it was part of our beloved country where our people were living.

We returned to Colombo in time for Christmas. Once we got close to Ceylon, we came up above water and travelled in at full speed. Being on a submarine travelling above water was quite an uncomfortable experience, as it made one seasick and produced other discomforts.

We rested for a short period in the beautiful Nilgiri hills, and then went up to Meerut at the beginning of January 1944. From there we went to Poona where other "White Elephants" were receiving further training.

This reunion made it possible for us to discuss our future plans and duties together for the last time. On top of the Singha mountain we gathered together to clarify our duties and obligations. For some of us, myself included, the thought of parachuting and going in a submarine were matters of dread. For others, such thoughts might be exciting. I cannot remember all the topics we discussed at the top of the Singha mountain. I only remember that we agreed that we loved one another and that we were working for a good cause. I suggested that we try not to harm or kill any Siamese once we all reached Siam, even if this meant sacrificing our own lives. We should not let the Japanese capture us alive, but should fight to the end. I introduced this proposal gradually, trying not to force anyone into doing what he felt to be against his instincts, that is in regard to fighting rather than being captured alive. However, most of the

“White Elephants” agreed with my proposal.

Afterwards the plan of entry into Siam was drawn up. Two or three of the “White Elephants” were to parachute into the country with the radio equipment. They were to be dropped blind into parts of the forest of north central Siam between Sukhothai and Sawankhalok one night during the early waning or waxing of the moon in March and April. There were to be two groups of three men each, called “Appreciation I” and “Appreciation II” respectively. The members of “Appreciation I” were to land in March, hide in the forest, radio back to the station, and make plans to receive “Appreciation II” during the period of the next full moon. If the station did not hear from “Appreciation I,” “Appreciation II” would then make another blind drop in an adjacent province in a manner similar to that of “Appreciation I.” Our duties were to keep ourselves safe, to radio back to the commanding station, to receive the following group of parachutists, and if possible to contact the underground.

The men in these two units were not the same as in the “Pritchard” group, as we needed radio experts and doctors when we were going to be entirely on our own. The two new groups included Nai Prem Buri (“Di”) and Nai Racit Buri (“Kham”) and Nai Thana Posayanon (“Kon”) as additional members. “Appreciation I” included myself, “Daeng” and “Di”; “Appreciation II” included “Kheng,” “Kham” and “Kon,” and was led by “Kheng.”

The six of us separated from the rest of the unit in February to practice parachuting at Rawalpindi. Each of us made five trial jumps, the first four during the day and the last at night. The first drop was made from a Hudson and the other four from a Liberator. The jumps were made after we had practiced and undergone physical training for a number of days.

Although we came to realize that parachuting was not a very dangerous act, we still did not like it. I myself cannot say in all sincerity that I was not afraid. Nevertheless, we tried to hide our fear. On the trip to the airport every morning we passed through a cemetery, and would tell one another that sooner or later our bodies would end up there. Whatever else, we all benefitted from the training in physical fitness and from the fresh air of the Punjab, and felt very healthy after being in Rawalpindi for a week.

While waiting for "reality" in Calcutta, where we had gone from Rawalpindi, we indulged in urban enjoyments such as seeing a movie in an air-conditioned theatre, eating ice-cream sodas and dining in a restaurant for the last time. Finally the day arrived. "Appreciation I" was to start work on the sixth of March, three days before my birthday. I jokingly asked my commanding officer to send me a birthday present in the jungle. That morning we flew north-eastward from Calcutta to a place the name of which I cannot remember, although the scenery remains vividly in my mind. It had a large runway with neither vegetation nor fresh water; there were only planes and pitiful huts around. For lunch we had dry canned meat, dried-out bread, and water that smelt of chlorine. It was definitely a mistake to have sent us to such a very discouraging place.

That evening we boarded a Liberator for our destination. Bombers were sent off to adjacent areas on the same night to help protect us. We also noticed another Liberator taking off from the same runway a few minutes before us. We later learned that four Chinese were on board bound for Nakhon Pathom on a mission similar to our own.

We spent most of the time on the plane sleeping. It was

uncomfortable and the weather was bad. I felt a little sick. During the trip we could not really eat. Although it was the night of the waxing of the moon, it was quite dark and we did not know our whereabouts. Someone told us to get ready at 22:30 hours, and by 23.00 hours we were waiting at the exit ready to slide down it. The exit was near the engine, and was large enough for a person to slide down with the equipment on his back. When the order "Go" came, we were to jump into the fateful darkness. One hour at the exit seemed like a whole year of sitting at the top of a cliff. Only the wind blowing into the exit told us that what lay below us was not hell, for we felt cold air not hot flames. The plane circled around but no orders came to jump. Finally someone tapped my shoulder and told us that we were returning to Calcutta. The pilot could not find our landing place, the map was bad, and the area was dark.

We did not stay in Calcutta long since we were all anxious to go on with our work. A week after the first trip, the British informed us that they were ready for another attempt. The procedure and plan was exactly the same as that of the first trip except that we left about four to five hours later in the night since *the moon was now waning*. We were cold when we reached our designated area. The plane circled the area very close to the ground. Numerous lights on the ground made us wonder if we were at the right location. However, there was no time to ponder. The order to jump came; we jumped.

The three of us landed close to one another on the ground. I was the most unlucky, as I sprained my ankle. When I came down one leg landed on a dyke (*i.e.* the low mud bank surrounding a rice-field) while the other did not. After we

hurriedly consulted the map we realized that we were about twenty-five to thirty kilometres away from our destination, and too close to a village for our purposes. Seven parachutes containing a month's supply of food and other equipment had also been sent down with us, but we only found six in the field. The seventh was later spotted in the middle of the village, which was separated from the field where we landed by only a few bushes. We therefore decided to leave the area immediately.

It was about 4:00 a.m.; we had about one hour before dawn. However, we could not move very quickly because of our supplies, and yet we were too close to the village to try to bury these. With no time to make a careful decision, we saw five or six farmers approaching us. They saw us.

The farmers proved to be charcoal-burners from another village who had gone into the forest to cut wood and who were now on their way to their village. They had camped the night before outside Muban Wang Nam Khao (the name of the village where we had landed; it was in Chai Nat province. We had planned to land northwest between Tak and Nakhon Sawan). The charcoal-burners had seen our parachutes coming down, although some had mistaken these for smoke, as the parachutes were white. They were surprised to find that we were Siamese and not Europeans who had come in to bomb our country.

They knew that we had not jumped from either a Siamese or a Japanese plane, because the plane had had four propellers. Despite our attempts to persuade them that the plane was a new model supplied to the Siamese Air Force by the Japanese to be used for training purposes, they still did not believe us, although only one man expressed his disbelief verbally.

Having thus encountered an unexpected problem, we had to think up a way out. We therefore asked the men to help us carry our supplies to the village, pretending that we were planning to go to the village in the morning. They gave us a hand willingly, and left us at the outskirts of the village, where we said we were to meet our friends. We thanked them.

It was then about 5:00 a.m. Since we had no time to waste we took only the radio equipment, some food and some clothing. The rest of the supplies we either hid in the bushes or buried in the ground. In any event it was almost useless to try to hide things since one whole parachute full of supplies had landed right in the village straight in front of the temple. We did what we could and walked back westward into the forest. My sprained ankle retarded our trip. After four to five hours' of walking, we were in quite deep forest and decided to rest. Actually it was not a safe place, but we wanted to contact the station in India to say that we had landed outside the designated area, and that it was quite unsafe. We planned to bury the radio equipment and then move north-westward to meet with "Appreciation II" the following month. In the radio message we would warn them to be extra cautious and not to make the same mistake when "Appreciation II" was sent in, as the villagers knew of us already.

While we were waiting for the proper time to send our message, we dug holes to bury the radio equipment after the message had been sent, and to bury other unnecessary supplies so that we could travel with the least possible weight on us. We then settled ourselves in an area of thick forest away from the place where the radio equipment was to be buried. Although there was a path about four to five metres from our camp,

passers-by would be unable to see us.

The day was hot and the forest quiet except for the sound of birds and monkeys. My ankle ached and was swollen and we were tired after walking in the warm weather for half a day. Moreover we had not expected the incident that had occurred early that morning, and were upset at having been seen and that we had lost one parachute in the center of the village. According to our original plans we had also been supposed to land near a stream—now we had only three bottles of water. At least we were not hungry, so we did not have to worry about food.

Daeng and Di went to the radio station at the appropriate time. After I had watched the area for about half an hour, they reported they could not get the message through. They could only hear the voice from the commanding station faintly, and the commanding station could not hear them at all. In addition, the station had not waited for them long enough, and the signal to stop the message had come much sooner than had been agreed upon. It could have been that the commanding station had not expected us to radio so soon after landing.

We decided that the most important thing was to try to radio the message, and that this must be sent as soon as possible. It would be impossible to go very far with the radio equipment due to its weight and my swollen foot. Besides, the place where we were camped was a reasonably good location. Daeng suggested that an antenna might help, and that we should try to send the message again the next day. I, as leader, took responsibility for the decision. While waiting till the following day, we decided to try and find water to store in our bottles. We would then leave as soon as we had managed to get the message through.

Daeng and Di went off looking for water for many hours. I waited at the camp until they returned the next morning. They found a pond of dirty water at the edge of the forest, but since they had to depend on moonlight to travel by, they had to wait until about 3:00 a.m. Meanwhile I waited, listened to the sounds of the forest, and enjoyed the sight of the moonlight playing on various objects. I was not afraid of the wild animals at all, but I was glad to see my friends when they returned.

Our next attempt at sending the message was even worse than the first one. We could not hear from the commanding station at all. We were worried, since Di had mentioned that if we did not try to move on, the villagers would have time to catch up with us, yet at the same time we were concerned that the members of "Appreciation II" might have difficulties when they came down if we did not send the message. I took the responsibility and made the decision to try to send the message one more time the following morning. We would move on after that in any case. That afternoon, while Di and I were hunting around and looking for water, we ran into some villagers. They stayed overnight with us without any suspicions of whom we might be.

The next morning, at about 10:00 a.m., when Di and Daeng went to send the message, I was alone at the camp. Five minutes after they had left I saw a few people pass by at a distance. I thought they had not seen me, but only a few minutes later our camp was surrounded from all sides. The villagers were all armed. This was the end of our game, or of my game at least. I could do nothing except yell out loudly, "I surrender. You may take me away," hoping that my friends would hear me and get away.

It seems almost unbelievable, but within that one second

many thoughts came into my head. From the time I realized I was surrounded until I was captured the thoughts came so fast I cannot remember their sequence. I remembered my sweetheart in London; the last words which Khun Mani Sanasen had said before we left England; my friends who were still in India; my two friends in the nearby bushes; my relatives and friends in Bangkok; the message in my pocket from my commander⁽¹⁰⁾ to "Ruth"; and lastly the poison in my shirt pocket. My last thought was whether I should swallow the poison and die or whether I should be captured alive. If I decided to die it would be because I had too many secrets to keep, and to be captured alive would mean that I might have to tell these secrets and so betray my friends. If I decided to be captured alive, on the other hand, it would be because being alive I would have some way of protecting the evidence I had on my body, which I would not otherwise be able to do. Life was beautiful. One could still have hope if one was alive. Certainly I would rather have died than have been tortured by the Japanese, but there were no Japanese in sight. I therefore decided to stay alive and suffer the consequences.

When I look back on these events now I always laugh, for when I was captured, the man in front of me, who was dressed in a police uniform and carried a pistol, jumped on me in the exact same way in which it is done in the *like*,⁽¹¹⁾ uttering unintelligible words the while. Many people were hidden in the surrounding bushes, but they did not come out until I surrendered and showed that I was not armed. At first there were only about five to six people, but a minute after I surrendered, about thirty people appeared. They tied my hands behind my back with a *pha khao ma*.⁽¹²⁾ From then on I could not make sense

of what the people were saying, because all of them seemed to be talking simultaneously. The man nearest to me addressed many filthy speeches to me. Another man, after making sure that I was defenseless, hit me and talked away at me. I did not say anything in return. Actually I was dazed and excited and wondering about my two friends. I was relieved, however, when I saw that even though some of the villagers had found the radio equipment, my two friends had not been captured, nor did I hear any shots.

I later learned that Daeng and Di heard the noise when I was being taken prisoner, and fled before they had been seen. They hid in another part of the forest until night time, and then went to the place where we had agreed to meet in case any of us got lost. They were hoping that I would go there if I could get away. When I did not arrive they headed northward and were captured in Uthai Thani while they were eating in a market-place without any hats on.⁽¹³⁾

Among those who captured me were the assistant district headman, two policemen and other farmers who seemed friendly and cheerful. They took me from the forest to Wang Nam Khao. By the time we had reached the village, many other people were claiming to have taken part in my capture. The head of the district (Wat Sing), who was the only man on horseback, was one of those who made this claim. There were about two or three hundred people who tried to take charge of me, including the charcoal burners we had run into the first day we landed. After the charcoal burners had left us they had reported us to the district office. Villagers had therefore been drafted to search for us. Since they understood that there had been four of us, inquiries were made about the other three.

Having met the district headman, I was taken to the temple and chained by the ankle to a post. Since I did not try to escape, I was exempted from being chained at the wrists. From what I could overhear the policemen were debating about me. One group felt that I was a very important and dangerous prisoner, a traitor, and was trying to destroy our nation and people. Another group, which equalled the first group in number, showed kindly feelings towards me. These believed me when I said, without giving my name, that I was a student on a government scholarship who had been sent to England. Many questions were asked about how the War was going. A polite assistant district headman was among this latter group. In contrast, another assistant district headman was quite coarse. He scolded the villagers who gathered around me and ordered them not to come near me. The reason for this treatment was that he believed I was a revolutionary. I felt that the villagers in general were very kind, not because they knew about politics or what the War was about, but just because of the innate kindness and sincerity of their natures. Then there were others who did not care one way or the other, and who were curious but not unpleasant. I noticed that both the police officers and the villagers were impressed that I had jumped by parachute from a four-propeller bomber. I drew them a picture of the aeroplane, stating that it was about the size of the *bot*,⁽¹⁴⁾ but not as large.

The villagers brought a delicious lunch and dinner for the officers and myself. I ate with an appetite even though my mind was not fully on what I was doing. That afternoon many people from other villages came and sat around me in the *sala*.⁽¹⁵⁾ Though they were interested in me as a parachutist, they could not come very close, as those officers who disliked

me had forbidden them to do so. Late that afternoon, however, a number of the officers went to sleep and gave the villagers a chance to move closer and ask questions. Among these was an old lady who sat by me for about two hours without moving. When not many people were left she told me that I resembled her son. Upon being asked, she told me that her son had been drafted and she did not know where he was. Her sincerity captured my heart, and I felt the love of a mother for her child.

That night, being tired, I slept soundly. A cart was ready to take me to Wat Sing district office the next morning at dawn. I was chained to the cart. Two policemen sat with me as guards, and about twelve villagers walked alongside. Our supplies and radio equipment had been sent along earlier in another cart. The policemen were friendly and agreeable. At about 7:00 a.m. we stopped at a village for breakfast, which had been prepared by the villagers prior to our arrival. They probably knew that I was coming. Everyone in the village came to see me. The two policemen teased the girls, asking if they were not somewhat attracted to the parachutist, but they denied it and went off and prepared some excellent food, including a curry, vegetables and hot sauce. The policemen invited me to drink the whisky which was brought out by the villagers, as I might not have an opportunity to do so again for a long time. I enjoyed myself, even though I felt that 7:00 a.m. was much too early to drink. The villagers surrounded my cart and inquired about aeroplanes, the bombing and the War. They seemed glad to hear that the Japanese were losing the War. None of the villagers had any feelings against me, and many were surprised that I was a Siamese. They called out "Chaiyo!" ("Hurray!") as our caravan started to move off.

We received similar treatment when we stopped at another village for lunch. I answered similar questions with more expertise. Before I left a villager approached me and handed me a piece of *wan*⁽¹⁸⁾ when nobody was watching him. He whispered that I should keep it for good luck as protection against harm. However, he said, I need not be concerned, as my forehead showed that I would be successful in whatever project I undertook.

The next village was larger than the other two we had stopped at earlier. We reached this village at 4:00 p.m. The villagers were more knowledgeable, and included monks, teacher, and others who had been to Bangkok. We reached Wat Sing district in the evening, and I was sent to the police station. Before entering the district centre, the two policemen who had been my guards gathered up a contribution of twelve baht. They suggested that this money might be useful to me over the next few days. The next day these same two policemen brought me hard-boiled eggs in jail since the jail food was not sufficient.

My status as a prisoner became formal once we reached the district centre. I was taken to a jail similar to those to be seen all over the country. The cell was ten feet in width and length, with bars on all sides except for the floor. There was one inmate in there already. He looked like a strong, healthy, happy farmer, even though he had been charged with murder. At a party he had got drunk, quarrelled with another man, hit him, and stepped on him on the ground. The other man had died. Having learned previously of my expected arrival, this inmate was delighted with the opportunity of observing the

parachutist. We chatted. Three hours later a third man, charged with spying, came to join us. This man had gone to Wat Sing three or four days previously to look for minerals in the area of Wang Nam Khao where our parachutists had landed. While he was trying to get workmen and carts for his journey, he was arrested because the police suspected that he had connections with the parachutists. He had denied this, but in vain. Only I knew he was innocent. Four months later, I ran into this same man at the police department in Bangkok. He had been denied *the opportunity to go home even though there was no evidence against him.*

The villagers of Wat Sing came to visit me in jail. Although the guards tried to keep them away at first, they finally got a look at the "queer" figure. The guards wanted their relatives and their friends' relatives to have the chance to see a parachutist once in their life times, too, so the whole police station was occupied by villagers. They made comments about parachutists, some mean, some kind. The man with a murder charge against him enjoyed himself, but the miner was very unhappy, since he was innocent. The villagers could not decide which of the three was the parachutist, and would ask: we joked and tried to confuse them. The miner, however, would not join in; he sat sadly in a corner. However, he became more friendly the next day. Being a palmist, he read my hand and told me I would not die yet. My good lines were still quite distinct. His own fortune, he said, was not very good.

The Governor of Chai Nat Province arrived the next afternoon with his family, the provincial Chief of Police and a judge. An hour after, the three of us (prisoners) left with these government officials for Chai Nat. On our way from the police

station to the boat, we were chained together. The miner felt very ashamed. Feeling awkward at having to chain me, a government student who had been sent abroad, the Governor made me a personal apology. On our way to the boat people gathered on both sides to see the inmates, especially the parachutist. I recognized some law students whom I had met a few days ago. We waved.

In Chai Nat I was separated from the other inmates and sent to the Governor's office, where I spent many hours. I asked for permission to bathe. This was granted on my promising that I would not try to escape. I shaved with my "Roll razor" shaver, which, when it was being sharpened, made noises similar to those of fireworks. The bathroom door swung open, since the noise of the shaver had been mistaken for the sound of a machine gun. After bathing and dining, the provincial Chief of Police and the provincial public prosecutor arrived for preliminary investigations. I gave them my name and the real goal of our project. However, I did not tell them the number of my Siamese friends in the British forces or any other secrets. The first set of inquiries was put forward politely, but the politeness seemed to disappear when I refused to answer important questions. The investigation ended at about 10:00 p.m., when I was sent back to jail for the night.

There were about twelve people in jail, many of whom seemed to younger than twenty years of age. There was just enough room for the twelve of them. When I arrived someone had to sleep on the top bunk. I volunteered, but was refused. However, a boy was nominated instead. I later came to realize

that the boy had a skin problem and was avoided by everybody. I slept in his place and he slept on the bunk on top of me. He scratched all night, and the falling skin dropped down on my body. I could not sleep that night because of the scratching noise, mosquitoes and other insects, although I clothed myself from head to foot.

I was transferred to the provincial jail at Chai Nat the next morning. This jail housed a doctor who had a murder charge against him and who acted as the jail doctor. Originally he was to have been imprisoned for life, but on one of the special occasions (the King's birthday, New Year's, etc., on which prisoners sometimes had their sentences commuted—Ed.), the King had reduced his sentence. The doctor had now almost completed his reduced sentence, and with his medical knowledge and good conduct record, he had been put in charge of the jail hospital, although without medicines it could hardly have been called a hospital. The patients had to sleep on the floor. The doctor was very well liked by everybody, but could not do much without facilities. Most of the people had malaria, but had to wait for nature to take its course. New inmates with severe charges against them were normally chained at the ankles. If they showed good conduct, restrictions on them would be lessened. Many inmates had permission to work outside the jail, and the best were exempted from work and could go to town during the day, returning (to the jail) at night. Reading, writing and handicrafts were taught in jail. One building was reserved especially for women, and I was told that many of the married couples had met their partners in jail. All the inmates ate red rice and vegetables for their two meals a day. Some of them had permission to go out to fish and could cook for themselves in

addition to the food already provided. The red rice was much too dry for new inmates like myself; I needed much more soup than the others. At this point the twelve baht I had been given came in handy for buying extra food. The guard was also kind enough to send me white rice, eggs and soup every meal. I shared the food with the doctor and the other inmates who were his assistants.

I cannot remember the length of my stay in that jail exactly, but it was probably between three and seven days. I was called to the police station one morning, and left for Bangkok by boat at 11:00 a.m. that day. The provincial chief of police was my guard. Another man who was chained with me had fled from a mental hospital and killed a monk afterwards. He told me, and as far as I could see with my eyes, he had no mental problems. I often wondered what happened to him afterwards.

The chief of police who was my guard very much liked to show me off to his friends. On the way to Bangkok I was taken to another police station. Interesting as the stories of my inmates may be, unfortunately I cannot relate them all here since it would take up too much space. I had breakfast with the Governor of Ang Thong. He commented that we were like actors in a Chinese play who fought with one another, and then dined together after the fight. The last night of the trip I slept at the police station in Nonthaburi, and headed for Bangkok the next morning.

From the time I had first landed up till now every passer-by had stopped to look at the parachutist. But in Bangkok nobody paid any attention to the small police boat on which I was boarded. When I landed at Tha Chang near Thammasat

University I could see no familiar faces. After two hours of waiting, a police car came to take me to the Police Department. There I met Daeng and Di, who had arrived earlier. We had lunch together and chatted.

Before long the number of “war criminals” increased rapidly. Before the arrival of the three of us, two Siamese-speaking Chinese who were supposed to have landed at Nakhon Pathom (part of the group I mentioned earlier: the third man was killed and the other fled) were taken into custody. At the time of the full moon the following month, the members of “Appreciation II” (Kheng, Kham and Kon) arrived safely and were taken into custody. In a similar manner two out of five Chinese who had boarded a submarine and landed in the southern part of Siam were also captured. From then on Free Siamese from the United States were taken in a few at a time, first two people, then one, and then five people respectively. Some of the Free Siamese from the United States had travelled on foot from Yunnan; others had flown in by hydro-plane from Colombo; two others were killed after being captured in the Northeast.⁽¹⁷⁾ All six of us “White Elephants” were thankful to be alive. Due to the increasing number of prisoners, we were transferred from the Police Department jail to the police living quarters in the compound of the Police Department. Two of the Free Siamese from England, Nai Sawat Sisuk (“Raven”) and Nai Cunkeng Rinthakun (“Phong”) came to live with us even though they had not been captured. We were allowed to walk around the compound. Our allowance was also increased so that we were able to buy food, and we became regular customers of the merchants and peddlers in the compound. (At this time

Japanese officers came to investigate us. We were guarded by Siamese officers. The details of the investigation appeared in *Ukotsan*, 1952, under the title "Musawatha weramani"⁽¹⁸⁾ and will not be discussed here.)

During this period we were able to contact the commanding station in India by radio with the help of Free Siamese within the country of both high and low rank. Some of them gave up their houses so that they could be used as radio stations. We followed the regular activities of prisoners by day, and slipped out to send off radio messages by night.

At first it was difficult to make contact with the commanding station in India since the latter thought that we had been captured when we had not contacted them as agreed upon. We tried and tried to make contact for many months, but without success. It was not until September (1944) that we finally succeeded after a messenger had been sent overland to Chungking to contact the British forces there on the one hand, while an informal anecdote using our code names was broadcast through the station of the Department of Publicity on the other. After we finally made contact we were so excited that we could not sleep.

With the aid of many high officials in Siam, the work of the Free Siamese went smoothly and safely from then on. We had the support of the police, and later of the army, navy and air force. Military officials, from generals to privates, and civilians from Ministers to common citizens enthusiastically gave us a hand. Around May 1945, when the Free Siamese Movement was well under way, I received permission to take a vacation in India and England. I boarded a Catalina from Hua Hin, and

returned on a Kakota, landing at a Siamese Air Force runway in the Northeast.⁽¹⁹⁾ The “White Elephants” and the Free Siamese from the United States (who landed in Siam since November 1944, and now that many more radio stations were able to contact India, the importance of the “Appreciation” groups gradually decreased. We finally decided to separate and start earning our livings. Phong and Raven had already left to go to work. In April 1945 Kon and Kham went to Yala,⁽²⁰⁾ while Di and Kheng left for another southern province later on. Daeng and I remained in Bangkok not doing much until the end of the War.

4. Final Notes and Explanations

The description in section 3 was written a long time ago. At the time I tried to write clearly and concisely, but I feel that further explanation is due at this point, even though the story still will not be complete. Since this article is to be part of the Appendices to a book by Professor Direk Jayanama, I would, however, like to make some further comments in connection with his book.

a. The reasons why I was chosen to be the first person to contact the Free Siamese.

A short answer is that the British knew that the Free Siamese in Siam were led by Nai Pridi Phanomyong, and that he was connected with Thammasat University. I was a graduate of and had worked at that University for many months. Although I did not know the Rector, Nai Pridi, personally, the following connection between us existed.

I graduated from Thammasat University in June 1936 in

the first class to graduate from that University since its establishment in 1934. Being one of the first persons to have graduated from there, I had had some opportunity to become acquainted with the professors. After I received a Bachelor's Degree in Economics with first class honors from London University, Professor Wicit Lulitanon, who was (then) on the faculty at Thammasat, hearing of my good record, passed on my name to the Rector (i.e. Nai Pridi Phanomyong). He in turn sent me a telegram congratulating me not only as Rector, but also in the name of the Ministry of Finance, which awarded me my scholarship.

It was therefore felt that I would be a good person to try to make secret contact with the leader of the Free Siamese movement, for there would be no need for me to verify my credentials with him.

In fact, when I was captured and sent to the Police Department in Bangkok, I was guarded by a Police Captain Phayom Cantharakkha (now a full Colonel), who was a Thammasat University graduate. Before the time that the Chief of Police (General Adun Adunyadetcarat)⁽²¹⁾ granted us permission to set up a radio station to contact India, Khun Phayom had already taken the risk of taking the radio equipment home and trying it out there. He also contacted Professor Wicit Lulitanon (then Secretary-General of Thammasat University), who in turn contacted Professor Pridi. Khun Phayom took me to meet Professor Pridi for the first time at Professor Wicit's house in Bang Khen. It was there that I relayed to Nai Pridi the message from the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces (Lord Louis Mountbatten) to the leader of the Free Siamese. By that time my friends and I had already been busy sending radio messages to India.

We had also been able to receive Khun Prasoet Pathummanon and Khun Krit Tosayanon, who had come in by parachute at Hua Hin and who had made contact with other Free Siamese leaders such as Professor Direk Jayanama.

Our meetings with Free Siamese leaders were held at night (except for the meeting at Professor Wicit's house in Bang Khen). I would usually disappear from my quarters at the Police Department, pretending to be taking a walk along Sanam Ma street. When Khun Phayom drove by, all of us prisoners-of-war would get into the car when no one appeared to be looking. Khun Phayom would then drive to the designated place and transfer from the car. We met Professor Direk for the first time in this way. Then we would transfer back into the car again on our way back to our quarters. On the nights of these secret meetings we usually went to bed during early dawn or during alarms signalling an air attack. Later on the Chief of the Police Department allowed us to meet him after midnight every time, sometimes we would meet at 3:00 a.m. We walked and talked in the vicinity of the plaza containing the equestrian statue of King Rama V or in the area around the Democracy Monument. We had already been sending out radio messages when (official) permission to do so was granted to us, so he knew we were quite efficient. The first group of parachutists to be received formally at Phu Kradung⁽²²⁾ were Nai Sano Ninkamhaeng, Nai Praphot Paorohit and Nai Thep Semathiti. Later units (*i.e.* those that arrived after the Chief of Police had given his full support to the Free Siamese) were received much more conveniently, for (then) the Free Siamese and Khun Phayom no longer needed to keep matters secret from both the Japanese and from the Police Department. The cooperation of the police made many

of our tasks easier, since there were police units all over the country. If a Japanese soldier saw us with Europeans and policemen, the explanation would be that the Europeans had been captured as war criminals.

b. The reasons why I was granted permission to take a vacation to India and England.

Permission to leave Bangkok was granted to me in June 1945 because the British command wanted to see me personally, and secondly because I wanted to go to England. Since the main work (*i.e.* of establishing contacts between the Free Siamese in Siam and the Allies) had been successfully completed, the commanding unit gave me permission to take a vacation in England to see my girlfriend.

While in England, I undertook both economic and political tasks for Professor Pridi. I was to ask the British government to recognize the Free Siamese as the legal government of Siam (once the war ended) in the same way as the (government of the) United States had been asked to do. Further, the British government was to be asked to release the frozen Siamese currency reserves being held in England.⁽²³⁾ Professor Pridi asked me to try to contact Mr. Anthony Eden, then the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. However, I told him that I did not know Mr. Eden, and that with only a few days there it would be quite impossible for me to make such a contact. I said that I would, however, try my best to contact somebody else with whom to discuss this matter.

By that time, the war in Europe had come to an end. General elections were planned for England, and from conversations which I had heard amongst British army officers I expected that the Labour Party would win the elections. The

leader of the party at that time was Professor (Harold) Laski of London University. Although I did not know him personally, he had been head of the Political Science Department when I was an economics student at the University, and I had attended his lectures. I realized that the possibility of meeting him was much greater than that of meeting Mr. Eden, and that if the Labour Party won the elections, then meeting with Mr. Eden would be of no use anyway. I therefore made an appointment to meet Professor Laski, and he agreed to see me at his home. I wore my British military uniform to show that I had pledged my life for the cause by joining the British Army. I do not know whether my attempts to impress Professor Laski worked, but after I had talked to him about the requests of the Free Siamese he promised that he would help us, but only on one condition. He took more than an hour to explain this condition. In summary it amounted to the fact that he was willing to help the common people of Siam, but not the powerful or rich landowners. He wanted to help only the common people. The hour he spent was on the question of why the common people should be helped.

The meeting with Professor Laski was not as successful as might have been hoped, for the British government continued to treat Siam as being of enemy status. However, Professor Laski did follow through on his words, and wrote to Mr. Bevin, the Foreign Secretary (in the new Labour Cabinet of 26th July 1945) a number of times (about our situation). My friends in the Foreign Office told me that Laski's notes to Bevin were fully examined, and although they did not produce any actual results, Laski did try to help Siam as best as he could.

c. The negotiations in Kandy after the surrender of

the Japanese.

I was sent with other Siamese representatives to Kandy twice after the Japanese surrendered. Both times I was asked to wear British uniform without fail. These talks with the British were extremely important, as the British did not show themselves as well-disposed towards us as did the United States.

The first mission was led by General Luang Senanarong, as our military representative. He had the reputation of having fought very hard against the Japanese when they first landed and attacked Siam (on December 8th 1941). His unit had won its battle. He was an outstanding soldier, honest, patriotic and brave. There were no real discussions at this meeting. Siam was just trying to show the flag and have it made known to the British and to news reporters in general that she had fought the Japanese and had been willing to carry out an uprising at the end of the War, but had been dissuaded from doing so by the Allies.

The second mission to Kandy was led by M.C. Wiwatthanachai Chaiyan. Since the details of the discussions which took place have already been given in Professor Direk's book,⁽²⁴⁾ there is no need for further elaboration on them here. Moreover, I was called back to England to continue my studies before the negotiations ended.

d. Luang Suranarong and Mr. Martin.

Before concluding my article, I must mention the importance of these two men. When we first arrived in India they gave us a great deal of moral support. We Free Siamese were afraid and depressed after many months of intensive travelling, particularly as we did not know what the future held for us.

However, there we met a number of Englishmen who had worked in Siam, spoke Siamese, and who were members of our commanding unit. They included (Messrs.) Pointon, Micholoyne, Bryce, Smith, Hobbs and Hopkins, all of whom gave us help and moral support. The other people who boosted our morale were General Luang Suranarong and Mr. Martin. Luang Suranarong had come to India from Singapore, where he had been sent on military duties.⁽²⁵⁾ When the Japanese invaded Singapore, he had fled to India rather than surrender to the Japanese. We young men gained much spirit from his example. The other man was an elderly Englishman named Mr. Martin, the father of a Siamese doctor, Dr. Bunsom Martin. He had left Siam for India on foot rather than be taken prisoner by the Japanese. We knew his son and regarded him as a Siamese. The example of "Uncle Martin" also gave us much moral support.

Footnotes to the Article by Nai Puey Ungphakorn

- (1) This article was written for Professor Direk Jayanama of the Political Science Department of Thammasat University, to be incorporated into his book, which was written for the information and use of future students.
Section 3 of this article was printed in the cremation volume of Colonel San Yutthawong (my brother-in-law) on July 19th 1953.
- (2) (Chairman of the Bank of Thailand and Dean of the Economics Faculty at Thammasat University)
- (3) (A high-ranking member of the Siamese royal family)
- (4) (The widow of the former King Prachathipok, who died in exile in England in May 1941)
- (5) Towards the end of the war, the Pioneer Corps were granted the title of "Royal Pioneer Corps."
- (6) We had just been moved from Denby in North Wales, where we had slept in tents and garages, to Bradford, Yorkshire, where we were sleeping in what had formerly been a secondary school.
- (7) (As has been mentioned previously, it was common practice to refer to the Allied powers as the "United Nations" before the United Nations Organization was formally established in 1945)
- (8) (See footnote (16) to Nai Thawi Bunyaket's article in Siam and World War II)
- (9) (Ditto)
- (10) (The message which Nai Puey was carrying from Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in South-East Asia, to the Siamese Regent, Nai Pridi Phanomyong)
- (11) (A local drama form)
- (12) (A long strip of cloth used as a waist cloth and for a wide variety of other purposes)
- (13) (One of the decrees passed by the Pibul Songkhram government during the war years laid down that Siamese must wear hats)

- when in public places. Daeng and Di were clearly unaware of the existence of this edict, and hence got picked up)
- (14) (The sanctuary-hall of a temple compound)
 - (15) (Convocation or meeting-hall of a temple compound)
 - (16) (A local plant)
 - (17) (Meaning the Northeastern provinces of Siam)
 - (18) (A Pali phrase meaning "Not telling a falsehood." One of the five Buddhist precepts adhered to by devout Buddhists. *Ukotsan* was an annual publication of the boys of Assumption College)
 - (19) For further details see General Net Khemayothin, *Ngan Tai Din Khong Phan Ek Yothi (Underground Work of Colonel Yothi)*, (*op.cit.*), chapters 7-9 and 17-19.
 - (20) (In southern Siam)
 - (21) (Himself became a leading member of the Free Siamese movement. See also the preceding chapter by Nai Thawi Bunyaket)
 - (22) (Name of a mountain in Loei province)
 - (23) (See Part III, Chapter 3)
 - (24) (See Part III, Chapter 1 for details on both the two above-mentioned missions)
 - (25) (In November 1941, Field Marshal Pibul sent a military mission under Luang Suranarong to Singapore to discuss the question of what aid the British could supply to Siam in the event of the latter being invaded by Japan. (See *Coast, op.cit.*, p.17))

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