



THAI FOREIGN POLICY 1932-1946



Charivat Santaputra

Thai Foreign Policy 1932 - 1946



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Thai Foreign Policy 1932 - 1946

CHARIVAT SANTAPUTRA



Committees on the Project for the National Celebration
on the Occasion of the Centennial Anniversary of
Pridi Banomyong, Senior Statesman (private sector)

To celebrate the centennial anniversary of Pridi Banomyong
(11 May 1900 - 11 May 2000)
and on the occasion that UNESCO has included
Pridi Banomyong in the calendar of Anniversaries
of great personalities and historic events (2000-2001)



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CHARIVAT SANTAPUTRA

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FOREWORD

Foreign policy of any country is proper only for that country under circumstances and factors, internal and external, at the time. It could be the result of well-thought vision and farsighted planning of the politicians who assume the role of national leaders or foreign policy decision makers.

As for Thailand or Siam as she was then called, Thai foreign policy of the period 1932 to 1946 is very interesting for study and research in details. It was during this period that far-reaching political change occurred in the country, followed by tragic world events severely affecting Thailand. The 1932 Revolution brought about the regime of constitutional monarchy to replace centuries-old absolute monarchy. It thus changed players in foreign policy decision making from being the exclusive role of the King to that of qualified citizens.

Dr Charivat Santaputra has very well described foreign policy of Thailand beginning from the 1932 Revolution, right through the postwar period. This era brought in new players in foreign policy decision making process — civilian and military leaders have since assumed the role which used to be the prerogatives of the King and a few Royal Princes. The author projected well the roles of two close friends whose mutual love and rivalry began when they were studying in Paris: the liberal law-graduate Pridi Banomyong and the nationalist artillery officer Luang Pibulsongkhram. These two figures were instrumental in the 1932 Revolution and became national leaders having prominent roles relating to foreign policy throughout this period and until 1946.

Pridi as a great liberal and civilian leader headed important ministries including Interior, Finance and Foreign Affairs. He advocated neutrality and was against collaboration with Japan in the war. Pridi thus directed a resistance movement against Japanese occupation and cooperated with other Free Thai movements abroad and collaborated closely with the Allied Command Headquarters in the Far East. It was also Pridi who directed the postwar normalisation of Thai relations with the Allied Powers and France and engineered Thailand to become member of the United Nations.

Pibul, on the other hand, led a group of military officers with

sympathy towards military regime in Germany, Italy, and Japan in the prewar years. The ultranationalism leaning of the Pibul group became more noticeable especially in the years prior to Japanese penetration into Southeast Asia. Pibul then took complete control of the Government by becoming Prime Minister and also took over the portfolio of Foreign Affairs for a brief period. He was instrumental in shifting Thai foreign policy from neutrality to more collaboration with Japan besides pushing Thailand into conflict in Indochina with the French. Pibul was later on compelled to step down before the end of World War II. Subsequently after the war he was arrested and charged with crime of war in the Thai Special Court. His case was however dismissed by the Court on account of non-retroactivity of the law.

In writing his thesis on Thai Foreign Policy 1932-1946, the author relied on a vast number of authentic sources in Thailand, the United Kingdom and elsewhere including personal interviews with the individuals who were directly or indirectly involved in the foreign policy decision making process. The most important interview Dr Charivat was able to conduct exclusively was none other than the one with Pridi Banomyong who was then living in exile in the suburb of Paris. Hence, Dr Charivat had direct access to the person whose role was paramount in the 1932 Revolution and the following years throughout this period and until 1946. The author listened firsthand to Pridi's conceptual thinking and all the reasons behind the events in which Pridi became involved until he left the political scene of Thailand and went into exile in 1947 after a coup d'état staged by Pibul's former supporters. Pridi spent his later years till his death in Paris, where the idea of democracy had taken seeds in his thoughts and actions decades earlier.

It is gratifying to note however that the name of Pridi Banomyong will not be easily forgotten. In the year which marked the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, that is the year 2000, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO in Paris decided to include the name of Pridi Banomyong in its Calendar of Great Personalities and Historic Events for 2000-2001 and to be associated with Pridi's Centennial Celebration held in various places both inside and outside the country.

Wichian Watanakun
(Chairman of the Executive Board of
Pridi Banomyong Institute)
28 December 2000

FOREWORD

in First Edition

To the Thai general public, the making of foreign policy is something so remote and hence mysterious. It is something roughly concerned with the question of national survival — i.e. that of maintaining or losing national independence. There is of course nothing theoretically wrong in attaching supreme importance to this very basic issue had it not become all too often subject to national chauvinism and demagoguery. For lack of an informed and educated public then, foreign policy could indeed succumb to irrationality and military adventurism. Unfortunately, there has not been much help from the Thai academia where policy studies and research, both domestic and external, are still not the rule of the day.

It is partly because of the concern for this missing link that the Thai Khadi Research Institute deems it appropriate to reproduce Dr Charivat Santaputra's thesis, *Thai Foreign Policy 1932-1946*. Although historically confined, the main thrust is its exposition of the decision-making concept and approach and thus of the process of interaction between domestic politics and external relations. For students of politics and government in general this also helps throw a more instructive light on what was going on, especially the perception and thinking of the dramatis personae involved in that crucial span of Thai political transition. In presenting this publication, it is hoped that it would stimulate further interest in the field of policy and decision-making studies and research particularly within the Thai academic community itself. This in turn would help keep the Thai citizenry sufficiently informed and help create a truly democratic environment.

The Thai Khadi Research Institute wishes to express its gratitude for the author's kind permission and for a generous grant from the John F. Kennedy Foundation of Thailand which makes the publication possible.

Saneh Chamarik
March 1985

PREFACE

When I returned from England, Professor Saneh Chamarik, Director of Thai Study Programme, asked me to have my thesis produced as an academic document. I happily and readily complied to such request. Since I embarked on this thesis I had always wished that it would stimulate more interest upon the issue. I would like to see nothing more than the readers' deliberation on my thesis — its facts, information, presentation and conclusion. I also hope that this thesis would be used as a basis for critical assessments, debates, conflicting thoughts, or another starting point for future research.

From then till now, the Thai Study Programme has nobly been arranging for funds to finance its publication. The John F. Kennedy Foundation kindly gave the financial support. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to both institutions for making my wish a reality.

I would like, most of all, to dedicate this edition of my thesis to His Excellency Mr Pridi Banomyong, the Senior Statesman, who died on May 2, 1983, at his home in suburban Paris... For peace, independence, humanity, justice, and prosperity.

Charivat Santaputra
March 25, 1985

บทคัดย่อ

วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้เป็นผลของการพยายามประยุกต์บางส่วน
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และทำไม

ข้อเขียนนี้จะบรรยายถึงสภาพแวดล้อมของการตัดสินใจของผู้
มีส่วนในการตัดสินใจ ทั้งในสภาพปฏิบัติการและในสภาพความนึกคิด
ตามแนวคิดของเบรคเคอร์ เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นว่า ประเทศมหาอำนาจ
และผู้นำสยามมองและรับรู้สถานการณ์ต่างกันอย่างไร จุดหลักของ
วิทยานิพนธ์นี้ได้แก่ การพิจารณาความมากน้อยของผลกระทบที่
ปัจจัยตัวแปรทั้งภายในและภายนอกประเทศมีต่อยุทธศาสตร์และการ
ดำเนินนโยบายต่างประเทศในการสนองตอบสถานการณ์ที่สำคัญต่างๆ

ภายหลังการอภิวัฒน์ปี พ.ศ. ๒๔๗๕ เมื่อปัญหาด้านการ
รับรองและการเข้าแทรกแซงผ่านพ้นไปแล้ว ก็มีการแข่งขันเพื่อช่วง
ชิงการคุมนโยบายต่างประเทศระหว่างกลุ่มทหารซึ่งนำโดยหลวง
พิบูลฯ กับกลุ่มพลเรือนเสรีนิยมซึ่งนำโดยนายปรีดิฯ ในที่สุดเมื่อ
หลวงพิบูลฯ เริ่มสวมบทบาทผู้นำเผด็จการ ก็ได้ดำเนินนโยบายต่าง
ประเทศที่ก้าวร้าวและเล็งผลเลิศ นโยบายนี้จบลงด้วยสัญญาทาง
วาทะที่หลวงพิบูลฯ ให้กับฝ่ายญี่ปุ่นระหว่างสงครามอินโดจีน สัญญา
นี้นำไปสู่การเข้าเป็นพันธมิตรกับญี่ปุ่นระหว่างสงครามโลกครั้งที่ ๒
โชคยังดีที่นายปรีดิฯ ได้นำขบวนการต่อต้านเพื่อกอบกู้สถานการณ์
และในที่สุดก็สามารถนำสถานะอธิปไตยกลับสู่ประเทศสยาม

จะเห็นได้ว่านโยบายต่างประเทศที่ถูกต้องชอบธรรม คือ
เป็นกลาง ยึดหยุ่น และใช้มหาอำนาจประเทศหนึ่งเป็นฐานต่อรอง
กับประเทศอื่นนั้น ให้คุณประโยชน์แก่ประเทศที่อ่อนแออย่างสยาม
อยู่เสมอ

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON
ABSTRACT
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
POLITICS
Doctor of Philosophy
THAI FOREIGN POLICY 1932-1946
by Charivat Santaputra

This thesis is an attempt to apply certain features of foreign policy analysis to empirical evidence, in order to explain what, why and how certain foreign policies were pursued by Siam (Thailand) during the period 1932-1946.

Brecher's operational and psychological environments in the decision-making model are described to show what other Powers thought of an issue and what Siamese leaders perceived it to be. How various variables (internal and external) contributed to each foreign policy strategy and execution in response to each salient issue is the central theme of this thesis.

After the problem of recognition and intervention had passed following the 1932 Revolution, the contest for the control of foreign policy was between the military faction led by Pibul and the liberal civilians led by Pridi. When Pibul finally assumed his dictatorship role, speculative and aggressive foreign policies were pursued, ending with his oral commitment to Japan in the Indo-China Conflict, which led to the alliance with Japan during the Second World War. Luckily, Pridi led the Resistance Movement to salvage something out of the situation and finally restored the sovereign status of the country.

It can be seen that the foreign policies of neutrality, flexibility and playing one Power against another have always been beneficial to a weak nation like Siam.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am most grateful to my supervisor, Dr P.A.R. Calvert, for his guidance, encouragement, patience, and all the academic as well as personal advice he has given me throughout the course of this thesis. Professor Joseph Frankel taught me foreign policy analysis which lit in me the quest to apply this academic subject to the case of my own country.

I would like to record my appreciation to all the help I have received from the staff of the following institutions: Department of Politics, Inter Library Loan and the Main Library, Southampton University; the Public Record Office; SOAS Library; LSE Library; Thai Foreign Ministry Library; Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Office (Library Section); Thai Assembly Library; Phra Chulachomklao Military Cadet College; Thai Information Centre, Chulalongkorn University; History Division, Directorate of Operations, Ministry of Defence; and the Thai Government Students' Office in London.

I am grateful to the following persons who have given me interviews and their views of the period concerned: Mr Sophon Chunchum, Lady La-iad Pibulsongkhram, General Netr Khemayothin, M.R. Seni Pramoj, Mr Patpong Rinthakul, Mr Pridi Banomyong, and Mr Konthi Suphamongkol. Mr Pridi Banomyong, in particular, has kindly given me interview after interview as well as constructive advice and many valuable documents.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to a few friends who have helped me in one way or another. Ms Paritta Chalernpow wrote Thai names and drew the maps and figures. Ms Naree Luanvathananukul typed part of the thesis. Ms Prapaisri Wananuraks typed, corrected and retyped the rest with great efficiency and patience. Ms Judy Stowe corrected some English and had given me many invaluable comments and criticisms. M.L. Pannawadee Varavarn kindly sent me some of her grandfather's rare documents. Ms Premwan Varithorn gave me great assistance when I did my research in Thailand.

Every member of my family has been marvellous to me throughout. Their encouragement, warmth and trust in my ability to accomplish

this task have strengthened my determination considerably. I shall always be grateful to them, especially my mother and father.

Finally and foremost, I would like to thank all honest Thai taxpayers who have made my study here possible, and also the Thais who do not earn enough even to be in the tax bracket. Each of them has as much right as I do to enjoy this privilege (of further education). I am a lucky one, so, to them this thesis is whole-heartedly dedicated.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

From the evidence in previous writings, it might appear that little can be said about Thai foreign policy during the period 1932-1946. To the West, it is a short chapter of relatively little importance to world history as a whole. To the local people, the degree of importance increases, but most of them nowadays would just shrug their shoulders and say to themselves “Well, nice to know our own history.” This is not surprising because existing works are merely descriptive and historical. They emphasise particular issues and their uniqueness, in the hopeful belief that history will not repeat itself.

To a student of foreign policy analysis, such descriptive work is insufficient. It is in the belief that history has to be told, and could be told, in a more explanatory fashion so that something could be learnt from, that this work is undertaken. Hence, this thesis will not only relate the diplomatic history of Thailand during the period 1932-1946, but also explain, in a more meaningful way, why certain foreign policies were pursued during that period, and what their results were. Each salient policy will be described in a systematic manner so that comparison is possible. It is hoped, in consequence, that this thesis would give an insight to the decision-maker to the extent that similar situations could be detected and proper policy-strategies could be readily prepared to meet such situations, so that history need not repeat itself.

INTRODUCING THE THESIS

To write a systematic as well as meaningful thesis, a purposeful framework is necessary. As there exists no generally accepted framework of foreign policy analysis as a sub-discipline, each author has to select an approach as a central structure. With that structure in mind, he must then build up the analysis by applying it to empirical evidence. Other selected concepts and theories may also be useful as tools in the building of the whole thesis.

Most Western academic approaches are irrelevant to developing countries because the latter lack well-defined organisational network, bureaucratic complexity, and structural differentiation. Furthermore, one has to select an approach which suits the study, in this case a single country study, not a comparative one. This makes me opt for the decision-making approach as my integral structure. As applied to Thailand between 1932-1946, it concerns the rivalry and domination of decision-makers who have authority, via special knowledge or charisma, and hence influential personality. Foreign policy sources, internal as well as external, are described through their vision and perception, as they are the ones who formulate as well as execute foreign policies.

Therefore, a broad theoretical framework will be set out in Chapter I to structure the pattern by which empirical evidence will be treated. Certain concepts, which I believe to be useful, will also be explained so that the reader can readily understand when the terms crop up in the thesis. They are deliberately selected and are, by no means, exhaustive. Other models and concepts may also be useful, but not significant enough for me to spend much time and space upon.

Having set out the broad framework, the time span should be explained. I begin in 1932 because it was the year the Revolution, which replaced the traditional absolute monarchy by a constitutional one, took place in old Siam. In terms of Thai foreign policy, it transformed the system whereby the King and a few princes could dictate policy at will, to one whereby decision-makers had to be responsible to other institutions. Thus, there emerged a rivalry to control the foreign-policy machine. The merit of such a change is not our concern here, but the new system gives us a good start for a new era. I end the thesis in 1946 because, by the end of that year, Thailand had absolved her misadventure in the Second

World War and emerged as a full member of the United Nations, which means an acceptance into the new Family of Nations as a fully sovereign state. It also marked the high tide of a successful Thai foreign policy.

As it would surely be wrong not to lay the lessons of the past before the future, Chapter II will contain a brief survey of Siam's foreign affairs up to 1932. Historical interaction between Siam and the West, the nature and levels of contacts and the salient legacies (such as the problem of extraterritoriality) are described. To set the scene for 1932, bilateral relations between Siam and the Powers of the day are emphasised. It should, therefore, be explained from the outset that Siam's relations with her immediate local neighbours (Malaya, Burma and Indo-China) are not discussed as such, but only in the context of Britain and France, because throughout the period all three were colonies and their foreign relations were controlled by their colonial masters. It has to be mentioned too that, though most foreign affairs are contained in routine work (visas, boundary-crossing, fishing rights, etc.), only what I consider to be salient features of Thai foreign affairs are described here. Matters purely concerning these neighbours individually are often not of significance and, thus, are deliberately left out, since it seems to me that Thai decision-makers did not perceive them to be factors of real importance in their formulation and execution of foreign policies during this period.

As is always the case in international politics, after an unusual change of government, the problem of recognition is immediate. This is considered in Chapter III. As internal control and stability are usually the main criteria of acceptance, this chapter begins with internal politics. It is followed by the main foreign policy which was a direct result of the change of government. How foreign Powers viewed the situation in Siam during 1932-1933 will then be discussed in further details. Here, and throughout this thesis, generally known international events will be very briefly described as a general background, without references.

Chapter IV covers the period 1934-1938, when Phya Pahol, the figurehead of the People's Party, held the premiership. Domestically, it was a period of consolidation of the People's Party. In terms of foreign relations, the peaceful political climate at home enabled the Siamese to exert her presence forcefully. "Unequal" treaties were terminated and a new series of treaties were negotiated. Meanwhile, a new regional

dominant Power appeared on the horizon, Japan. Her rise was however related to the rise of the military in Siam too, which was disguised under the loose term “nationalism”.

The premiership was transferred to Pibul, the leader of the military faction, on December 16, 1938, when Pahol retired, allegedly because of ill-health. Pibul held the post until his forced resignation in July 1944. During this period, the country had gone through many changes, especially in its external relations; changes which culminated in the declaration of war against Great Britain and the United States on January 25, 1942. This meant a complete departure from the traditional foreign policy of neutrality and playing off one power against another.

As so many significant events occurred in this period, I divide this episode into four chapters. Chapter V starts with Pibul's first government until the middle of 1940. Pibul's domination of domestic politics will be discussed at length. Paradoxically, Pibul allowed the liberals to conduct the country's foreign policy of strict neutrality, and the Non-Aggression Pacts with Japan, France and Great Britain were their testimony. Chapter VI is about the Thai-Indo-China Conflict; the general situation, its brief inception, the attitudes of the Powers, the conflict and the results.

Chapter VII deals mainly with the year 1941. It describes various pressures the Thais had to encounter from external environments. Thai foreign policy decision-makers and their beliefs will be identified. This chapter ends on December 8, 1941, when the Japanese invaded Thailand. The immediate Thai reaction is then evaluated. This fateful event started a new phase of Thai foreign policy, and Chapter VIII, which begins with the new composition of the ruling party, declaration of war, and formation of closer relationships with Japan, ends with the fall of Pibul. Different stages of the status of Thailand during the War will be pointed out, and the Siamese Resistance Movement is appraised. These four chapters correspond with the changing phases of domestic politics rather than foreign policies. However, since international events in this period, 1938-1944, were so strong and intensively affected and penetrated domestic politics, one can see the value of “linkage” concept in showing the interplay between the two polities.

Chapter IX picks up the situation after the fall of Pibul to the end of 1946. It begins with diplomatic and political moves towards the end

of the War and the situation when Japan capitulated. The status of Thailand after the War is then reviewed. It ends with the country's necessary negotiations with foreign Powers and their results, which absolved the disadvantageous status Pibul had brought Thailand into. In this period, domestic politics changed rapidly but the major foreign-policy makers did not. Hence, domestic politics are described only as far as it directly affects foreign policy, and not in detail.

Finally, in Chapter X the salient features of theoretical application and evaluation are restated in a more distinguished manner. This is to explain the correlation between theoretical framework and its application to empirical evidence within this thesis. This is followed by categorising Thai foreign policies in this period into some recognisable patterns. This chapter, and indeed, this thesis, will end with my tentative concluding appraisal of Thai foreign policy 1932-1946.

SOURCES

My primary source for empirical data is embodied in the British Foreign Office Papers, covering the period 1932-1946, which are kept at the Public Record Office in London. I spent almost two years reading through the papers that concern Thailand, hundreds of volumes in number. They are mainly letters, telegrams and reports sent by the British Legation in Bangkok to the Foreign Office (FO) in London, and vice versa. They also contain comments by various people in the Far Eastern Department of the FO as well as the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Whenever an account is mentioned and no detail is given in the reference apart from source number, it is to be understood that the source is a communication from the British Minister in Bangkok to the British FO, addressing the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. There are also records of conversations, attitudes and plans as well as newspaper cuttings about Thailand. These documents provide me with the best available information I could find in that country. In the thesis, they are referred to by their Group Number, followed by the Volume Number. To be more precise, the document number, file number and country number will be given too. For example, F566/296/40 in Vol FO371/46844 means Document Number F566, File Number 296, and Siam or

Thailand (is signified by Number 40). FO371 means Group Number of the Group under which these FO papers could be found; 46844 is the Volume Number under this Group.

My next group of primary sources come from Thailand and are mostly in Thai. I spent six months in Bangkok in search of them. I was fortunate to have full access to relevant sections of the Thai Foreign Ministry Archives. I was, in addition, allowed to read only a limited number of mostly well-known documents at the libraries of the Thai Assembly and the Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet. The officers at the History Division, directorate of Operations, Ministry of Defence, were courteous but found it impossible to allow me access to any unpublished documents in their possession, even though more than 30 years have lapsed. The staff at the Phra Chulachomklao Military Cadet College went out of their way to give me all the assistance and facility I needed, but unfortunately, documents in their "Pibulsongkhram Room" are limited in number and mainly concern military matters as a discipline.

While in Bangkok, I was fortunate to be granted some useful interviews. The head of the Archives Section in the Thai FO, Mr Sophon Chunchum, twice gave me interviews on October 31 and December 12, 1978. As a young man during 1932-1946, he gave me his personal account of the period, though he asked not to be quoted verbatim. General Netr Khemayothin and M.R. Seni Pramoj kindly answered my questions and gave their own overviews of the period, on January 2 and 3, 1979, respectively. Madam La-iad Pibulsongkhram talked to me briefly and most kindly lent me three volumes of Luang Pibul's writings. Though not directly cited in the thesis, these helped to provide the missing link between events and thoughts, etc. In any case, many parts of these writings have later been incorporated in a set of books by his son, Anant Pibulsongkhram which can be, and are, conveniently quoted. In London, on June 8, 1980, Mr Konthi Suphamongkol, an ex-FSM member and ex-Thai Ambassador to London, also gave me his view of what went on in those days.

I visited France twice in April and May 1980. There, at his home in Antony, H.E. Pridi Banomyong, a principal character in this thesis, generously gave me many invaluable interviews to which I have had to refer in places whenever no other unpublished documentation could be found. Furthermore, he very kindly furnished me with many rare signifi-

cant documents, including a set of photocopies of his libel charge against Professor Rong Sayamanont, Court Case No. Black 4226/2521. Attached to this charge are some Thai and Allied official documents, and official documents in the form of evidence as witnesses to the War Criminal Committee by Police General Luang Adul Detcharas (during December 13, 1945 - January 16, 1946), Prince Aditya Dibh-Abha, an ex-Regent (on October 19, 1945), and Mr Thawee Bunyaket, an ex-Prime Minister (during October 19-23, 1945). They comprised as my authoritative information on the War years.

Three authoritative books should next be mentioned. The first is Prasert Patamasukhon's *Forty-two Years of the Thai Assembly, 1932-1974* (in Thai). The author worked in the Secretariat Office of the Assembly for more than 35 years. This work is an objective record of what happened in the Assembly, and when. Thus it could be referred to as a major source document on Thai politics. The second is *Thai Politics: Extracts and Documents 1932-1957*, edited by Thak Chaloemtiarana, under the auspices of the Social Science Association of Thailand. It contains, in English, many interesting as well as important documents of the period. The third is Direk Jayanama's *Thailand and the Second World War*, the translated version of which has recently been published. The author had been involved with Thai politics, especially in foreign affairs throughout the period 1932-1946 and had, more than once, been the Minister of Foreign Affairs. His two scholarly volumes thoroughly describe the War Years, from a Thai standpoint with great authority.

The Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) provides the official American side of the topic, but a lot of documents are not included. F.C. Darling's thesis "American Influence on the Evolution of Constitutional Government in Thailand" also provides a good account of the Americans' relationship with the Thais. The main source representing the Japanese views up to 1941 is E.T. Flood's voluminous thesis, "Japan's Relations with Thailand 1928-1941". This scholar has exacted many interesting interviews with Japanese officers and has read many Japanese documents. These works confirm the value of the British Foreign Office Papers as primary sources even for Thai relations with other countries like the US, Japan, France, Germany, Italy and institutions like the League of Nations, the UN, etc.

Articles from various journals provide the main secondary

sources. As they were written mostly within or immediately after the period concerned, usually, they could give a more reliable picture of the feeling and atmosphere of the period than books. Books are, however, cited here and there, usually as a link and a concluding view of an observer. Newspaper articles are also referred to from time to time.

It is hard to judge the relative reliability of each source. Obviously, official documents must be relied upon first and foremost. Personal interviews and theses should be next in reliability as they are clearer than other written works. Newspapers, memoirs and articles come next before most books. As these so-called “facts” have to be interpreted, by me, I shall try to be as objective as possible and whenever there is a clash of more than one sources, I shall try to present every view but shall also give my own judgement of their reliability. References to these sources and other substantial or controversial information will be given. Sources closest to events will be utilised first in describing actual happenings, ‘hindsight’ information will be used mostly to enable me to relate the whole thesis coherently.

NAMES

Because there is no fixed or uniform rule that is generally accepted in writing Thai names in English, difficulty arises. Different writers use their own styles, and translations. Here I shall try to adhere to three principles. Firstly, I shall not attempt to translate titles because they are not possible to give accurate ranking. For example, “Phya” (พระยา) will be written as such, and not as “Lord” which some writers believe to be its equivalent status. Furthermore, these titles and military ranks, if referred to in full, will be the ones the subjects were holding at the time they were mentioned.

Secondly, I shall try to follow the most common usage of official names, where available. Owners’ preferred forms will be followed, where known. If not, as FO Papers provide my main source of information, the common usage in these documents will then be accepted. As for those names that seldom appear in official documents or appear with some inconsistency in their spellings, I shall try to use the spellings that sound nearest to their pronunciation in Thai. According to these princi-

ples, the name “Direk” or “Direk Jayanama” (ดิเรก ชัยนาม), as the owner preferred, will be used instead of “Direck Jayanama” or “Nai Direk” as appeared in FO papers. Then “Jayanama” is preferred to “Chaiyanam” as many writers employ in the belief that it is closer to Thai pronunciation. Usually, if I have to transliterate from Thai sources, spellings which give the sound nearest to Thai pronunciation will be employed when other official or common usages cannot be found. However, wherever a passage is quoted from a source, original names will be left intact.

Lastly, as Thai names and titles are usually long and elaborate, for convenience, I shall generally use their popular shorter names if these characters appear frequently in the thesis, though full names and titles will be given when they first appear. It is customary for the Thais to refer to each other by first name, and “Nai” signifies “Mr”.

For the sake of convenience, here is the list of names that appear quite often in the thesis.

พระองค์เจ้าอาทิตย์ทิพยามภา	HRH Aditya Dibh-Abha - (Prince) Aditya.
หลวงอดุลเดชจรัส	Luang Adul Detcharas - or (Luang) Adul, or “Pulao”.
หม่อมเจ้าศุภสวัสดิ์ วงศ์สนิท สวัสดิวัตน์	HSH Prince Subhasvasti Wongsnit Savasdivatana - Lt Col “Arun”, or (Prince) Svasti.
จำกัฒ พลังกูร ดิเรก ชัยนาม	Chamkad Balankura - Chamkad Direk Jayanama - Direk, or Nai Direk or “Omar”
หลวงโกวิทอภัยวงศ์ (ควง อภัยวงศ์) เนตร เขมะโยธิน	Luang Kovid Aphaiwongse - Khuang (Aphaiwongse) Netr Khemayothin - Netr, or Col “Yodhi”
พระยาพลพลพยุหเสนา (พจน์ พหลโยธิน) หลวงพรหมโยธี	Phya Pahol Polpayuhasena (Pote Paholyothin) - (Phya) Pahol Luang Phrom Yodhi - (Luang) Phrom
หลวงพิบูลสงคราม (แปลก ขีตตะสังคะ) ประยูร ภมรมนตรี	Luang Pibulsongkhram (Plaek Khitasangka) - (Luang) Pibul Prayoon Pamornmontri - Prayoon



หลวงประดิษฐมนูธรรม (ปรีดี พนมยงค์)	Luang Pradist Manudharm (Pridi Banomyong) - (Luang) Pradist, or Pridi, or "Ruth"
ม.ร.ว. เสนีย์ ปราโมช	Mom Rajawongse Seni Pramoj - (M.R.) Seni
หลวงสินธุสงครามชัย	Luang Sinthu Songkhrachai - (Luang) Sinthu
พระยาทรงสุรเดช หลวงธำรงนาวาสวัสดิ์	Phya Song Suradej - Phya Song Luang Thamrong Navasvasdi - (Luang) Thamrong
ทวี บุญเกิด	Thawee Bunyaket - (Nai) Thawee
วนิช ปานะนันท	Vanich Pananont - (Nai) Vanich
หม่อมเจ้า (พระองค์เจ้า) วรณไวทยากร วรวรรณ	HSH Price Varnvaidhayakorn Varavarn - (Prince) Varn
หลวงวิจิตรวาทการ	Luang Vichitr Vadhakarn - (Luang) Vichitr
วิลาศ โอสถานนท์	Vilas Osathanondh - (Nai) Vilas

ABBREVIATIONS

For convenience, space and time, many abbreviations are used. Usually their full names will be used when they first appear, with their abbreviated forms in brackets. Here is a list of some commonly used abbreviations in this thesis.

Commander-in-Chief, (Far East)	CIC, (FE)
Chief of Staffs	COS
Department of State or State Department	DOS
Foreign Office	FO
French Indo-China	FIC
Free Siamese Movement	FSM
Free Thai Movement	FTM
Minister of Foreign Affairs	MFA
Office of Strategic Services	OSS
Prime Minister	PM
Supreme Allied Command (Southeast Asia)	SAC (SEA)

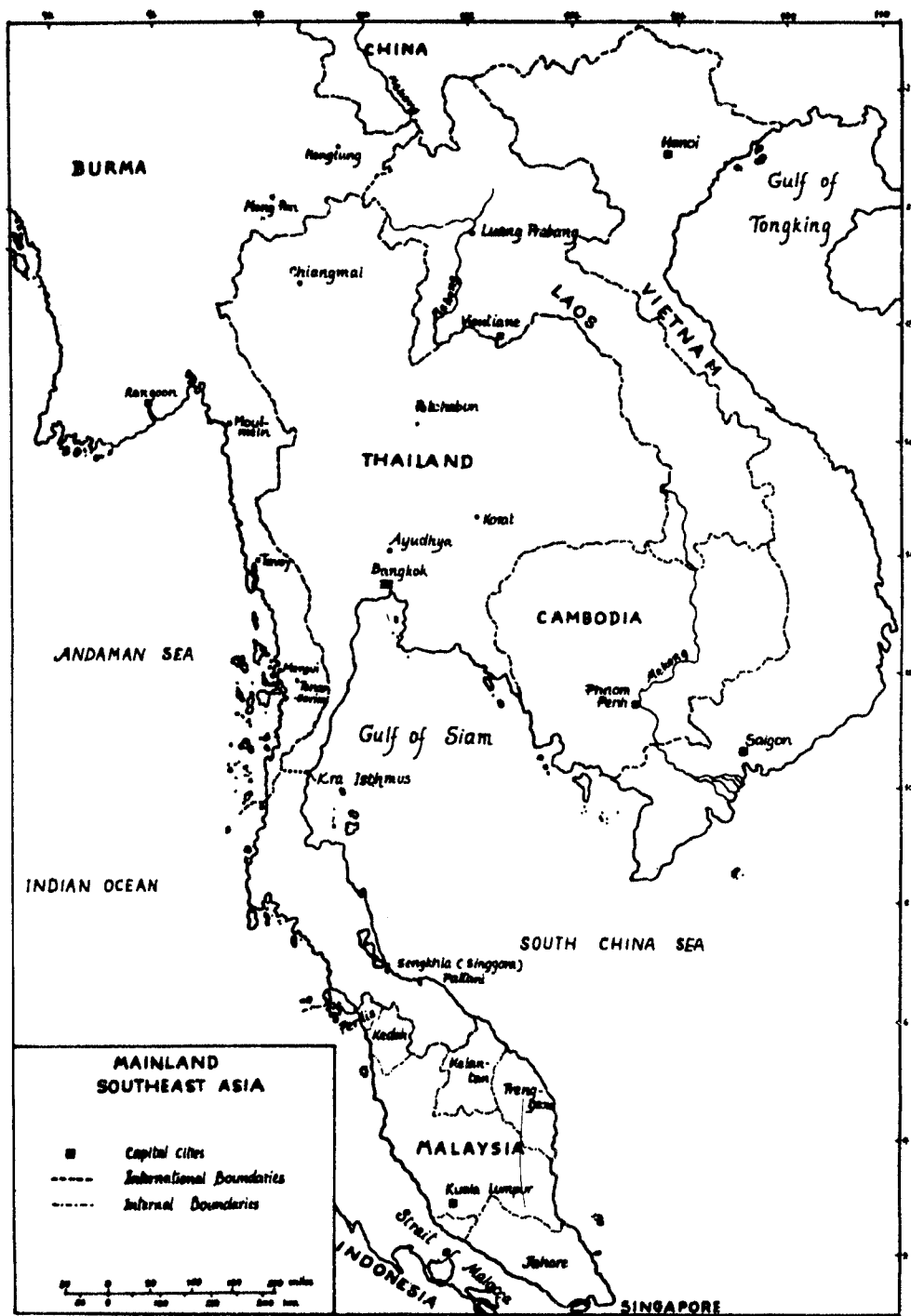
Southeast Asia Command	SEAC
Special Operation Executive	SOE
United Nations	UN
United States of America or the United States	USA or the US
The Second World War	WW II or WW 2

WARNINGS

Although the words “Thai” and “Thailand” are generally accepted nowadays, I try to use the names “Siamese” and “Siam” whenever most sources refer to them in such fashion. When and with what significance they are changed will be described in the thesis. Otherwise, they are treated as interchangeable words. The merits of their preference are not our concern here. The same can be said about Free Siamese Movement and Free Thai Movement, although in this case they also loosely indicate their origins. The former derives its name from the Resistance Movement inside the country. The word “Siamese” here signifies no “pan-Thai” ambition which is symbolically linked to Pibul’s “Pro-Japanese” policy. The latter derives its name from Seni in Washington and is also the term employed in England at first. Once they had made contact, the two are interchangeable.

Meanwhile, the word “Minister” is usually employed in the thesis when the Siamese used the word **กรมการราษฎร** - (literally) People’s Councillor or State Councillor. Likewise, “Prime Minister” is used in place of “President of the Council”. Fortunately, these awkward titles were changed by the permanent Constitution of December 10, 1932, after which the word “Minister” can be properly used.

It should be noted that until January 1, 1941, the Thai new year officially started on April 1st. Therefore, there might appear some slight apparent differences in dates when Thai writings are translated. However, I shall try to follow the now universally accepted method of calendar and treat every year as beginning on January 1st, throughout the thesis.





CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The main objective of this thesis is to describe and explain Thai foreign policy during the period 1932-1946, in terms of what, why and how. This will be done by using empirical data and content analysis to illustrate the policy strategies pursued and executed. Evidence will be allowed to speak for itself when first presented in Chapters 2-9. To render it more meaningful, their salient features will be re-examined in Chapter 10 in the light of some theoretical frameworks, which will be sketched here in Chapter 1.

Hence, I shall begin with a brief theoretical survey and pick parts from existing frameworks which I find appropriate to fulfil the above objective. Models or parts of the models to be employed will be sketched out. Certain useful concepts will also be briefly defined.

THEORETICAL SURVEY

There seems to be two contending approaches to the study of foreign policy of a country over a period of time. Twenty-five or so years ago, there was only the traditional school. It is concerned only with diplomatic relations between a particular state and others. It is, thus, rather descriptive and historical. It emphasises individuals and their actions. This leads to excessive concern on particular and unique issues. It gives little mention to foreign policy in a wider pattern that is not

unique. No real analysis is attempted to find out the cause of the events they describe. Therefore, it does not attempt to set any hypotheses, parallels, or patterns or types of criteria. This could be found in books about diplomatic or foreign policy experiences written by the people in that circle, or by laymen as observers of the era. Hence, it, more or less, amounts to being a history of diplomatic activities only.

Once analysts begin to ask "Why states behave as they do?", the above approach cannot give satisfactory answers. Theorists found that the answer here lies in the nature of the systemic structure of international politics itself. Once this is established, they begin to find the causes of such events. Different opinions, within this second school, begin to flourish. At first, a mono-causal explanation became the theory of the day.⁽¹⁾ Being a mono-causal explanation, everything has to be boiled down to this singular element. Every information of analysis is thus perceived through this pre-set lens. As can be easily seen, once this pre-set lens is questioned, the whole explanation disintegrates. To be precise, its decline started in 1962 when Snyder et al produced an analysis of foreign policy with emphasis on decision and decision-making.⁽²⁾ Unlike the mono-causal framework, this new one does not ignore the uniqueness or idiosyncrasies of a state's policy. It can incorporate wide-ranging determinants of a single policy. In essence, it rejects the notion that the state is merely a solid "billiard ball" which moves according to its impact with other balls, and focuses its attention on decision-makers who act in or on behalf of the state instead. It opens the flood gates: no one factor could now explain foreign policy making and/or execution. Insights from other disciplines (such as psychology and sociology) are employed to aid the understanding of foreign policy analysis, which has now become a discipline of its own.

From the descriptive study of diplomatic activities, foreign policy study moves to an explanatory attempt. From a mono-causal explanation, it has now moved to a multi-causal analysis. This leads to a self-sustaining take-off in that it has stimulated further thoughts, devices and frameworks. This proliferation of frameworks comes in many types, levels, and forms. Some theorists study a single factor at a time. Some attempt to set up a paradigm with a set of determinants. Some go further as to try to construct a general theory of foreign policy with hypotheses to be tested. Unfortunately, a consensus has never been

reached. Each theorist proposes his own theory and some even attempt to substantiate their frameworks with empirical studies, with varying degrees of success. Each work seems to have shed some light on an aspect of foreign policy analysis but without any standardisation (and I cannot see one in the near future). As a discipline, the study in this field is still rather loose and there is plenty of room to be explored. Such is the fascination of the whole world of academic research. However, the development of such academic theories is beyond the scope of this thesis.

The precise nature of foreign policy itself has never been agreed. Most analysts propose their own definitions that usually include the elements they want to analyse. To me, I regard foreign policy in a very general sense of the word, that is to say the form of action a state adopts in its relationships with other states or the external environment. In this thesis, Thai foreign policy during 1932-1946 will be identified, but the more valuable part will be the explanation of such policies. To explain, one has to realise that "human activity in the formulation and execution of foreign policies is as complex as the men, forces, perceptions, beliefs and arguments involved...The explanation of foreign policy is as continuous a process as the making of it."⁽³⁾

As can be seen, there are many factors to be looked at. Here, I propose to look at each foreign policy in three levels — the formulation, the nature and type of the policy itself, and the execution. In terms of theoretical model, I shall employ certain parts of the decision-making framework to aid the understanding of the formulation process. I shall try to identify the relevant domestic sources of Thai foreign policy, and the external environment the decision-makers have to take into account. Within this sphere of analysis, certain concepts will be very useful, and I shall try to identify and define them in the process. For the nature of the policy itself, empirical content analysis seems to be the appropriate tool. This level will then be more descriptive, with some categorisation in the final chapter. As for execution, little theoretical framework exists. Thus, apart from employing it as a strategy (diplomatic skills) a decision-maker has in hand, the execution level will be principally a descriptive analysis of empirical data, with some tentative conclusions.

THE DECISION-MAKING MODEL

As the first to explore the field of decision-making as an approach to foreign policy analysis, Snyder defines it as “a process which results in the selection from a socially defined, limited number of problematical, alternative projects of one project intended to bring about the particular future state of affairs envisaged by the decision-maker.”⁽⁴⁾

Snyder and associates’ study is a micro-analysis on a specialised level of government in terms of decision-making, as opposed to the Hegelian state of affairs which concentrates on the state and not on decision-makers. It assumes, as its central theme, that action equals decision by certain recognisable unit(s). This study goes on to identify sources (stimuli) of decision-making which are external environment, internal society (societal), and domestic bureaucratic system. Having identified these sources, the decision-making process is broken down into 3 subcategories:

1. “spheres of competence” – the activities of the decision-makers necessary for the achievement of the unit’s objectives;
2. “communication and information” – meanings, values, and preferences available at the time of decision, and
3. “motivation” – psychological, personality, and value factors that influence the actors, enter the process, and influence its outcome.

The essential development of this study seems to be the recognition of the eclectic role of perception which is, of course, a psychological factor. Perception (see later) plays a crucial part here as the authors accept that decision-makers follow their cognitive behaviour and, thus, act in response to image of reality rather than reality itself. The authors, though specifically reject irrationality, do not assume rationality as such. Readers are left to decide for themselves whether decision-makers act with purpose. As for motivation, the authors distinguish between “in order to” and “because of” motives. The former comes from decision-makers as participants of a society and acting in capacity as a member responding to environmental changes. The latter is developed to explain individual (personal) motives. This becomes the “residual” category in this model, to fill the gap unexplained by the “in order to” motives.

Snyder et al’s pioneer model of decision-making was much

criticised. For instance, some argue that it gives no hypothesis which could be linked to specific decisions, and that the model does not say which stimulation factors affect decision-makers most (i.e. no ranking). Furthermore, it does not establish any relationship between the numerous variables. Andriole and associates mention that Snyder's work goes only as far as it sets out, to "seek to isolate and identify some of the crucial variables that determine...responses to concrete situations." But it wrongly believes that foreign policy decision may be understood as the product of the interaction between the 3 internal variable clusters — spheres of competence (to achieve organisational objective; role), communication and information (nature, quality, quantity, processing, flow), and motivation (psychological state of actors; decision-makers' behaviour that could explain their activities). Thus this framework lacks balance because of too much emphasis on internal sources.⁽⁵⁾

This model can also be criticised in that it concentrates too much on perception and leaves out objective view. Hence, it ignores reality which decisions are made into and thus leads to the lack of a feedback process. It does not account for the operational environment⁽⁶⁾ either. This negligence leads to the inability to assess the degree of congruence or the disparity of operational and psychological view. In other words, "the psychological environment determines the limits of possible decisions whereas the operational environment determines the limits of possible actions."⁽⁷⁾ Without congruence between these two environments, you need to consider feedback.

In 1963, Joseph Frankel⁽⁸⁾ seized on Snyder's model and elaborated it. He explicitly distinguishes the operational environment (OE) from the psychological environment (PE), though his concept of OE is still relatively unstructured. It concentrates on institutional restraints on decision-makers. It does not attempt to weigh the impact of different levels and structures of the international system on state behaviour. As for the psychological setting, he stresses on three variables which, he believes, shape elite perceptions: information, image, and values. Sadly, OE and PE are not integrated in the analysis, thus, once again, precluding the assessment of congruence or disparity and the resultant implications for foreign policy.

Frankel breaks down the decision-making process into three stages. The predecisional stage is characterised by initiative, planning,

definition of a situation, prediction, advice and deliberation. Then comes the formulation of decision, and lastly, implementation. However, though useful, it is still a static model in that no feedback is explored. Frankel's model also lacks a "rigorous analysis of the linkages among environment, elite images, and policy choices."⁽⁹⁾

In 1969, M. Brecher made a big contribution to this decision-making process study. In his articles⁽¹⁰⁾, he attempts to incorporate Snyder's model and its subsequent criticisms and proposes his own model. Brecher postulates that foreign policy decision-making system is comprised of four main elements. They are the environment (both operational and psychological), group of actors (instead of a unitary decision-maker), structure to which decision is initiated (bureaucratic organisation), and the processes of formulating decisions. In his analysis, he divides the whole study into three main categories — input, process and outcome.

By **input**, Brecher includes both the environments that a decision has to be made towards and the perceived one (i.e. operational and psychological). To Brecher, the operational environment sets the parameter of what decision-makers could do. It affects the choice of outcome or the action, as distinguished from decision, directly, and affects the choice of policy decision indirectly. This is so because the operational environment factors have to be filtered through decision-makers' images or perception through attitudinal prism (see later). The importance here is the distinction between action and policy decision.

Taking up the criticism of Snyder about ignoring the OE, Brecher tries to identify its relationship with the PE as well. He posits that their relationship provides techniques for measuring the success of a foreign policy. This may be so because if the OE is (more or less) correctly perceived, through the attitudinal prism, the pursuing policy may be said to be keeping in with reality, and, thus, has more chance of being successful. If incorrectly perceived, the likelihood of its failure is, obviously, higher. However, Brecher also acknowledges that many other intervening factors could disrupt the OE.

From that, Brecher tries to structure the OE into two groups of major variables, the external and the internal factors. The external set is comprised of five types. The first is the global system (G) which represents the whole network of interaction. The subordinate system (S)

represents the intermediate locational strategy (e.g. the continent, organisations like SEATO, NATO, and the Commonwealth). This is followed by dominant bilateral relations (DB) which usually represent the relationships between the country in question and the Super Powers or the dominant Power(s) in the region. The last type, which is explanatory in itself, is bilateral relations (B). The internal set is also comprised of five types. The first two are military and economic capabilities (M and E). Then comes the political structure (PS) which denotes whether the polity is stable, open, civilian, etc. Interest groups (IG) form the next type. They communicate information about the environment to decision-making elites. (They could be professionals, associations, teachers, manufacturing organisations, etc.) They pressure for the specific issue being under decision. The last type is competing elites (CE). They may not have an interest in this specific issue at all and may campaign for a completely different programme altogether. A good example is the Opposition Party for instance.

The link between the OE and the decision-making elite (actor or individual who performs the function of policy authorisation — could be President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, etc) is represented by “communications”. It is “the transmission of data about the operational environment by mass media, internal bureaucratic reposts, face-to-face contact, etc.”⁽¹¹⁾ As this is the channel through which information about the OE is passed on to the decision-makers, Brecher finds it important for analysts to assess its adequacy and extent to see whether the decision-makers’ perception through this is bias.

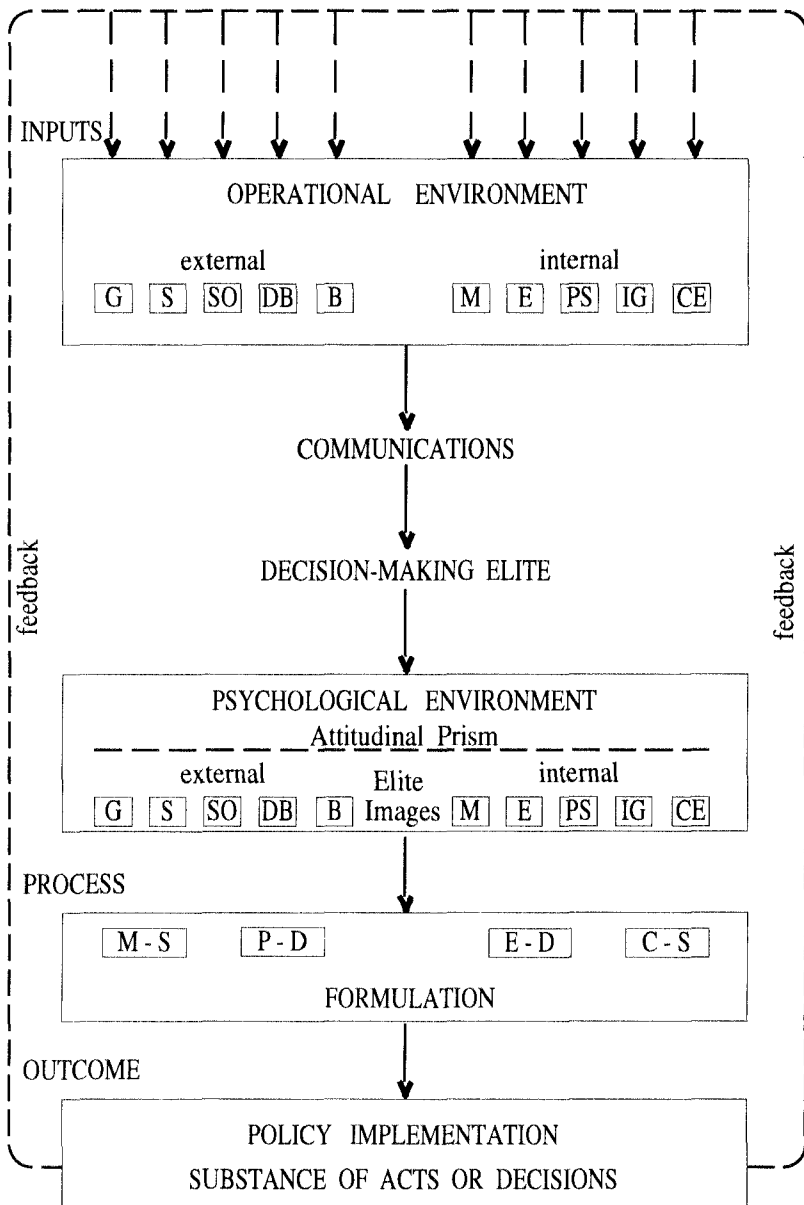
Having categorised the OE, Brecher turns our attention to the psychological environment (PE) faced by the actors. Here, he distinguishes two sets of data — the attitudinal prism and elite images. The “Attitudinal Prism” represents the filter through which a decision-making elite (actor) perceives the OE. This is made up of two factors. The first one is the societal setting which is comprised of things like ideology and historical legacy. The other is his own personality predispositions which include his individuality, childhood upbringing, etc. These two factors are comparable to Snyder’s “in order to” and “because of” motives respectively. However, Brecher goes a step further by pointing out the “elite images” of the OE, including the competing elites’ advocacy and pressure potential. He finds this an important component of the

decision-making process which is based on the notion of cognitive behaviourism. He points out to analysts that to ascertain the elites' images is to study their speeches and actions through content analysis.

By **process**, Brecher means the formulation of decisions. Here, he employs Rosenau's concept of Issue Areas (see later). Brecher postulates that all decisions fit into four broad Issue Areas. The first one, Military-Security (M-S) includes all matters dealing with violence, forces, and elites' perception of threat to national security. The Political-Diplomatic Issue (P-D) deals with all interactions in the external area except those dealing with violence. The Economic-Development Issue (E-D) includes trade, aid, allocation of resources and overseas investment, etc. The last issue area here is Cultural-Status (C-S). It includes cultural, educational, scientific changes as well as matters pertaining to the self image of the nation (place in the world).

Within these four issue areas, decisions are contained in two analytical categories — general and specific. The general decision is known as strategic decisions which are the broad policies that are important for the entire decision-making programme (e.g. US policy towards Africa). The specific decisions are known as tactics. They are merely the implementation of the former. They reformulate the strategies in response to the demand in specific political decision (e.g. US tactical policy toward the Angola issue). Once the decision is made, it is to be implemented by various structures such as the head of state, head of government, foreign minister, etc. An example of how decisions are related to issue areas can be seen in an implementation. If the strategic policy of the USA towards Africa is to have some influence, the issue areas concerned are politics and security. This is implemented through tactical decision in giving aid to Angola for instance. This involves, more or less, economic and political issues only. This becomes the **outcome**.

Brecher's Decision-Making Model



(Adapted from Brecher, 1973 p.74)

Once implemented, this action (or decision transformed into action) affects the entire structure once again because it has changed certain factors in the OE and elite images, in varying degrees of course. Therefore, Brecher adopts the concepts of “feedback” and makes it a continuous process of inputs-process-outcome which turns to input into the whole structure, etc. Hence the outcome of “circular feedback” is established.

An evaluation of Brecher’s model of decision-making process is bound to be controversial. First of all, it is an advance on Snyder by incorporating Frankel’s criticisms, correcting their deficiencies and adding certain further structured variables. Secondly, he has attempted to relate the OE and the PE to assess congruence. However, he admits that it is difficult to get a precise measurement of the gap and that the best one can do is to offer a statement of quality (lesser or greater). Thirdly, this model is dynamic as it contains a circular feedback. Fourthly, it employs Rosenau’s Issue Areas in a more precise manner than Rosenau’s own usage.

However, there are also many criticisms. The first of which concerns the issue areas. It is said that though, in general, they make useful classification they are not the only identifiable ones. For instance, the issue of vital or routine decision, any hostile-friendly relationship could be pointed at. Yet, the disciples of Brecher (or he himself) may argue that they are included in the political-diplomatic issue. Another criticism is that it does not give sufficient emphasis to the role of values. It suggests that decision-makers act purely on cognitive behaviour and thus it ignores the importance of the affective behaviour-volitional element of freewill — which may be determined by values in society. It is suggested that images should not be left out altogether either. (For values and images, see later). In using content analysis in determining elite images, Brecher should also have made a distinction between aspirational and operational issues. It is quite often that the decision-making elites do not really say what they are going to do. They may say what they wish to do. Furthermore, most manifestos are usually aspirational and diplomatic speeches are usually calculating too. It is also argued that Brecher tends to see decision-making as one unitary opinion and thus he leaves out the notion of bureaucracy.

Whether all these criticisms are true, or important enough,

remains debatable. One thing is certain — Brecher's model is a very tidy scheme imposed upon untidy processes. Though I am quite sure that decision-makers do not see themselves working in that manner, it is a model which approximates reality and must be considered academically very sound and useful. Furthermore, Brecher himself has successfully operationalised his model in his article in 1973⁽¹²⁾ and subsequently in another article.⁽¹³⁾ The 1973 article itself is earlier explained in fuller detail in his book which appeared a year earlier.⁽¹⁴⁾ Here I propose to employ his model in structuring each foreign policy analysed.

The study of the decision-making process was further elaborated in 1969 with the much celebrated article by G.T. Allison.⁽¹⁵⁾ Allison explained this in a more detailed manner in 1971.⁽¹⁶⁾ These and his later works⁽¹⁷⁾ are concerned with the actual decision-making process, focusing upon different levels of actors or decision-makers and how a decision may be reached, with reference to his own case study of the Cuban missile crisis.

Theoretically, Allison conceptualises three models of decision-makers and how they are related to the decisions reached. They are the Rational Actor Model, the Organisational Process Model, and the Bureaucratic Politics Model.

1. The Rational Actor Model is based upon the analogy between a government decision-making group and a rational man, i.e., a decision is a purposive act of a unified government. The decision-makers would thus adopt any means to achieve the set end as a rational man would. It accepts the rational man's behaviour and characteristics in that he has certain goals or objectives which are ranked in a hierarchy; he seeks to achieve his goal with the least cost; and that his action can be explained by his goal. Hence it is the study of choices of means to reach a certain goal. However, Allison points out that this model is based on unrealistic assumptions about how an individual makes his choice i.e. with perfect information, unlimited time, clear hierarchy of objectives, etc. Moreover, governments do not resemble rational men and are hardly unified as decision-makers. The mechanism within the government itself may also dictate the resultant decisions as can be seen in the next model.

2. The Organisational Process Model is based on the notion that decisions are the products of routine activities of government departments (civil servants and politicians). Thus, this model postulates that

the decisions are merely the output of large organisations which function according to standard operating procedures. There seems to be neither choice nor decision made, but only actions. These standard operating procedures are set by previous experiences which define a limited scope or perspective within which every input or situation is reacted upon to produce an output. If this model is applied, the output will always be according to the standard operating procedures on matter whether it follows the intention of those giving orders.⁽¹⁸⁾ An analogy of a computer or a button pushing individual can be applied here, without any politics in it at all.

3. The Bureaucratic (Governmental) Politics Model focuses on institutions in domestic politics that deal with such a foreign policy decision. It is based on the outcomes of conflicts, confusions and compromises of governmental decision-making officials with diverse interests and unequal influences within the bureaucratic hierarchy. Or as Allison puts it, "Rather, what happens is characterised as a resultant of various bargaining game among players in the national government."⁽¹⁹⁾ In this model, a government is comprised of many bureaucratic organisations or institutions. Each has its own traditions and routines which affect both its policy and implementation. Each has different perception of the problems and the means to deal with them. (Each is, by no means, unified either.) Each has its own rational proposal. The outcome or the resultant decision is thus the reflection of the conflict and argument within and between these organisations. Although the model focuses upon the executives and bureaucracies which have the responsibility of formulating and implementing the nation's foreign policy, it incorporates outside interest groups as well. Thus the emphasis is on the pluralistic nature of the decision-making process.

As can be seen, all three models are complementary and do not replace each other. Of the three, the Rational Actor Model is the most abstract as it is based on the assumption that all men act rationally in the national interest. This is so, mainly, because of the imprecise nature of the terms "rationality" and "national interest". This cannot be substantiated or disproved by empirical facts either. As for the Organisational Process Model, even if we know and accept the standard operating procedures, we do not know how they are applied in a particular case. In this sense, the Bureaucratic Politics Model is least abstract. One can detect how it

works by scrutinising memoirs, interviews, official memorandum, etc. But memoirs of past leaders tend to give the impression that their decisions were carried out as an essentially rational deliberation among unified groups of equals. To Allison, the decision has not only to be made, but logically explained or sold to the electorates as well. Hence the first model can never be neglected. But he also argues that “although the Rational Actor Model has proved useful for many purposes, there is powerful evidence that it must be supplemented, if not supplanted, by frames of reference that focus on the governmental machine... the organisations and political actors involved in the policy process.”⁽²⁰⁾

In his article, “Foreign Policy and Bureaucratic Adaptation”⁽²¹⁾ M.K. O’Leary questions the issue of ‘feedback’ in Rosenau’s Adaptive Framework of Foreign Policy, in relation to Allison’s conceptual models. O’Leary breaks up the Rational Actor Model and tries to bridge this into the other two models. He argues that the feedback input goes, not to the society as a whole which is unitary as postulated by the Rational Actor Model, but to sections of a subnational rational model. This is applicable to a non-crisis situation only. In crisis such as war, there is a war cabinet to deal with the situation in the name of the “national interest.” Sub-national interest seems to be subsumed by it.

In answer to Rosenau’s concept of “Adaptive Behaviour”, i.e., that a nation tries to influence its environment into a favourable path or avoid an unfavourable one, with the subnational rational model one cannot segregate public objectives from the weight of international environment. Aggregate public aims have to be considered in foreign policy making. Although a nation wants to preserve its vital structure, it will have to change according to the external environment if the cost of resisting outweighs its utility. Here, neither cost nor utility is unified, only aggregated. Hence, in a non-crisis situation, O’Leary’s subnational rational model seems to be useful in the understanding of the bureaucratic model as well as the adaptive model. However, the weight of cost and utility depends upon the terms “image” and “value”.

The chief criticism of Allison’s model is that it concentrates solely on domestic politics. The input shifts to domestic structure and the outcome is the output resulting from domestic conflicts. The conceptual models are thus applicable to any decision-making process, not necessarily foreign policy alone. Only the Rational Actor Model takes account

of feedback in calculating what the other nation would do. The other models have no reference to the international game being played at all, only bureaucratic infighting. Therefore, the determinants of foreign policy decision could be seen in terms of role, image (they may channel decision-makers to decide accordingly), style of government (a strong chief executive may have only "yes" men as advisers and his words are usually obeyed), etc. More often than not, decision-makers will have their own ideological philosophies and will decide as soon as problems arise which sort of outcomes they wish to see. They will then try to justify these stands with the incoming information through their perceptive lenses.⁽²²⁾

General applicability of the three models, especially the bureaucratic politics model which is the most elaborate, is much questioned. Although Allison himself seems to have applied it to the Cuban missile crisis successfully, it may work only in the USA where bargaining among organisations, non-governmental and governmental institutions is the usual means of political decision-making. Even in a country with sophisticated organisations and bureaucracies, homogeneous civil servants may be there to thrash all conflicting views out at a lower level. Without diversification of power, the model is not really applicable.

With other nuances, in a nation, without firm bureaucratic structure or with a less sophisticated one, standard operating procedures may not yet be established and Organisational Model can be disregarded. As for other Models, Rosenau's pretheory (see later) may be more applicable — in less developed countries, the most effective factors affecting decision-making are not societal or governmental; individual (leadership) and systemic variables seem to be more significant. Allison's conceptual models go into depth to explain a single case study. This phenotypic study is criticised by Rosenau who believes that a model should have a general look at different but related things. Events are just a part of this genotypic research.

The next thing about the utility of these three models is whether good alternatives and procedures lead to good decisions. If we accept these models, it is also plausible that each bureaucratic institution may determine merely to expand their influence in the foreign policy making process. Each may develop a strong conviction about the contents of the resultant policy if it believes that its department has a vital contribution

to make towards the “national interest” in this issue.⁽²³⁾ Articulation of each individual’s policy and protection of its own interests usually result in a compromise. “The issue is how to reconcile conflicting interpretations of what the correct policy ought to be.”⁽²⁴⁾ The concept of “national interest” is polemically interpreted here but usually the one on top of the hierarchy seems to know best what the “national interest” is!

If the Organisational Process Model is accepted, there seems to be no point for decision-makers to formulate any policy as its implementation could be a major constraint. Authority leakage may be the case at issue here. Once a decision is made, lower down the hierarchy scale, different people may interpret this order differently according to their SOP (standard operating procedures) and/or perception. The outcome after implementation may not be as decision-makers desired in the first place. This may be unintentional but it could be intentional too in that the department responsible may slow down their action if the decision is unfavourable to their stand in the issue.

People outside the system may view the situation of the bureaucratic politics model differently from people inside it. Cornford sees that those leaders are “the victims of long chains of circumstances beyond their control and prisoners of the systems they are supposed to master.”⁽²⁵⁾ Apparently, they try to control and make use of the existing accepted face of bureaucracy. But on the other hand, a leader who actually dictates foreign policy will refuse to be confronted with a bureaucratic consensus that leaves him no options but acceptance or rejection by not allowing him to know what alternatives exist. Henry Kissinger is an example here. He made sure that clear policy choices reach the top by requesting a memorandum from each significant department, to be decided by the President at the National Security Council meeting.⁽²⁶⁾

As Cornford points out: “The impact of Allison’s account will depend on what you made of the crisis before you read it.”⁽²⁷⁾ It shows that where you stand depends on where you sit, and judgement on each policy is done only with the benefit of hindsight and done subjectively too.

On the whole, Allison’s models can be meaningfully employed to help our understanding of Brecher’s decision-making model. It is, however, concerned more with the psychological environment of Brecher’s model, and particularly through internal politics among

interest groups and competing elites. Hence, Allison's models could help explain certain phenomena in foreign policy when these internal factors are considered to be predominating. Though the three models can be said to be of little applicability to the case of Thailand during 1932-1946 because of lack of bureaucratic organisation and of other foreign policy interest groups apart from the small circle at the top, they provide us with certain useful concepts to think about. For example, rationality cannot be discerned or else every foreign policy must be treated as unique. Moreover, if one does not expect rationality, the whole subject will become uncontrollable.

Although SOP may, in this thesis, not resemble the level described by Allison, it helps to explain certain occurrences. For example, it is surely a military standing order for the border patrol corps to resist any invaders, probably at all costs. This may account for some border skirmishes without the knowledge of the central decision-making figures. As for the "bureaucratic politics" model, in this thesis, the level of interest groups and competing elites is much lower than Allison's for the mere fact of the simpler nature of Thai politics at the time. However, there exists competition, infighting and rivalry within the existing ruling elites to provide the "bureaucratic politics" in a lower degree, but their importance is not any lower as to the determination of the foreign policy being ultimately produced. Thus, within the framework of Brecher's model, one should bear Allison's models in mind when internal environment is analysed.

PRETHEORY

Before the introduction of this concept, foreign policy analysts had set up their own frameworks and concepts for hypothesising, none of which attempt to link up the components of external behaviour in causal sequences. In his 1966 article, "Pretheories and theories of foreign policy"⁽²⁸⁾, Rosenau points out that most existing analyses are on historical and single country oriented approaches, at specific or a period of time. There seems to be no general study as such. This single country oriented study could not be made applicable to other countries. The endless piling of historical case material is leading foreign policy researchers to a dead end.

Having set that aside, Rosenau declares that his aim is to produce concepts and frameworks which will allow the analysis of any state's foreign policy. Before reaching a state of general theory, Rosenau sees that there can be no real flourishing of theory until the materials of the field are processed, which render their comparability, through the use of pretheories of foreign policy. This is in response to his belief that empirical data have not been properly processed before, in a way to make theorisation possible. The analogy he uses is that one cannot build a general theory out of raw data in the same manner as one cannot build a house out of fallen trees and unbaked clay. This does not mean that data should be collected in uniform ways, but it means that the whole approach requires more order.

To start his pretheory order, Rosenau proposes, forcefully, that one has to outline the main ingredients first before organising them systematically. Then he claims that any foreign policy analyst has five sets of variables to consider or to explain external behaviour in its terms. They are:

1. The **Individual** or idiosyncratic variables (I) which are those characteristics unique to each decision-maker. This includes his values, talents, experiences, etc., to distinguish him from the others.
2. The **Role** variables (R) which are the external behaviour of an official which is generated by the position or office he occupies no matter what his idiosyncrasies are. It is postulated here that whoever is in his seat will act in the same manner.
3. The **Governmental** variables (G) which are the impact of the governmental political structure that enhance or limit foreign policy choice that a decision-maker can make. For example, the conflict between the legislative and the executive can determine a foreign policy outcome.
4. The **Societal** variables (S) which are any non-governmental aspects of a society which influence its external behaviour. These are the degree of national unity, level of industrialization, depression, etc.
5. The **Systemic** variables (SY) which are the non-human aspects of a society's external environment or actions occurring abroad that influence foreign policy choices of a decision-

maker. Geographical location and size can be an example here.⁽²⁹⁾

Having identified the ingredients from which any pretheory of foreign policy could be comprehensively derived, Rosenau points out that the next step, which is the main task of the study, is to assess their “relative potencies”. To achieve this, one has to assign the weight that each component has (or contributes) in determining external behaviour of a national society. The exact part that each plays is not necessary here as Rosenau himself asserts, “...there is no need to specify exactly how large a slice of the pie is accounted for by each set of variables. Such precise specifications are characteristic of theories and not of the general framework within which data are organised.”⁽³⁰⁾

Probably to render it easier to understand, Rosenau goes on to suggest his own ranking of the five sets of variables. In recognition of the great variation of societies, he employs three national attributes or characteristics to narrow the types of societies down even further. The three determining genotypic aspects of a country that he uses are:

1. **Size** which is comprised of geographical components like population and physical resources. He divides countries broadly into large and small.
2. **State of the economy** which accounts for per capita income, level of energy consumption, etc. Here his division is between developed and underdeveloped states.
3. **Political accountability** which deals with the state of the polity: whether it is one that represents the view of the majority, has free elections, etc. His broad criterion here is between open and closed polities.

Within these three genotypes, Rosenau ranks his five ingredients in his own way, hence rather arbitrarily.

Rosenau's Abbreviated Pretheory

Geography and Physical Resources	Large Country				Small Country			
State of the Economy	Developed		Underdeveloped		Developed		Underdeveloped	
State of the Polity	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed
Rankings of Variables	R	R	I	I	R	R	I	I
	S	I	R	R	Sy	Sy	Sy	Sy
	G	G	S	G	S	I	R	R
	Sy	Sy	Sy	Sy	G	G	S	G
	I	S	G	S	I	S	G	S
Illustrative examples	U.S.	U.S.S.R.	India	China	Holland	Czechos	Kenya	Ghana

(From Rosenau, 1971 p.113)

From these relative effects, certain conclusion of Rosenau's vision of pattern emerges. From the matrix shown, it can be seen clearly that some variables have a larger impact on external behaviour than others according to the different type of the state. For instance, for Rosenau, the systemic variables rank rather low in a large country and high in a small country. This may be so because small countries are more exposed to the effect of systemic changes. Meanwhile, role variables become the highest ranking component in a developed country, and still fairly high elsewhere. Individual or idiosyncratic variables rank highest in underdeveloped countries and always higher than governmental variables in any closed society. Noticeably, the societal variables rank lowest in all closed societies. However, as Rosenau, himself, rightly points out, it is only an idiosyncratic ranking and could neither be proved nor disproved.

It is arguable that this whole exercise is futile. But I firmly believe that "it is impossible not to have some pretheory whenever the task of tracing causation is undertaken," and that "any view that causation was not involved would only be treating human activities as random, thus some, however implicit, view of causation and therefore some, however unconscious, pretheoretical stance is axiomatic to academic enquiry."⁽³¹⁾

In essence, Rosenau has seen the proliferation of many approaches and concepts in the study of foreign policy, without much correlation. He then tries to make them directly connecting with each other in typology. He attempts to override specific case study and to replace it by identifying groups of states with relatively the same national attributes, and go on to see if they would act in the same peculiar manner in its external behaviour. Hence, according to Rosenau, there should be no more random study based on different ideas of approaches and concepts.

Such a large scheme is bound to have loopholes, and Rosenau's vision is much criticised. The Pretheory fails to specify the kind of foreign policy behaviour which each of the eight genotypic societies is expected to display. No attempt is made to differentiate the effects of the three attributes on foreign policy behaviours. And how each variable (before and after ranking) affects such behaviour is left unanswered. Apart from the fact that Rosenau has not set his criteria of dividing his national attributes, he also neglects its dynamism. Size, economy and the political structure may change all the time. Furthermore, Rosenau says very little about actors. States may, at time, act in terms of bloc or group. This will bypass the national attributes and, inside a bloc, states may not even be homogeneous. In the study of foreign policy, it is very important that the pretheory does not postulate any external attributes comparable to national attributes.

To a certain extent, Rosenau tries to fill in these loopholes in his extended version of Pretheory⁽³²⁾ in 1974. In this article, Rosenau sets out to do three things. Firstly, he begins to develop hypotheses about relative strength of the national attributes. Secondly, he tries to postulate some external attributes comparable to national attributes. And thirdly, he attempts to find some empirical measure of foreign policy behaviour with which to assess the two sets of hypotheses, then to compare the relative strength of the national and external attributes. In all these, he looks at foreign policy behaviour in terms of conflict and cooperation.

As for the relation of national attributes to foreign policy behaviour, he begins by specifying his criteria for differentiation of each attribute before giving their relative strength. For **size**, he uses population (23 million people) as the criterion to divide large from small. Then he goes on to hypothesise that foreign policy conflict is more likely in large countries than in small ones, because of interaction which could

lead to misunderstanding more easily. Cooperation, on the other hand, is greater among small countries.

For the **state of the economy**, he differentiates it on the basis of \$402 per capita income in 1963 as the lower limit of a developed country. His hypotheses here are that conflict behaviour is more likely in developed societies because greater development needs greater interactions. This leads on to greater numbers of issues around which controversies can arise. It also leads to more bureaucratisation and, thus, the ability to engage in controversy over a wider range of issues. Cooperation is seen more in underdeveloped areas because of increasing dependency on the international system. They are, usually, neither centralised nor bureaucratic.

For the **state of the polity**, Rosenau uses freedom of the press as the dichotomous criterion. He hypothesises that foreign policy conflict behaviour in a closed national society is more likely than in an open one. This is so because the more it is closed, the more an individual leader can act at his own whim. On the other hand, cooperation is more likely among open societies. This is so because non-governmental elements have more say and this gives more constraints upon the government. Hence the societal factor is much higher than the individual component.

Furthermore, Rosenau makes two composite hypotheses:

1. Size (large) and economic development give high potency to the societal factors. The governmental factor increases with the increase in economic development. The individual factor increases with lesser development and lack of political accountability. Systemic factor increases with size and level of development.
2. If national attributes are not of equal impact, size is more potent to affect foreign policy behaviour than economic development and political accountability. A large country cannot be ignored. It has more points of contact with the environment with or without economic or political capabilities. Of the two, the economic developmental stage is more important than political accountability, in terms of foreign policy behaviour.

Next, Rosenau proposes his relational attributes which are distance, homogeneity and balance of power. These three relational

attributes give out eight genotypic dyads.

Distance is determined by the distance between the dyadic partners. He hypothesises that proximity gives greater chance of foreign policy conflict behaviour. **Homogeneity** attributes include social, cultural, historical, ideological, and religious factors. The criterion is between similar and dissimilar dyadic partners, in line with Russett's regions of 12 socio-cultural homogeneity⁽³³⁾ (such as Buddhist, Asian, Latin, Arab, etc.). His hypothesis here is that foreign policy conflict behaviour is more likely between dissimilar partners. The more dissimilar they are, the stronger the societal factor will play in foreign policy behaviour. **Balance of power** or the parity in the use of force in foreign policy has military capability as the dichotomous criterion. He hypothesises that conflict behaviour is more likely between unequal partners. Higher ranking countries will perceive their own position of superiority whereas weaker ones will try to emulate them.

Again, Rosenau proposes two composite hypotheses:

1. In so far as conflict behaviour is concerned, the potency of systemic variables increases with dyadic proximity. The societal variables increase with dyadic dissimilarity and the governmental variables increase with dyadic imbalance of power.
2. If the relational attributes are not of equal impact, distance, homogeneity and balance hold their importance in that order. His reasoning is that there are more points of friction with or without the other two attributes. If you are far, you are less likely to be able to touch the others. Usually, if dissimilar socio-cultural aspects are outstanding, military inequality may be of less importance.

In essence, Rosenau's "Pretheory Extended" can be summarised in one sentence — intensity of interaction is what matters most. However, there are still many outstanding criticisms unanswered. Rosenau seems to use his intuitive sources without defining the indicators. Admittedly though, all theories begin with intuitive assumption then data are collected and analysed to get evidence to support or negate that assumption, but Rosenau has not supported nor negated that yet. People may accept his attributes and refined methodology, but no consensus seems to be there as to the criteria to construct the genotypes.

Rosenau's national and relational attributes are largely unrelated, but this only confirms Rosenau's belief that they should be separated. In foreign policy behaviour, size may, at times, prove to be the strong element in its determination, but the definition of "size" is not generally agreed. Therefore one has to bear this in mind whenever any prediction is made with "size" as the main indicator.

Furthermore, a polyarchic-pluralist open government will have more external interaction than the centralist state. Here, size does not matter all that much because subnational groups may pursue their interests across the border. In a centralised and closed society, subnational groups do not operate outside, or even inside, the country.

Nowadays, many other elements may prove to be more significant than size, per capita income, or openness of society in terms of foreign policy behaviour both in conflict and cooperation. For instance, ideology and religion seem to be dominating world events these days, but they are unquantifiable, abstract and changeable, and hence difficult to theorize. However, they can be usefully employed as psychological factors in decision-making. Economic interdependence is another factor of equal importance in present-day international politics.

Rosenau's Pretheory certainly can provide a good start in foreign policy analysis, but certainly not that decisive in the prediction of foreign policy behaviour. Pretheory and its extension give analysts something to work on. Its ingredients and attributes can be used to explain and describe the foreign policy behaviour of any country, especially those where the boundaries of the criteria for genotypic dichotomy are clear, as of Thailand between 1932-1946: with a population of around 12 million, a per capita income less than \$402 even at 1963 index, and a rather closed polity with sporadic periods of "openness". Rosenau's ranking within this genotype gives us a clue as to the variables' likely contribution to Thai foreign policy making. Meanwhile, the relational attributes give us some ideas as to what type of foreign policy behaviour could be expected from Thailand's relationship with any particular country.

Having cut the timber to size and baked the clay to shape, Rosenau posits that engineering principles are also necessary for the proper construction of a strong house, as materials do not fall in place by themselves. In his analysis, Rosenau sees two conceptual shortcomings which are necessary to give any theory the structure it needs. They are

the tendency of analysts to distinguish rigidly between the national and international systems and the tendency to ignore the implication of the equally clear-cut indication that the functioning of a political system can vary significantly from one type of issue to another. These two are conceptualised in terms of “linkage” or “penetrated political system” and “issue area” (see later), which are interrelated too.

LINKAGE POLITICS

In introducing the concept of the Penetrated Political System (PPS) as a tool for pretheory in 1966, Rosenau quotes Phillip E. Mosely who writes “the difference between ‘national’ and ‘international’ now exists only in the minds of those who use the words.”⁽³⁴⁾ Having surveyed the existing literature on boundaries between national-international systems, Rosenau points out the fact that they are blurring to the extent that there is another type of political system that such distinction will render it incomprehensible. He proposes to call it the “Penetrated Political System” and defines it as one in which “non-members of a national society participate directly and authoritatively, through actions taken jointly with the society’s members, in either the allocation of its values or the mobilisation of support on behalf of its goals.”⁽³⁵⁾

In September 1966, Rosenau develops the PPS further and replaces it with the term “linkage politics”, to apply to the linkage between any two political systems.⁽³⁶⁾ Rosenau points out that many researches have been made in the national-international linkages but “the relevant date has never been organised and examined systematically,”⁽³⁷⁾ and that “their common content has never been probed and compared.” Such linkage phenomena are treated as outcomes of foreign policy, not as sources of it. In other words, national-international linkages are treated as dependent variables, not as independent ones. In his article, Rosenau tries to fill these shortcomings, to link “the communication between those who specialise in comparative and national politics, on the one hand, and those who focus on international politics, on the other”.⁽³⁸⁾

Since “the boundaries can be crossed by processes of perception and emulation as well as by direct interaction,” Rosenau proposes to use

“linkage” as “the basic unit of analysis, defining it as any recurrent sequence of behaviour that originates in one system and is reacted to in another”.⁽³⁹⁾ For easy understanding, he employs the terms “input and **output**” to distinguish between initial and terminal stages of any linkage. Then each will be classified in terms of place of occurrence, i.e., in a **polity** (a national political system) or in its **external environment** (the international system). They are further refined into **direct and indirect** degrees of linkage. Direct linkage denotes the policy deliberately designed to bring about responses in other systems. Indirect linkage refers to a pattern of behaviour which is not intended to evoke boundary-crossing responses but do so through perceptual or emulative processes.⁽⁴⁰⁾

Having set out his terms to be employed, he comes to the final dimension of his linkage theoretical framework which is the way in which outputs and inputs get linked together. Rosenau delineates three basic types of linkage processes. A **penetrative** process occurs when members of one polity serve as participants in the political processes of another by sharing with those in the penetrated polity the authority to allocate its values (e.g. foreign occupying army, foreign aid missions, staff of international organisations, transnational political parties, representatives of corporations, etc). A **reactive** process occurs when “the actors who initiate the output do not participate in the allocative activities of those who experience the input, but the behaviour of the latter is nevertheless a response to behaviour undertaken by the former.”⁽⁴¹⁾ This is probably the most frequent kind of linkage. (A coup in one country may be reacted to in another polity.) An **emulative** process is a form of reactive linkage. This occurs when “the input is not only a response to the output but takes essentially the same form as the output”⁽⁴²⁾ (e.g. the postwar spread of nationalism).

Apart from these three processes, Professor J. Frankel has contributed an **imitative** process.⁽⁴³⁾ It is also a form of reactive process whereby the response is only an imitation of the output without any real expectation of matching it (e.g. the aspirations of rapid industrialisation and political modernisation).

Rosenau presents his framework in terms of a matrix.⁽⁴⁴⁾ He does so by identifying the external environment into six categories that are operative in the minds of actors: The Contiguous, the Regional, the Cold

War, the Racial, the Resource, and the Organisational sub-environments. As for polity, he divides it into four main components: actors, attitudes, institutions and processes, and expands them into 24 aspects of polity that might serve as or give rise to outputs and inputs with the six aspects of sub-environments. This yields 144 areas in which national-international linkages can be formed. He points out that this is not conclusive because there are three types (four here with Frankel's) of process to be considered, and each "should again be reproduced nine times, eight of them covering all the possible combinations of the direct-indirect and output-input distinctions and the ninth allowing for the identification of fused linkages."⁽⁴⁵⁾ Hence to represent the full array of possible linkages, the matrix (of 144 cells) will have to be reproduced 27 times.

Rosenau makes the reservation too that "the various categories are imprecise, incomplete, impressionistic, and overlapping."⁽⁴⁶⁾ But he also remarks that his purpose at this stage is to be suggestive and not exhaustive.

Rosenau then outlines six advantages⁽⁴⁷⁾ that derive from his presentation of linkage. Firstly, it prevents perpetuation of the analytic gap between comparative and international politics and compels thought about the way in which they are linked. Secondly, it prevents us from focusing on only manifest linkages. By subdividing politics and their environments into many components, unfamiliar and latent linkages are not overlooked. These may go unrecognised or be quickly dismissed if a less explicit framework is employed.

Thirdly, by breaking down national politics, this framework treats national governments not as undifferentiated internal environments and, thus, not relying on the national interest as an explanation for international behaviour. By identifying both governmental and non-governmental components, it enables us to examine fused linkages and to pose functional questions about the ways in which external behaviour serves the internal workings of politics. Fourthly, parallel to the breaking down of politics, the identification of six sub-environments helps us avoid the presumption that events abroad are constant in the functioning of politics. It also permits comparisons of the stability of different international systems in terms of the varying ways in which politics may be linked to them.

Fifthly, the distinction between direct and indirect linkage phe-

nomena calls for attention to be paid to actions of each group to each situation (each matrix cell). This leads to the emphasis that there are many cases in which polities had to “adjust to circumstances in their external environments that were not designed to affect them.”⁽⁴⁸⁾ Last, but not least, it is an attempt to form a basis for the comparison of the relative potency of variables in the international behaviour of different polities. In short, the matrix presented suggests “a focus on linkages *per se*, so as to compare their origins, duration, flexibility, stability, and functions irrespective of the kind of polity that sustains them.”⁽⁴⁹⁾

As a means, and not an end in itself, Rosenau’s framework on linkage politics stimulates further researches. It gives a wider dimension and relativity to more detailed components. But there seems to be serious problems in constructing a research design based upon it because the voluminous work will render it unmanageable and, more likely, inoperable.

In a subsequent article, “Theorising Across Systems: Linkage Politics Revisited”,⁽⁵⁰⁾ Rosenau admits that “we are interested in middle-range theory and not in across-systems breakthroughs which can be applied to any two system levels,” and that “breakthroughs will be characterised by theoretical constructs which specify how and under what conditions political behaviour at one level of aggregation affects political behaviour at another level.”⁽⁵¹⁾ But “technology is rendering the world smaller and smaller, so that the interaction of national and international systems is becoming increasingly intense and pervasive. The conceptual tidiness achieved through analysing the types of systems separately is thus no longer compelling. There is simply too much evidence of overlap between them for analysts to conduct research at one level blissfully ignoring developments at the other.”⁽⁵²⁾

Rosenau then surveys the uses and limits of other concepts associated with across-systems theory. He finds that **interdependence** “does not necessarily connote direction, regularity, purpose, or even interaction in so far as across-systems processes are concerned.”⁽⁵³⁾ It only accounts for the shrinkage of societal and geographical distance. It does not differentiate among phenomena or provide guidance for further study and research. Hence it gives minimal utility in this context.

The concept of **integration** has been advanced rapidly and yielded

an extensive body of theoretical and empirical materials. But there is still the lack of clarity and consensus on the definition of integration itself. Rosenau believes that it “can never make more than a limited contribution to across-systems analysis.” This is so because its scope is restricted to a particular set of phenomena, namely, those encompassed by non-coercive efforts to create “new types of human communities at a very high level of organisation”.⁽⁵⁴⁾ The attributes and dynamics of national actors are crucial to this study, but only as independent variables. What happens to the nation-state as a consequence of the role it does or does not play in regional integrative or disintegrative processes is beyond their concern. Hence, it is capable of only partial understanding.

Those who employ the concept of **adaptation** focus their attention on the national level of aggregation. It refers to the efforts and processes whereby national societies keep their essential structures within acceptable limits. It posits fluctuations in the essential structures as stemming from changes and demands that arise both within and external to adapting societies. It facilitates analysis across three levels of aggregation, “the subnational level at which internal demands arise, the international level from which external demands emanate, and the national level at which the demands are or are not reconciled”.⁽⁵⁵⁾ The study shows why and how most national societies adjust to a rapidly changing world, and why some have failed. At the time of writing (1971), Rosenau finds this concept of “adaptation” still too recent with no empirical study nor any quantitative analysis. It is also exclusively centred on the nation-state, thus all the dependent variables are confined to measures of change or constancy within the national society whose adaptive behaviour is the focus of attention, quite the other extreme from integration. Rosenau sees this concept readily applicable to regional groupings or subnational entities, but as yet, still “limited to a narrow (though important) set of phenomena”.⁽⁵⁶⁾

The concept of **intervention** is rather narrow. It “refers to an action and not a process — to a single sequence of behaviour, the initiation and termination of which is easily discernible and the characteristics of which are dependent on the use or threat of force.”⁽⁵⁷⁾ It begins when one national society explicitly, purposefully, and abruptly undertakes to alter or preserve one or more essential structures of another national society

through military means, and it ends when the effort is either successful, abandoned, or routinised. In a broader sense, intervention is equated with influence, and this shows the lack of definition consensus. It can also be treated as a form of penetrative linkage. As for theory-building, its exclusive concern with coercive phenomena poses a severe constraint.

Rosenau then “revisits” his linkage framework. He suggests that “students of linkage phenomena had a variety of options open to them...”⁽⁵⁸⁾ He goes on to say that the resulting essays from the 1966 discussion⁽⁵⁹⁾ have different meanings for each of them. He considers it as a faulty research strategy.

But the concept did not die. Rosenau gives ample examples of work in this field that have been done or are under way. He concludes that, in the first place, most works are concerned with hierarchical phenomena (linkages between superiors and subordinates). Secondly, most of them focus mainly on the penetrative process and ignore the others. “To a large extent, in short, linkage and penetration have come to be used synonymously.”⁽⁶⁰⁾ Thirdly, authors are ready to tailor the original framework to the specific foci of their research (East-West, North-South, Ideological, archipelagic, etc). These add to the original typology which Rosenau admits to be crude and arbitrary. He notices that empirical data have not been as innovative as the conceptual revisions apart from a few studies. He sees the existing framework as merely providing a new rhetoric with which to analyse old problems (historical study) and not a future route nor a breakthrough for an across-systems theory.⁽⁶¹⁾

One can hardly give a firm judgement about the theoretical utility of the linkage concept, though it seems to offer advantages over a number of across-systems concepts. A more convincing measure linking variation in one system to another may be needed for theory building. But linkage concept posits vast feedback systems which prove useful. Perhaps the linkage framework is more useful as a checklist rather than a process as such. It is a valuable concept, and as such will be employed as a crude explanation for some events.

ISSUE-AREA⁽⁶²⁾

The underpinning core of this concept stems from the rather complicated sentence which Rosenau describes in his article: "The notion that the outcome of an interaction sequence is dependent on the issue that precipitated it rests on the premise that each issue either encompasses different actors whose motives vary in intensity and direction or evokes different motives on the part of the same actors."⁽⁶³⁾ Furthermore, there is ample evidence that motives, actors, and interaction sequences fluctuate within different issues. If so, the functioning of political systems can be differentiated in terms of the values that are being contested.

It may be argued that "a major function of political systems is that of aggregating issues, of cancelling out conflicts between issues so that systems can endure without being dominated by a single issue or a single cluster of issues. In this sense, political systems are treated as being, so to speak, above issues."⁽⁶⁴⁾ This is important in most underdeveloped nations as most of them are single-issue dominated. This may collapse when this dominant issue is either resolved or otherwise removed (e.g. independence removes anticolonial issue, and may be followed by fragmentation). However, as an explanatory tool, one has to look at both single-overall issue as mentioned and issue-areas in foreign policy. It may be even more interesting to consider how they interact, and how certain decision-makers in a polity attempt to exploit the nation of an overall-issue to further his own cause. (e.g. a general may push security issue to be the overall important issue to promote military importance). As a student of foreign policy analysis, both contentions will have to be looked at.

It seems undeniable that the functioning of a political system depends on the nature of the issue(s) that it is processing at any moment in time. The ensuing step is, thus, to define categories of issues that affect the political process in sufficiently similar ways to justify being clustered together.

In creating such a typology, one will have to counter many other problems.⁽⁶⁵⁾ An important example is that on what bases are the many values and interests over which men differ to be clustered together into distinctive issue-areas?

Rosenau responds to this difficult task by noting some general guidelines instead. A typology of issue-areas must be cast in sufficiently abstract terms to encompass past and future conflicts as well as present ones. This is necessary so that the concept will be wider and will mean more than just an "issue". To go beyond the lives of particular actors, it is necessary to conceive of them as structures of roles that derive their patterned relationship to each other from the nature of the values or interests they encompass. Values and interests at stake usually determine the intensity and extent of (citizens' and officials') participation, direction and degree of the interaction through which issues are processed.

Rosenau identifies three kinds of issue-areas typologies frequently embedded in the discussion of political process. The first one is **value** typology, "wherein issues are clustered together on the basis of the kinds of values or interests over which controversy ensues",⁽⁶⁶⁾ such as different occupations. The second is **process** typology. It is clustered together on the basis of the kinds of processes through which they are conducted and settled. It is illustrated by the inclination to differentiate between legal and administrative issues, or crisis and routine issues, etc. Similar roles and motives seem to be the main elements in this area. The third one is **unit** typology. They are clustered together on the basis of the kinds of unit in or for which they are contested, e.g. the local-national and domestic-foreign dichotomisation.

In this analysis, Rosenau states clearly that he wishes to "assess the validity and utility of one particular unit typology, namely, the one in which domestic policy issues are presumed to be different from foreign policy issues."⁽⁶⁷⁾ To be more specific, it will be the study of "all the controversies within a society that, at any moment in time, are being waged over the way in which the society is attempting to maintain or alter its external environment".⁽⁶⁸⁾ It is this controversy that is the "issue area". Once it diminishes (whether accepted or changed) the issue area diminishes accordingly. But new controversy, and, thus, new issue area can arise within society over how it should react towards the changed external environment. However, it must be pointed out that routinised procedures whereby all societies conduct the day-to-day aspects of their foreign relations are not to be treated as an issue in foreign policy. On the other hand, a prolonged disagreement over, say, a proposed

military strategy between two establishments within the government (Foreign Office and Defence) would be considered a foreign policy issue.

The focus of this framework is on polity rather than on international systems, as to how it copes with its external environment. The matter to be considered is over which courses of action to pursue abroad involve different motives, roles and interaction sequences. Rosenau develops motivational differences, role differences, and interaction differences (degree and direction) to distinguish foreign and domestic issues. This gives out a matrix as shown here:

Characteristics of Foreign and Domestic Issues.

		MOTIVES		ROLES		INTERACTION SEQUENCES	
		Intensity	Extensivity	Number	Identity	Direction	Degree
PRIVATE CITIZENS AND GROUPS	FOREIGN ISSUES	high	narrow	few	nat. leaders	vertical	low
	DOMESTIC ISSUES	low	wide	many	all strata	horizontal	high
GOVT. OFFICIALS AND AGENCIES	FOREIGN ISSUES	low	wide	few	national	vertical	low
	DOMESTIC ISSUES	low	wide	many	nat. & local	horizontal	high

(From Rosenau, 1971, p.436)

Rosenau concludes that: "The more an issue encompasses a society's resources and relationships, the more will it be drawn into the society's domestic political system and the less will it be processed through the society's foreign political system."⁽⁶⁹⁾

Having established foreign policy as an issue area, some application may prove useful at this point. This can be seen in Rosenau's article "Pretheories and theories of foreign policy".⁽⁷⁰⁾ In Section 4, Rosenau pronounces the usage of the issue-area concept because there is "mounting evidence that the functioning of any type of political system can vary significantly from one issue-area to another."⁽⁷¹⁾

Here the concept of issue-areas conveys a vertical system concept. There are at least three sources why conceptually and empirically most

analysts neglect the concept of issue-areas as a principle of analysis. One is the sheer force of habit, as most have become accustomed to perceiving and structuring political phenomena in terms of horizontal systems. Secondly, most analysts view that issue areas which preoccupy horizontal system are unique rather than recurrent. Thirdly, while issue-areas and vertical systems certainly contain interdependent parts, their boundaries are not self-maintaining. But it seems that “no political system has unmistakable and impermeable boundaries.”⁽⁷²⁾

Rosenau states that an issue-area is conceived to consist of “(1) a cluster of values, the allocation or potential allocation of which (2) leads the affected or potentially affected actors to differ so greatly over (a) the way in which the values should be allocated or (b) the horizontal levels at which the allocations should be authorised that (3) they engage in distinctive behaviour designed to mobilise support for the attainment of their particular values”.⁽⁷³⁾ Hence, the boundaries of vertical systems are delineated by the distinctiveness of the values and the behaviour they encompass.

In pretheory, Rosenau proposes, arbitrarily, four issue-areas: territorial, status, human resources, and nonhuman resources, each of which encompasses the distinctive motives, actions and interactions evoked by the clusters of values that are linked to the allocation of each of the four areas respectively. Therefore, each of the four issue-areas is conceived to embrace a number of vertical political systems, and the boundaries of each vertical system are in turn conceived to be determined by the scope of the interaction that occurs within it.⁽⁷⁴⁾

As an explanatory tool, the concept of issue areas seems to have certain significance. It does remind us of different vertical areas to be distinguished before analysing any policy or activity. It also differentiates between a general foreign policy, a strategical policy and a tactical policy. A cabinet may unite on a general foreign policy, but factionalise about certain issue areas. We should, thus, bear it in mind when analysing a country's foreign policies. The concept also helps us put our perceptive ability into a systematic categorisation of issues to be looked at.

PERCEPTION AND IMAGE

It is a truism that man reacts to how he perceives reality rather than to reality as such. This perception, rather than reality, determines what plan or policy one adopts and what actions one then attempts. At times, one's perception may coincide with reality, but more often than not, it does not, because one seems unable to absorb all the information about reality. Furthermore, one can easily misjudge the situation and the environment.

The study of perception of decision-makers may help us better understand the making of foreign policy. But it has to be borne in mind that one can easily misperceive. This applies to both the decision-makers and our perception of their perception as well. Perception can create expectations and one can expect only within one's perception too. And "there is evidence from both psychology and international relations that when expectations and desires clash, expectations seem to be more important."⁽⁷⁵⁾ Perception also creates further conception of the same type because one tends to fit incoming information into pre-existing theories and images. To safeguard against this, R. Jervis proposes that decision-makers should make conscious choices about the way data are interpreted rather than merely assuming that they can be seen in only one way and can mean only one thing. One has to be aware, all the time, that there are alternative images and alternative policies too.⁽⁷⁶⁾

Perception, or the way we receive things in our minds, comes from the actor's personal experience, study, training and incoming information. Meanwhile, once one accumulates one's own perception to form a totality of such perception on certain object or situation, it becomes an image. Hence, perception is rather selective and narrower, and perceptual prism gives out image. One can have images of other people and situations as well as create one's own image to make others see oneself as such. In theory, it would be worthwhile for a decision-maker to have more than one image of a situation. In practice, this is difficult because one usually has to agree upon a starting point of an issue, thence, one uses one's own image of that situation to see what will happen.

Kenneth E. Boulding⁽⁷⁷⁾ finds that impressions of nationality are formed mostly in childhood and usually in the family group. Hence, the image is essentially a mass image. The elites share this mass image

rather than impose it. Parents pass it on to their children through value systems. Public instruction and propaganda reinforce this image. But this is not quite true in new nations which “are striving to achieve nationality, where the family culture frequently does not include strong elements of national allegiance but rather stresses allegiance to religious ideals or to the family as such.”⁽⁷⁸⁾ Here the ruling elites’ ‘national image’ derives from a desire to imitate other nations or ideals. Here, they try to impose their images on the masses. However, these imposed images are fragile in comparison with those that are deeply internalised and transmitted through family and other intimate sources.

Boulding proposes that the national image is essentially a historical image. The more conscious a people is of its history, the stronger the national image is likely to be. A nation can be seen as a body of people who are “conscious of having gone through something together... without the sharing, however, there is no nation.”⁽⁷⁹⁾ National leaders could tap on this consciousness to mobilise support when needed, in the manipulation of the vague term “nationalism”, to support or create “national image”.

Boulding thinks that there are three main elements in the formation of the national image. The first is the exclusiveness of territorial occupation. Secondly, at any particular time a particular national image includes a rough scale of the friendliness or hostility of, or towards, other nations (not necessarily consistent or reciprocal). Another dimension both of the image and of the reality of the nation state is its strength and weakness. This element is made up of many components, including economic resources and productivity, political organisation and tradition, willingness to incur sacrifice and inflict cruelties, military capability, and so on.⁽⁸⁰⁾ Then he constructs a complicated and arbitrary matrix with the above three components in an attempt to predict the kind of international behaviours.

From this model, Boulding distinguishes two very different kinds of incompatibility of images, real and illusory. Real incompatibility of image is when we have two images of the future in which the realisation of one would prevent the realisation of the other. An illusory incompatibility image is one in which real compatibility exists but the dynamics of the situation or the illusions of the parties create a situation of perverse dynamics and misunderstandings, with increasing hostility.

But Boulding also warns that “even real incompatibilities are functions of the national images rather than of physical fact and are therefore subject to change and control. It is hard for an ardent patriot to realise that his country is a mental, rather than a physical, phenomenon, but such indeed is the truth!”⁽⁸¹⁾

Some writers employ the term “strategic images” as independent variables in foreign policy analysis.⁽⁸²⁾ The image here can be divided into two components, cognitive and affective. The cognitive part of strategic images “refers to the decision-maker’s view and definition of the central features of the international environment (his perception); the affective (emotional and volitional) component refers to the valuational dimension of the image structure, the way he assigns his likes and dislikes, his approval and disapproval of these conditions.”⁽⁸³⁾ They overlap in the sense that the latter acts also as a filter in determining the importance and relevance of the things observed and perceived.

One can say that the term “strategic image” summarises the way in which a policy-maker organises, structures, evaluates, and relates to his environment. Frankel asserts that “one of the major characteristics of all images is a relative stability over time. Major changes in strategic images arise through traumatic experiences or through changes of personnel.”⁽⁸⁴⁾ He cites the case of Hitler’s occupation of Czechoslovakia altered Chamberlain’s image of Hitler, and the British national image of Hitler came with the replacement of Chamberlain by Churchill. Thus, the role of strategic image is that of allowing its holder to make sense of, and organise and integrate the information he receives. It also has an orienting function through clarifying expectations about the future. The study of policy-makers’ strategic images may give a “negative prediction” tool for one can, more or less, predict which courses of action are unlikely to be selected. A systemic understanding of the strategic images of others is good for a sound diplomacy. Improvement of one’s own images in the eyes of others is, psychologically at least, a promising way of exercising influence.

A foreign policy decision involves “the selection of the most preferred position in a contemplated field of choice”.⁽⁸⁵⁾ But the field of choice and the ranking of preference can only be done through the decision-maker’s images. It is always the image, and not necessarily the truth, that determines each behaviour. The image itself is “a highly

structured piece of information-capital, developed partly by its inputs and outputs of information and partly by internal messages and its own laws of growth and stability".⁽⁸⁶⁾ It is what one thinks the world is like, not what the world is really like, that determines one's behaviour. This applies to the psychological environment of Brecher's model of decision-making as well as the contents of this thesis.

VALUES

Although the term 'value' is usually employed, by different writers, to have, more or less, the same meaning, the precise definition of the term has never received consensus. Here, I propose to take it to describe the inner element brought to bear by decision-makers upon the processes of making decisions. As the term is ill-defined, many overlapping and loosely knitted terms are employed to denote it: "ideologies, doctrines, values and valuations, aspirations, utilities, policies, commitments, goals, objectives, purposes, ends, programmes, ethos, the way of life, etc. The distinctions proposed are generally unconvincing".⁽⁸⁷⁾ Its precise nature is within the sphere of psychology or sociology, and not within the bound of this thesis.

Personal consciousness generates value which is internalised through socialisation. A decision-maker has his own values but in his decision he will have to take into account other people's values too (pressure) to reach a solution. It is plausible to argue that decisions always are among conflicting values (or ranking of values) around the decision-maker. Values and ideology (philosophy) are seen as relatively enduring orientations toward goal objects of a social system or subsystems as distinguished from relatively transitory postures, such as attitudes or opinions. Policy-makers should be able to "distinguish basic value orientations from ephemeral shifting attitudes".⁽⁸⁸⁾

In foreign policy analysis, "Value" is useful as a tool for the understanding of decision-making, as to why such a decision comes about. Value is thus a component in the decision-making process.

NATIONAL ROLE

When one talks about the international system in terms of “balance of power” or “superpower dominance” etc, one immediately implies the acceptable roles imposed upon various actors. As for the former instance, there is an explicit division of states into one of the three roles: an aggressor state; a defending state; or a balancer. According to the believer of this theory, if the states do not play the role postulated in this theory, imbalance, war and the transformation of the system would result. A good example is nineteenth century Europe. As for the super-power description one implies the various roles of allies, non-aligned states, satellite states, the Western bloc, the Communist bloc, etc.

As can be seen, the concept of national role is widely used in many capacities. Role is ascribed “to a particular state of a generalised form of behaviour”. In certain circumstances, “that state will act or perform in a certain predictable manner.”⁽⁸⁹⁾ Thus its actions will be consistent with the “rules” of its behaviour subsumed in its general ascribed role.

In his extensive work on national role, K.J. Holsti⁽⁹⁰⁾ points out its widespread use against its lack of definition. There is no consensus on definitions or on empirical referents. He also points out that “as with ‘power’ or ‘interest’, scholars tend to define the term to suit their research.”⁽⁹¹⁾

Holsti surveys the existing literature on the concept and proposes to divide the concept into four parts. They are **Role performance** (attitudes, decisions and actions the government takes), **Role conception** (self defined), **Role Prescriptions** (emanating from the external environment) and **Position** (a system of role prescriptions) which is where such activities occur. However, “the actual role performance in international politics is primarily determined by the policy-makers’ role conceptions of domestic needs and demands and critical events in the external environment.”⁽⁹²⁾

Realizing that, Holsti redefines the above four parts as a) **National Role Performance** — the general foreign policy behaviour of governments. b) **National Role Conception** — the image of decision-makers concerning the appropriate orientations of their state towards the external environment. c) **Role Prescription** — the effect on the state of

the nature of the environment. d) **Status** — the rough estimate of the state's ranking in the international system.⁽⁹³⁾

In analysing the use of this concept in academic works, he finds nine role types implicitly and explicitly within the field. [They are revolutionary leader-imperialist; bloc-leader; balancer; bloc member; mediator; non-aligned; buffer; isolate; protectee.] Each has a major distinctive function to perform and a suggested set of primary role sources. Then he turns to content analysis by examining the actual national role conceptions of policy-makers from statements of top officials or executives. Analysing 71 states over 1965-67, he finds the use of seventeen distinct role conceptions.⁽⁹⁴⁾ [They are bastion of revolution/liberator; regional leader; regional protector; active independent; liberation supporter; anti-imperialist agent; defender of the faith; mediator-integrator; regional-subsystem collaborator; developer; bridge; faithful ally; independent; example; internal development; isolate; protectee.]

A significant conclusion of Holsti's work is that while academic writers ascribe only one role to each state, the actual number of role conceptions per country is more than one. Holsti hypothesises that the more active a country is in international affairs, the more national role conceptions will be perceived by its policy-makers. There seems to be no policy-maker visualising his state's role in terms of "balance of power" system any longer. Holsti claims that this concept of role is the key to understanding foreign policy behaviour because most decisions will be reasonably consistent with role conception. Thus foreign policy analysis should concentrate on explaining "the origins, presence, and sources of change of national role conceptions rather than single decisions".⁽⁹⁵⁾

In a replying article,⁽⁹⁶⁾ Carl W. Backman doubts the validity of Holsti's hypothesis. This is so because the whole framework is based on the assumption that statements by policy-makers are a reliable indication of intention and of actual behaviour. Backman's argument seems stronger when one applies the three levels related to the concept of national interest — aspirational, operational, and explanatory/polemical senses (see later). Policy-makers themselves may be confused, and they usually speak in the tone favourable to their courses and causes anyway. Moreover, the terms employed by policy-makers may mean differently to different listeners (e.g. liberator could mean interventionist as well) at different times. It seems plausible that policy-makers also define the

term “national role” to suit their actions.

However, as an explanatory tool for the understanding of foreign policy, the general concept should be grasped, with their shortcomings in mind, rather than avoided.

NATIONAL INTEREST

The term ‘national interest’ has suffered from a surfeit of usages and meanings. It is used in all areas of politics. In the field of international politics, it is most frequently used as “a measure of a state’s success in foreign policy”, and sometimes as “the basis of the explanation of International Politics”.⁽⁹⁷⁾ Rosenau distinguishes two usages, analytical and instrumental. It is an analytical tool to “describe, explain or evaluate the sources or the adequacy of a nation’s foreign policy”. It is an instrument of political action where it serves as “a means of justifying, denouncing or proposing policies”.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Analysts are divided into the objectivist and the subjectivist schools. However, here I intend neither to be involved in these controversies, nor to define the term, but to describe the relevant usages of the term that I think will contribute, at least as a warning, to the understanding when the word is employed by decision-makers in the thesis.

It has to be mentioned from the outset that there is no precise meaning of the term. Anyone can define their goals in terms of the national interest, hence it is value-laden. In any case, who is to decide whose interest corresponds with the proper national interest? Is it the individual, group elites, the government or the people? Being so, the term is still important simply because decision-makers in foreign policy use it and thus we should understand it. It will also help us construe the actual policy as well as the aim or ideology at higher level.

Systematically, Frankel⁽⁹⁹⁾ distinguishes three categories of national interest in terms of ideal types:

1. **The Aspirational level** represents the vision of a good life. It is some ideal set of goals which the state would like to realise if possible. It is a general direction of policy desired rather than policy actually pursued. It is the political will rather than the capability that determines this level of national

interest. This is usually agreed to and aspired by the nation as a whole; e.g. social welfare, economic growth, peace, etc.

2. **The Operational level** represents the totality of the policies actually pursued. It is quite opposite in nature to the aspirational level which is generally long-term, rooted in history and ideology, need not be fully articulated or coordinated, and can be contradictory. "The interrelationship between the two levels is significant in determining political dynamism."⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ The closer this level is to the aspirational level, the more successful the country's policy is, as the country is actually pursuing the vision of a good life.
3. **The Explanatory and Polemical level** is used as a concept in political argument in real life, to explain, evaluate, rationalise, or criticise international behaviour. More often than not, it is used to prove that one's argument is right and than that of the opponent is wrong. It is not really for describing or prescribing behaviour. This is commonly used in political debate.

One can see that national interest can mean differently to different people. The above three levels may help us put into proper perspective any usage of the term, although admittedly it is difficult to distinguish between the third level and the first two in everyday life. At least it should give us some explanatory tools for the understanding of the common usage of the term "national interest".

COMPATIBILITY AND CONSENSUS

Foreign policy analysts who study the outcome of the policy will normally focus on the operational environment that a nation state faces. Domestic political variables are largely neglected in this analytical perspective. Meanwhile, those focusing on the internal political processes are preoccupied with the motivational aspects and turn to the perception of external conditions that is the basis for choosing among alternatives of ends and means. Hence, it is more about choice of implementation rather than the necessity imposed upon by the former. In his article, "Compatibility and consensus: a proposal for the conceptual linkage of external

and internal dimensions of foreign policy”,⁽¹⁰¹⁾ W.F. Hanrieder tries to bridge these analytical barriers in the belief that foreign policy is a continuous process because “foreign policy goals are circumscribed both by internal motivation/psychological phenomena and by external-operational contingencies.”

Hanrieder proposes two concepts that permit the correlation of the two dimensions of policy aims — compatibility and consensus. Compatibility is intended to “assess the degrees of feasibility of various foreign policy goals, given the strictures and opportunities of the international system”, while consensus is intended to assess “the measure of agreement on the ends and means of foreign policy on the domestic political scene”.⁽¹⁰²⁾

Hanrieder explains further that by “compatibility” he means “a particular object has a reasonable chance of realisation if implemented by a policy that an outside observer would deem appropriate. The degree of complementarity among goals... can be established by aggregating their respective individual compatibilities vis-a-vis the international system... Respective degrees of compatibility between individual goals and the international system serve as the basis for evaluating the degree of complementarity among goals.”⁽¹⁰³⁾

“Consensus”, Hanrieder points out, has no operational background. “The motivation-psychological determinants of foreign policy projects may be checked by ethical restraints, inadequate perception of opportunities, realistic perceptions of external strictures... but the range of political goals that the members of a political system can advocate and agree on is at least hypothetically without limits.” Consensus is thus further defined as “...the existing measure of agreement of policy projects among the relevant elements of a national system’s decision-making process, it necessarily imposes boundaries on the activities the political system can pursue without risking fragmentation”.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ In this sense, consensus is a standard of feasibility, as an operational consequence of psychological phenomena, especially in democratic system as it determines, in the long run, what foreign policy goals a government can pursue without risking the loss of support and, ultimately, office. As for compatibility, by definition, it is a concept of feasibility, as it serves to assess the likelihood of success of a foreign policy.

In his proposal for an analytical framework, Hanrieder employs

Rosenau's concept of "the penetrated political system". He extends Rosenau's usage of the term to cover a state, "(1) if its decision-making process regarding the allocation of values or the mobilisation of support on behalf of its goals is strongly affected by external events, and (2) if it can command wide consensus among the relevant elements of decision-making process in accommodating to these events".⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ He asserts that this formulation gives a wider range than Rosenau's and makes possible the correlation of patterns of compatibility with consensus.

When the political system is penetrated, the allocation of values cannot be isolated from external factors. Hence policy objectives may be derived from three referents: internal (socio-politic, economic, militaristic, national law, etc.), external (behaviour of other states), and systemic (imposed by the international environment). These goal referents overlap in such a political system. Furthermore, being a penetrated system, the standards of feasibility between compatibility and consensus begin to coalesce, because the external environment extends into the internal domain. The concepts that are employed for structuring the two environments are now blurred and the two analytical barriers are bridged.

If the degree of consensus is measured and the degree of compatibility between a state's policy and the structures of the international environment is evaluated, the degree of penetration can be constructed. If these two patterns correlate well, the system is highly penetrated. Hanrieder's second hypothesis is that if there is consensus without compatibility with systemic conditions, ineffectual demand is made on foreign policy decision-makers, or a distorted perception of international system exists. His third and last hypothesis is that if there is no consensus, then some decision-makers have a better chance than others of realising their policy proposals, and the national system is only partially penetrated. Finally, Hanrieder claims that by employing these two concepts "all these analytical operations yield accumulative property that link external with internal dimensions of foreign policy projects... if the policy projects of all members of the international system were analysed in this fashion... the resulting aggregate would automatically reflect the system's predominant patterns of power and purpose."⁽¹⁰⁶⁾

Immediately after this article is a review article by James N. Rosenau⁽¹⁰⁷⁾. Rosenau criticises Hanrieder's study in two main respects.

Firstly, much in the article is unsubstantiated. Secondly, and more importantly, the concepts are not clearly defined. There are no dynamics of the relationship between them. Yardsticks for measuring each component (or degree of agreement of difference) do not exist. Furthermore, Hanrieder has extended the concept to cover both political and non-political international phenomena. Rosenau claims that “Hanrieder has substituted penetration for influence and equated politics with interaction.”⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Thus it covers the entire range of international relations, which is inoperationalisable.

Instead of “compatibility and consensus”, Rosenau proposes the concept of “adaptive behaviour” which is based on the premise that “all nations can be viewed as adapting entities with similar problems that arise out of the need to cope with the environment”.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Thus a state’s foreign policy always attempts to alter undesirable aspects of the external environment and pressure desirable aspects, as the basic purpose of foreign policy is to ensure the survival of the state. Rosenau then claims that there are four strategies for foreign policy — promotive, preservative, acquiescent and intransigent.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Rosenau posits that “for each type of foreign policy behaviour, certain types of variables will be ‘more or less’ strongly associated with the pattern.”⁽¹¹¹⁾ There are some criticisms of this concept, but, even without those, I cannot see the concept replacing “compatibility and consensus” in terms of explaining any chance of success and failure of foreign policy. It merely prescribes four types of foreign policy as to its nature and does not give us any yardstick or indication of its application.

Compatibility and consensus may prove to be just one more set of concepts and definitions but they “can be justifiably accepted as indicators of the domestic and external parameters of foreign policy in that they illustrate that there is a limit beyond which you cannot go in either and some compromise between what is feasible and what is acceptable at home seems to represent the very essence of foreign policy decision-making.”⁽¹¹²⁾ At least the concepts give us some indication of what to be looked at as a constraint a decision-maker has to face. They also give us a rough yardstick in understanding why a certain foreign policy is successful or otherwise.

A SIMPLIFIED FRAMEWORK

The basic assumption of decision-making theories is that action in international relations can be defined as a set of decisions made by recognisable units. Each decision is the end point of input, where the influences that have shaped this decision can be detected and analysed, and the beginning point of output, where policies are formalised and authorised. The main study of this analysis is the components constituted between these two ends, their identification, their relationships, how they work, etc. If one assumes that action in international relations stems from "decision" on foreign policy, one can understand the action-reaction pattern among states by focusing on the forces that influence decision-makers whose authoritative acts are, to all intents and purposes, the acts of the state.

As such, this approach seems appropriate to this study. By studying the two environments, operational and psychological, in both domestic and external settings, as well as decision-makers, their attitudes, options and constraints, it is hoped that policy formulation could be detected. Applying this model, which will be closely linked with Brecher's, to empirical content analysis, with the aid of the various concepts already briefly defined, Thai foreign policy between 1932 and 1946 may be further illuminated from an academic angle. How various factors, individually and in sum, shape each action in a foreign policy situation, is the theme of this thesis. It is hoped that this simplified theoretical framework will help us consider them in a methodical and more comprehensive manner.



CHAPTER TWO

SIAM AND THE WEST UP TO 1932

Contacts between the Siamese and their neighbours must have existed since time immemorial. However, the first encounter with the West occurred in the sixteenth century as European trading vessels began their explorations in this area for power, wealth and adventure. According to D.G.E. Hall, the first Westerners to arrive in Ayudhya were the Portuguese in 1511-2. Then came the Dutch in 1608, the English in 1612, and the French in 1662.⁽¹⁾

This chapter intends to survey briefly the contacts from the seventeenth century up to 1932. It also discusses the various types and levels of contacts made and the impacts they had upon Siam by 1932. Extraterritoriality, one of the main features of the relationship, will then be explored. Finally, bilateral relations between Siam and Britain, France, the USA and Japan will be considered individually. Other regional Powers like Holland and in particular China are left out for different reasons: Holland because of proximity and her lack of interest in Siam; and China because it deserved a thorough research on its own. Although the Chinese population posed certain internal problems for the Siamese authority, they will be dealt with only in passing to override its complexity, which can be read elsewhere.⁽²⁾

Because of limited space and time, only salient features which have bearing on subsequent chapters will be related in substantial details here; otherwise a general picture of the relationships will be narrated.

HISTORICAL INTERACTION

When they first arrived, the Europeans were well received by the royal court. Each tried to seek the favour of the king who was absolute and held complete control of foreign trade. Hence, the Europeans began their rivalry while the king played one group against another to gain benefits for himself and maintain his control. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the French attempt to convert King Narai to Catholicism contributed to the usurpation of power by an alarmed Siamese general. Since then, most Europeans were forced to leave the country and further contacts with the West had been successfully opposed until the nineteenth century.⁽³⁾

This attitude of Europhobia was firmly held even during the first half of the nineteenth century, by which time already three kings had ruled from the present capital, Bangkok. During the reign of Rama III (1824-1851), some minor treaties were signed with Great Britain and the US, but the King consistently refused to open the country to Western trade until he died in 1851. He was succeeded by King Mongkut (Rama IV, 1851-1869) who brought his progressive ideas into practice, and as Hall observed, "Siam entered upon a new era."⁽⁴⁾

Meanwhile, the nineteenth century became the heyday of colonialism. The presence of these advancing colonial powers was threatening Siamese independence. If an isolationist policy was held and neither compromise nor cooperation with the West was adopted, the Europeans, with vastly superior military and technological order, would surely use force to open Siam. Therefore, King Mongkut wisely decided to open Siam to extensive intercourse with the West. Within a few years of his reign, he negotiated fresh treaties with most powers, e.g. with Britain in 1855, France and the USA in 1856, Denmark in 1858, Portugal in 1859, the Netherlands in 1860, Prussia in 1862, Sweden and Norway in 1868.⁽⁵⁾ These treaties, following the mould of the one made with Britain in 1855, guaranteed the right of extraterritoriality for foreigners living in Siam, which was a pattern similar to that once set by the Dutch in 1664.⁽⁶⁾

Coupled with taking a new stance on the international scene, King Mongkut attempted to modernise Siam along the pattern of the West in order to be accepted in the family of nations as an equal, and to rid his country of the disadvantages imposed by the treaties.⁽⁷⁾ When he died in

1868, modernisation was just at the beginning, but, as Vella notices, “His personal bias in favour of things Western made converts among the officials and had a lasting influence on his successor, paving the way for more far-reaching Western innovations in later years.”⁽⁸⁾

King Chulalongkorn (Rama V, 1868-1910) succeeded his father and reigned for 42 years. During his reign, Siam was reformed administratively, militarily, legally, fiscally, and also in the eyes of foreigners. The King made many trips abroad, including twice to Europe in 1897 and 1907. He thus gained some ideas of how Siam should be governed in a “modern” manner. These trips also enhanced the prestige of Siam as an independent nation, equal to those of European Powers. But perhaps his greatest accomplishment was the preservation of the kingdom’s independence when Siam passed through the most perilous period of European imperialism, and he was forced to make some heart-breaking concessions to Britain and especially to France. An author appraised his policy in the following fashion:

“By the policy of negotiation and partial yielding, however, time was bought to carry forward the inner reforms, consolidation, and reorganisation required to put the kingdom on a secure footing from which to face the modern world.”⁽⁹⁾

Domestically, King Chulalongkorn successfully and vigorously carried out his father’s programme of modernisation as well as initiated his own schemes. His work is best summed up by Wilson thus:

“He inherited a traditional Southeast Asian Kingdom with its intricate web of bureaucratic and feudal relationships, its ancient ceremonies and symbols, and at his death he left a modern state with a rapidly developing system of communications, a sound fiscal position, and the general outlines of an effective administration and army.”⁽¹⁰⁾

Rama V sent most of his sons to study abroad, mostly in England but also at some other important capitals of Europe such as St Petersburg, Copenhagen, Paris and Berlin. This policy served to make Siam known to the West and the royal princes and the rich nobles’ sons could take home what they learned to modernise Thailand. It is under this policy that Prince Vajiravudh succeeded his father in 1910 and

became the first Western-educated monarch in Siam. Despite his nepotism and love of luxury, he carried over several social reforms to modernise Siam. He also pressed forward the work of legal codification which was substantially completed in his reign.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, being educated in England and having served in the British army for a while, the King was sympathetic towards the Allies. But there was also a strong resentment of the French deed twenty years before and hence there was a pro-German faction in the army. Nevertheless, in July 1917, “in consequence of Germany’s contemptuous rejection of a Siamese protest against her methods of submarine warfare, Vajiravudh took the plunge and declared war.”⁽¹¹⁾ In 1918, a small Siamese expeditionary force was sent to Europe. They were trained but did not actually go to war as it ended just in time. Siam gained a great deal from this enterprise. Apart from some confiscation of German ships and the railway system, she secured membership of the League of Nations, and in 1922 the US made a fresh treaty abandoning all her extraterritorial rights in Siam.⁽¹²⁾ The Siamese delegation, representing the country at the Versailles Peace Conference, at the same time negotiated for better terms in new treaties with other nations. Under one of President Woodrow Wilson’s “Fourteen Points”, territorial integrity was accepted and hence extraterritoriality was declared out of court. Siam benefited from this, and by 1925 had achieved a tangible result in the signing of new treaties with all powers.

Another important legacy of Rama VI was that he was “in effect the founder of intellectual nationalism among the educated Thai.”⁽¹³⁾ He wrote many articles in the press under various pseudonyms on the subject of ‘love of nation’ (รักชาติ) and also appeared in many plays himself. But he also “attacked the developing separateness of the Chinese community in the country.”⁽¹⁴⁾ Since then the Chinese have been an issue and a problem in Siam, but this is not our direct concern here.

Prince Prajadhipok succeeded his brother in 1925 as Rama VII. He was “a conscientious and responsible ruler, and throughout his reign (1925-1935) he was motivated by a sincere desire to serve the welfare of his people.”⁽¹⁵⁾ He stressed the need for economy and efficiency in his government. He also opposed the autocratic rule of his brother, and it was frequently rumoured that he was sympathetic to a constitutional form of government. However, Rama VI’s extravagance had dug deep

into the country's pocket. A policy of retrenchment necessarily followed. Together with increased customs returns, resulting from new commercial treaties, and prosperous foreign trade, within a short time, the government was able to eliminate the deficit and restore a sound financial position, and modernisation programmes were continued.⁽¹⁶⁾

The great slump of the 1930s hit Siam relatively lightly, but it had some profound side-effects. Siam failed to raise foreign loans in Paris and New York and the budget in 1931 was in deficit. During the slump, Britain also went off the gold standard. This left Siam stranded, and after a long period of hesitation, she followed suit in May 1932. Subsequent improvements in her export trade brought heavy criticisms upon the government for not acting earlier.⁽¹⁷⁾ Other drastic measures were necessarily taken, including further retrenchment and salary cuts, which hit the junior army and civilian officers very hard. They were already discontented with the monopoly of high offices by the princely class. Many of these junior officers favoured democracy, and consequently, on June 24, 1932, a bloodless revolution occurred in Siam.

THE NATURE AND LEVELS OF CONTACTS

It seems that, apart from adventure, trade and religion were the main attractions that brought the West into contact with Siam in the Ayudhya period. Once trade was established, interests had to be protected. This led to clashes of interests among the Europeans. A way of winning was to gain the favour of the king. All kinds of measures were tried to achieve this aim, including bribery, threats, promises and even an attempt to convert the king to Christianity. Contacts were confined to the royal court. But, Europe was still very far away from Siam.

The pattern of contacts did not change in the early Bangkok period (1782-1850). The court dealt with all trade and treaties. Although King Mongkut dealt with these problems personally, the amount of detailed work involved was soon realised to be beyond his energy and other princes were designated to help him. The Minister of the Port was assigned to deal with foreigners and the title of his office changed to the equivalent of Minister of Foreign Affairs in the next reign. But this post was always filled with a prince of high rank. At this level were handled

not only diplomatic links but also national finance and trade. The Siamese people, lacking mass media and good communications, could not organise public opinion even if they cared to. Few people could read. Radio was a curiosity before 1932. Transport was slow. So the contact of any kind was confined mostly to the official princely class alone.

Apart from financial benefit through trade, this level of contact served Siam well in two counts. The first was that the princes, whose concentration of wealth led to some capital formation, were keen and curious to play with new sciences and technology. They were the only ones who could, in the first instance, afford such luxurious commodities as engines. Once they brought them back, the idea soon spread. If they proved useful, they were here to stay. Secondly, many princes served in the government departments and applied their knowledge from the West to improve the civil service. It could be said that the contact at this level helped modernise Siam from the top downward, assisted by foreign advisers.

From the reign of King Mongkut onwards, many foreign advisers were employed to reorganise the administration. These advisers also taught their Siamese subordinates who took over their posts when they finally left the country. Advisers were selected from many countries to keep their influence in check.

As Darling says,

“The role of foreign opinion posed as an important restraint on the Siamese government during Prajadhipok’s reign.”⁽¹⁸⁾

This was also true during the three preceding reigns. Western political, social and technological ideas were accepted by Rama IV who tried “to appear benevolent and human in foreign eyes.”⁽¹⁹⁾ He and his successors tried to make the country look modern and progressive; King Prajadhipok even thought of granting a constitution before 1932 but failed due to the “influence of the conservative princes” and the “backward social conditions in the country”.⁽²⁰⁾

It was with these “backward social conditions” that contacts at another level were concerned. At the grassroots level, the main contacts were made at the beginning of this century by missionaries, journalists, and students returning from their studies abroad. The dissemination of ideas at this lower level gradually produced an effective base for the

change and modernisation of the country.⁽²¹⁾

Being Buddhist followers, the Siamese tolerated all other religions, and in 1869 King Chulalongkorn passed the Edict of Religious Toleration and thus officially and legally welcomed all religions. Apart from religious teaching, missionaries brought to Siam the printing press and other advanced technologies. They also set up schools which later became the prototype of many Siamese ones. Their care for the people's health with their modern medical science quickly won them the trust of the people. Because this proved useful, the modern technology that they brought with them spread easily, but not their religion, which appeared to the Siamese to offer little they did not already have.

Foreign journalists became editors of the English language *Daily Mail* which, in the 1920s, reprinted many articles from leading foreign newspapers. The paper opened criticism on the government and urged improvement.⁽²²⁾ Although it was in English, it had much impact upon anyone who could read, and also led the way for the development of vernacular papers.⁽²³⁾ The papers spread ideas very quickly and some groups of people gradually began to doubt absolutism and the right to rule of the monarch.

Last but not least was the role played by students returning from their education abroad. It was around the turn of the century that the King's Scholarships opened the way for brilliant civilian students to win competitive exams to study abroad. There were also military officers who were sent for specific types of training from various western countries. Emerging as individuals with knowledge, ability, idealistic thinking and ambition, most of them returned to serve in key positions in the civil service and the army. As democracy was in vogue in the West at that time, they became the carrier of this thinking in Siam.

They mingled with the middle class and junior officers where their ideals were spread. The monopoly of high offices by the princes, some of whom were not capable, and the policy of retrenchment by Rama VII increased the level of resentment in the civil service, and this group grew quickly. They began to think of political changes and viewed "the absolute monarchy as an archaic institution which was retarding the progress of the country,"⁽²⁴⁾ and, of course, their promotion.

Thus the popular level of contact helped Siam in modernisation upward from the grassroots. The impact of this level of contact over-

whelmed the effects of the previous level in 1932, when the emerging middle-class, civil service and military individuals took over the administration from the princely class.

THE PROBLEM OF EXTRATERRITORIALITY

Extraterritoriality, or the privilege of being outside the jurisdiction of the country one is in, was the price Siam had to pay in exchange for the preservation of her independence during the nineteenth century. Foreseeing the threat to the survival of the nation from the imperialistic policy of Britain and France, Rama IV agreed to an unequal treaty with Queen Victoria's emissary, Sir John Bowring, in 1855. This treaty created the right of extraterritoriality for British nationals in Siam. They were thus freed from the jurisdiction of the Siamese courts. Siamese autonomy in imposing tariffs was also curtailed. Provision for the unequal right of extraterritoriality was followed in treaties made with twelve other Powers of the day.

Extraterritoriality was not new. It was copied from China where it had been enforced because the West believed the Chinese could not rule her own subordinates due to their large territory and the declining authority of the Ch'ing dynasty. In Siam, this new concept seemed to be taken without serious opposition, at first. It was a more attractive proposition than territorial claims and partition.

To Western eyes, the legal right of extraterritoriality was a safeguard for their nationals who retained the right to be tried by their own courts under their own laws and procedures. It "implied that the Siamese political and legal system was vastly inferior to that in the West and that much progress would be required before these restrictions could be abolished." It also stressed the concern for "humanitarian and the protection of individual freedom."⁽²⁵⁾ It seemed a sensible and even necessary step in the sense that although European court procedure was soon adopted in Siamese courts, the Siamese language was very difficult for European tongues. Europeans could argue that even the Siamese government welcomed the move because it freed them from some responsibility as they had, in any case, already been employing legal advisers to help out with the reform and the functioning of the department.

Whatever the merit or morality, in effect, extraterritoriality gave the West (and Japan) the privileges to withdraw any case involving their nationals or the nationals of their protected countries; to change the venue to Bangkok; to have European legal advisers present if British or French Asians were involved; to appeal to the Appeal Court and to the Dika Court (highest court in Siam) on points of law; and to employ British law of property and testacy on British cases until the Siamese had passed one on this subject.

There seems to be no moral justification at all for the accompanying privileges of certain restrictions over Siamese tariffs and taxation, apart from greed, insult and show of strength. In respect of trade, the Siamese had to undertake not to monopolise any that would jeopardise trade between the high contracting parties. Some import tariffs were fixed at a very low level, of 3% and 5% in some cases. It allowed the British to mine and enjoy forestry as of right truly as any Siamese. All foreigners were allowed to use Siamese waters for navigation and shipping as if they were Siamese.

Later, the Siamese tried to rid themselves of this yoke through modernisation and concessions. For example, in the Treaty of Bangkok of 1909, Siam ceded the Malay states of Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu to the British in exchange for the British promising to abandon some extraterritoriality privileges. But the problem was still paramount and had to be dealt with gradually and continuously for many years to come. As Wilson observed,

“The effort to end extraterritoriality involved a complete revolution in the administration of justice and the law itself. In 1897 a commission was appointed to study the problem of revision of the law in order to bring it into conformity with standards acceptable to the powers and thereby lay a basis for the end of consular courts. In 1908 the first of the law codes, the criminal code, was issued, and the following year Britain recognised the principle of the end of extraterritoriality, although it persisted for almost 30 years.”⁽²⁶⁾

Apart from modernisation, the Siamese found they also needed some pretext to alter the treaties. This arose when Siam joined the Allies and became a victor in the First World War. At the Versailles Peace

Conference, the Siamese delegation put forward the proposal which was boosted tremendously by President Wilson's proposal on territorial integrity. The US duly became the first nation to agree to abandon extraterritoriality, but with a protocol of ten-year period of transition towards complete abolition. By 1926, twelve other countries had followed suit. As for tariff restrictions, these had been more gradually changed and it was noted that by 1925 Siam had gained "more or less complete fiscal autonomy."⁽²⁷⁾ Thus, by 1932 extraterritoriality and its accompanying privileges still existed in Siam but were well on the way out.

Now, we shall turn our attention to bilateral relations between Siam and some of the Powers.

GREAT BRITAIN

According to Professor D.G.E. Hall, the first British vessel came to Ayudhya in 1612, a hundred and one years after the time of Albuquerque's conquest of Malacca for the Portuguese. Soon, the British East India Company established a trading post at Patani, but here, as elsewhere in the East Indies, they were overshadowed by their Dutch rivals, and English trade languished.⁽²⁸⁾ The British presence faded away just like other foreigners after the death of King Narai because of wars in Europe, the suspicion of the West, and the Siamese intermittent wars with the Burmese. This went on although the British and the French had forcefully opened China, Burma and Indo-China to Western trade.

Although the Siamese kings were unwilling to enter into treaty relations with the West, in 1826, John Crawford forced a treaty upon them and the Siamese found themselves unable to do anything to rid their discontent. Luckily, as we have seen, King Mongkut decided that the best course of action was to "bend with the wind" and to open Siam to extensive intercourse with the West.

The first country to conclude a new treaty with Siam was Britain, through the good offices of Sir John Bowring who represented Queen Victoria, on April 18, 1855. This Bowring Treaty superseded the 1826 one by a much fuller instrument, "which provided for British Consular jurisdiction in Siam and for a Conventional import and export tariff."⁽²⁹⁾

This became the model for the new treaties that the Siamese successfully negotiated with other European nations. Thus, Siam was officially open to foreign trade and other intercourses.

During his reign, King Mongkut attempted to modernise Siam. "He encouraged his subjects to learn European languages, especially English,"⁽³⁰⁾ which he saw as the key to technological progress and modernisation. He also employed an English governess to tutor his many sons including the Crown Prince Chulalongkorn, who later became Rama V.

During the reign of Rama V (1868-1910), relationships between the two countries were smooth. Siam never suffered violence or loss of Thai-speaking populations to the British which was in marked contrast to Franco-Siamese relationship. When Britain conquered Upper Burma in 1886, she handed over two Shan States, "East Kencheng and Tangaw, to Siam, in the hope of avoiding a common frontier with French Indo-China, but Siam later had to cede these territories to France."⁽³¹⁾

When the French had been forcing the Siamese to cede to them territory after territory to her east and northeast, the British concern ran high. As she did not want war with the French in this part of the world, a Convention was made in January 1896, by which

"England and France guaranteed the territorial integrity of Siam, but provided for a British sphere of influence in Western Siam, including the Malay Peninsula, and a French sphere in the east, while the Menam valley in the centre of the country was left free."⁽³²⁾

This was reaffirmed in 1904, but Siam was still to lose territories to the French, and later to the British as well.

As F.C. Jones recounts, since the second half of the sixteenth century, "the Siamese monarchs also exercised a loose suzerainty over the various small states of the Malay Peninsula, including Johore and Malacca."⁽³³⁾ But after the British acquisition of Singapore in 1819, their influence in the Malay Peninsula grew steadily. By the end of the century, the Siamese had given up the extreme south, but still claimed suzerain rights over the middle Malay States, and tightly held the north of Malaya. In 1909, another treaty was concluded and ratified with Britain whereby Siam agreed to abandon all claims to "the three (sic) Malayan sultanates of Kelantan, Trengganu and Perlis, a territory of 15,000 sq miles with

1,000,000 inhabitants, and Britain surrendered extraterritorial rights ...³⁴⁾ However, the inhabitants of these states are Malays, not Thais.

In 1907, Rama V toured England and spent a weekend at Windsor Castle with King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. This was his last trip abroad. When he died in 1910 he was succeeded by his son, Rama VI (Prince Vajiravudh) who was educated at Sandhurst and Christ Church, Oxford. Also, he was, for a time, attached as a subaltern to the Durham Light Infantry before following a course at the Hythe School of Musketry.³⁵⁾ In this sense, the British had a profound influence on the Siamese and they were looked up to with respect.

As far as trade with Siam goes, no other nations could match Britain in quantity. It came as no surprise that the British Minister was consulted in most governmental matters. A British citizen was always employed in the post of Financial Adviser. Thus, it surprised no foreigners that Siam eventually joined the gold standard circle in 1928.³⁶⁾ It was noted by an author that though Siam was politically independent, she was economically a “colonial” area, “for about 80% of capital invested in the country was British, and British influence was pervasive,”³⁷⁾ and that “this leaning towards Britain was a characteristic example of Thailand’s traditional diplomatic style...”³⁸⁾

Relationship between the two countries was smooth and harmonious up to 1932. As Cecil Dormer, the British Minister, reported to the Foreign Office in January 1932, “such matters as have been dealt with have presented no difficulties, and the Siamese government have in every instance shown an accommodating spirit.”³⁹⁾ But by 1931, the British were hit hard by the world depression of the inter-war period and had abandoned the gold standard. As most of Siamese assets were tied to gold, and the Siamese treasury held a large amount of sterling in reserve, Siam made a big loss and their trust in the British faded a little. This was illustrated again by Dormer:

“The loss which they have suffered has undoubtedly shaken their confidence in us, and a certain feeling of resentment is noticeable at what is considered the fact that a part of the loss might have been avoided had their finances not been so subject to British guidance.”⁴⁰⁾

Although there were some British interest groups who disliked the Siamese being the master (over trade and) of their own country and

had more than once asked the Foreign Office to do something about it, diplomatically the relationship was cordial. For example, in reference to Mr Malcolm of the British Borneo Company asking for Britain to rattle the big stick at the Siamese for not cooperating, Dormer disagreed:

“If we are to copy the French and bully the Siamese, we cannot expect the latter to continue as friendly as they have hitherto shown themselves in such matters as the control of Indian agitators and aviation. It is worth remembering that Siam cuts off the Federated Malay States from Burma and if she were to behave as a second Persia we should have a lot more trouble than we have now.”⁽⁴¹⁾

Therefore it seems safe to say that the British also relied on the good nature and behaviour of the Siamese at the same time as the Siamese relied heavily on the British for advice, education, technology, and probably most importantly, balancing the menace of the French. Hence both gained in being cordial and cooperative diplomatically.

FRANCE

The relationship between France and Siam had, distinctively, never been one of equal partners. The first contact came when a French merchant ship arrived in Ayudhya in 1662. From then on trade and Catholicism were the main aims of the French. They also thought about dominating Siam politically as well.⁽⁴²⁾ Like other Western Powers, the French left Siam for a century (in the 18th). When the West began to exert their influence in this country again in the 19th century, the perspective of relationship became much wider as the French had, by then, become the Protector of Cochin China (Southern Vietnam nowadays), and thus the Siamese neighbour to the east.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Siam had been the undisputed master of Cambodia for some time. As for Laos, the Kingdom of Vientiane was extinguished and its capital destroyed by the Siamese in 1828. However, these two countries had been under Siamese suzerainty before, on and off. It was recorded that King Naresuan (1563-93) conquered Cambodia and Laos.⁽⁴³⁾ Whenever the Siamese Kingdom was weak, these vassal states would break away, but when the tide turned,

they paid tributes or were reconquered. However in 1802, Gia-Long founded the Empire of Vietnam with Hue as the capital and posed as a competitor to Siam for the control of Cambodia. The two powers thereafter took turns to dominate Cambodia. In 1845, an agreement was reached whereby both Siam and Vietnam guaranteed the protection of Cambodia. Thus the Cambodian sent homage and tribute to both Bangkok and Hue.

On April 15, 1856, a Franco-Siamese treaty in the pattern of the famous Bowring Treaty was signed. Under this treaty, the French gained extraterritorial rights, free access to Siamese ports, property rights under limited tax liability, freedom of interior travel, and nominal customs duty. But during the negotiation, the French wanted even more, as recorded by an author:

“Contemporaneous French negotiations conducted by Consul Montigny of Shanghai involved a gratuitous attempt to communicate with Cambodia, Siam’s vassal, but this attempt was effectively sabotaged by Bangkok.”⁽⁴⁴⁾

However, during the 1850s the relationship between France and Siam was still cordial. Napoleon III’s envoy was splendidly received at Bangkok in 1856. French missionaries were given much freedom to build schools, seminaries and churches. As for trade, however, the French lost completely to the British competitor. During this period, the French were looked up to by the Siamese as a source to counterpoise British influence, the pattern which, of course, was reversed in the next decade when French imperialism took its toll.

From 1861 to 1863, the French had taken control of six provinces of Cochin-China and inherited the suzerainty over Cambodia. In 1863, the French “forced the feeble Cambodian ruler to sign a secret treaty agreeing to surrender control of his country’s foreign policy to France and to accept the presence of a French Resident at his capital at Phnom Penh.”⁽⁴⁵⁾ King Mongkut’s protest was in vain when the treaty was made public in 1864. In 1867, King Mongkut was persuaded to recognise Cambodia’s vassalage to France in return for the compensatory concession that the border provinces of Battambang and Siemreap properly belonged to Siam. Apparently these provinces had been tightly held by the Siamese since 1794.⁽⁴⁶⁾ This became the first of the many troubles Siam had with France during the years to come. Nuechterlein rightly

remarked:

“Before Mongkut died in 1868, it was clear to him and his advisers that France was becoming the real danger to Siam’s independence, and that Siam would need the fullest support of the British to resist the French advance.”⁽⁴⁷⁾

A boundary commission fixed the boundary from the sea to the Tonle Sap (Great Lake) but failed to agree on the border from the north of this Lake to the Mekong.⁽⁴⁸⁾ And the scene of conflict shifted northward to Laos.

Typically, the French had used any pretext to extend their control over territories that had, at any time, been part of her satellites. They even capitalised on the desire of both the Khmers and Laotians to become independent (from Siam) and gave this as a reason to colonise these peoples. But after 1870, there was a short period of setback due to the Franco-Prussian War and the struggle at home between the partisans of monarchy and advocates of the Republic. The French naval commanders left in charge at Saigon could do little more than hold on grimly to their precarious protector position.

Towards the end of the 1870s, French imperialistic moves over Indo-China were resumed. By 1883, the French had at last established a protectorate over the whole of Vietnam. The Siamese expedition to tighten their hold over the Laos vassalage was used as a pretext by the French to annex this territory. The Quai d’Orsay issued a warning note to Bangkok and invited the Hue government to formulate its claims on Luang Prabang. After some negotiations, on May 7, 1886, a provisional agreement was concluded sanctioning the creation of a French vice-consulate at Luang Prabang. In describing this agreement, Hall pointedly remarks that it was

“a method of approach to the question which, be it noted, implicitly recognised Siamese authority over the disputed principality.”⁽⁴⁹⁾

Auguste Pavie became vice-consul in February 1887. Within the next year, Pavie conspired with a French commander in annexing Sibsong Chuthai to the French Empire, telling the Siamese commander in Luang Prabang that Sibsong Chuthai had been dependencies of Vietnam. Pavie wished for more cantons in “Middle Laos” but the

Siamese held firm. In June 1889, Pavie returned to France with more territories in his mind as recorded by Hall:

“There he strove to convert the Quai d’Orsay to the view that it should aim at extending the boundaries of its Indo-chinese empire to the river Mekong.”⁽⁵⁰⁾

By 1890, Bangkok was alarmed as Pavie and other Frenchmen had increased French influence among the Laotians and increasingly agitated for the “incontestable rights of Annam” to all territories east of the Mekong middle region. Siam suggested neutrality in the area until the boundary could be agreed. Both sides accused each other of infringing this. By this time, Britain had completely conquered Upper Burma and did not wish to share a frontier with the French. In 1889, the French Ambassador to London asked Prime Minister Lord Salisbury to declare Siam a buffer state and the frontier between Siam and Cochin China to be fixed by using the Mekong as the natural boundary until it reached Cambodia. Lord Salisbury agreed on the first but referred the second to the Siamese.

In February 1892, Pavie was appointed Minister to Bangkok. Meanwhile, Gladstone took over from Lord Salisbury, and Lord Rosebery took charge of foreign affairs in London. The French Ambassador told Lord Rosebery that none of Siam’s territories were on the left bank of the Mekong, since all of the country lying on that side belonged to Vietnam. Rosebery’s cautious diplomatic reserve over this was enough for the French to proceed with their plan.

Some incidents of conflict between the French and the Siamese in the “sensitive” area stirred up strong public opinion in France. In February 1893, the French government authorised the Governor-General of Indo-China to take forceful action if reparations were not obtained. Pavie also made a claim of the same nature to the government in Bangkok. The Siamese referred it to arbitration. But Pavie demanded the immediate evacuation of all positions held by Siam in the disputed territory, and in April three columns of French troops occupied the claimed territory in the Lower Mekong.

Bangkok appealed to London but Lord Rosebery only urged the Siamese to avoid provoking the French. Meanwhile, as Hall noted:

“The systematic advance of the French columns along the Mekong brought a whole series of incidents... The French

were looking for trouble in order to turn into their own ends.”⁽⁵¹⁾

The French made some wild and speculative accusations to arouse the people in France and succeeded in pushing their own government to take drastic action.

French warships were sent to the mouth of the Chao Phya River and upstream too, which was contrary to the 1856 Treaty. The Siamese fortress at Paknam committed the serious blunder of firing the first shot,⁽⁵²⁾ but the French were in a commanding position and issued an ultimatum on July 20 for three things: evacuation from the territory east of the Mekong; payment of three million francs as indemnity; and punishment of the officers responsible for firing on French ships. The last two demands were accepted but the Siamese asked for negotiations on the first. Six days later Pavie left for Koh Sichang and the French blockade began. Siam appealed in vain to Lord Rosebery and thus had to concede.

Siam capitulated on August 3, 1893, but the French had increased their demands. Pending the Siamese evacuation of the east bank of the Mekong, France would occupy Chantabun, a southeastern province of Siam. It also demanded that Siam withdraw its forces 25 kilometres from the west bank of the Mekong and evacuate from Battambang and Siemreap too. Then negotiations towards a Treaty were made. France attempted to insert many more supplementary terms which Lord Rosebery described as “calculated to infringe materially the independence and integrity of Siam, which she had pledged herself to respect.”⁽⁵³⁾ In October 1893, Siam accepted the Treaty.

Now that the French controlled all the left bank of the Mekong, they had a common border with British Upper Burma. Tension rose and, at times, nearly caused war. Luckily in 1896, the two giants reached an agreement in which “both states guaranteed the independence of the Menam Valley and promised to seek no exclusive advantages in Siam.”⁽⁵⁴⁾ But soon France felt that control over the Chao Phya “was essential to the economic success of French Indo-China.”⁽⁵⁵⁾

A badly-drafted clause in the 1893 Treaty later caused more trouble. It could be interpreted as giving the French extraterritorial jurisdiction over French protégés even of Asian nationals. Incidents involving this interpretation occurred again and again. Had it not been

for the 1896 Franco-British agreement, the French might have taken up the opportunity for taking over Siam using this as a pretext.

The 1904 Entente Cordiale, though made in Europe, left both the British and the French free to come to terms separately with Bangkok. In the same year, the Franco-Siamese agreement was reaffirmed whereby Siam lost Luang Prabang and Pakse, and the Laos frontier was modified to the French advantage. In return, France reduced her demands in connection with her “protégés” and the neutral zone and promised to evacuate from Chantabun. This evacuation was not done until 1906, and even then France occupied the neighbouring town of Tratt instead.

In 1907, another Treaty was made whereby Siam surrendered the provinces of Battambang, Siemreap and Sisophon and still more territories in Luang Prabang. In return, France handed back some minor territories surrendered by Siam in 1904, namely Dan Sai, Tratt and Koh Kut. France also abandoned all claims to jurisdiction over her Asian subjects in Siam. Having acquired these rich and fertile territories, France secured the control of the whole of Laos and Cambodia from the Siamese. Thus between 1867 and 1907 Siam lost to France about 467,500 sq kilometres of territory with a population of nearly 4 million.⁽⁵⁶⁾ The subsequent treaties of 1925, 1926 and 1937 confirmed these existing frontiers, which became disputed again when WW II began.

Generally, before WW II, the primary objective of Siam's foreign policy was to gain international recognition of her independence and boundaries and to regain full sovereignty over everyone in Siam. The First World War offered Siam the chance to achieve both objectives. Britain and France wanted her to join the Allies and she eventually did. The Siamese reaped their benefit to the fullest. A new Treaty with France was successfully negotiated in 1925. As an author noted:

“The French concession of a new consular treaty made in 1925 was accompanied by a frontier settlement establishing a demilitarised zone on both sides of the Mekong River boundary plus the enjoyment of reciprocal rights by Siamese citizens resident in French Indochina equal to those accorded to French nationals in Siam.”⁽⁵⁷⁾

Apart from territorial conflicts and treaty relations, the French did have some other dealings with the Siamese too. For instance, a French Catholic Bishop, Pallegoix, spent quite a long time in Bangkok. He

taught Prince (later King) Mongkut Latin in return for learning Siamese. He wrote a book, *Description du Royaume Thai ou Siam* in 1854, which furnished a good recorded history of the country. Apart from him, there were other notable Frenchmen serving in Siam too, especially as legal advisers after the Siamese had employed some Belgians to fill this post while territorial disputes were on. Thence, the French pattern of law became the model for Siam. Furthermore, many students were sent to France to study, notably in law and politics. Many of these students returned home to form the core of the 1932 Revolutionary Group such as Pridi Banomyong and Luang Pibulsongkhram.

Extraterritoriality was also a talking point between the French and the Siamese, although it gradually disappeared after WW I. But the French attitude towards Siam seemed not to have changed. They still looked down on the Siamese. Their superiority complex was such that in February 1931, the French Legation protested against the Siamese increase in import duty on spirits, although it was accepted by all other affected nations which rightly saw that it was a matter of Siamese internal sovereignty. To retaliate, France announced a customs barrier in Laos. Merchants near the border lost trade heavily. They were mostly Chinese though, not Siamese.

On the whole, down to 1932, the relationship between France and Siam, when it existed at all, had been more correct than cordial. France seemed to be the only western nation to receive such an attitude from the Siamese. The relationship was, of course, highlighted by Siamese concession to the French of territories and extraterritoriality privileges. Since then, the Siamese had always been suspicious of the French even after reluctantly joining the Allies in WW I. The situation could be summed up by the report of Cecil Dormer, the British Minister in Bangkok, to the Foreign Office in January 1932 that "French relations with Siam have appeared more than once to be lacking in harmony."⁽⁵⁸⁾

THE U.S.A.

Compared to other western nations, American influence on Siam was occasionally more "idealistic" and more too at a popular level while most other nations confined their services to the government. Being a

new nation and having fought the War of Independence and the Civil War within the past 175 years, the Americans held in high esteem the values of “equality, freedom, progress, humanitarianism, and respect of law.”⁽⁵⁹⁾ These they took with them wherever they went, and they imparted these concepts to other places as they went along.

At the government level, the contact with Siam was more of a diplomatic and adviser status. They seemed to exert no other notable channel of influence at all, probably so because of three main factors. The first was the Monroe Doctrine which laid down the policy of isolationism to which the US returned after the end of WW I. The second was the state of the economy. The process of industrialisation took time but unlike other powers, America was large and abundant enough in terms of raw materials, hence there was no need for further imperialistic expansion outside her continental limits. Meanwhile, the Americans had many setbacks at the time of national and world depression, especially during the inter-war year world depression. The last factor was proximity and lack of interest in the region. Though they had annexed Hawaii and the Philippines in 1898, the Americans had no apparent further interest in Southeast Asia which, at the time, were under the sphere of influence of the other three big World Powers — the British, the French and the Dutch.

As for treaty relations, the first between the two countries was concluded in 1833.⁽⁶⁰⁾ In 1856, Townsend Harris negotiated another treaty in the mould of the Bowring Treaty. This increased bilateral trade considerably with several American firms opening branch offices in Bangkok. However, the Civil War and her own isolationist policy halted all the progress in this direction until after WW II. Even then, in the 1920s the US became the first to agree to abandon consular jurisdiction at once, subject to the right of evocation for a limited period, and also to concede tariff autonomy, the concession to be made effective when other Powers did the same. This proved to be a significant breakthrough for the Siamese who used it as a model in negotiating with other Powers for equal treaties. Apart from being the first to relinquish such privileges, it is worth noting that the Americans had never forced any piece of territory from Siam and were thus regarded as true friends.

The Americans and the Siamese exchanged ministers and had a legation at each other's capital. More important was the fact that many

Americans were employed at the top level of Siamese administration. After 1903, the post of General Adviser, with its responsibility extended to every phase of government activity, was traditionally filled by an American from the Harvard Law School. This was the Siamese attempt to gain the support of a friendly and powerful non-European nation which might help Siam in her struggle against Britain and France, her colonial neighbours.⁽⁶¹⁾ In 1915, the title of General Adviser was changed to Adviser in Foreign Affairs and the post's responsibility was confined to Siam's international affairs but its holder still enjoyed much prestige. Its zenith was reached when Dr Francis B. Sayre, the Adviser, and the Siamese delegation succeeded in obtaining new treaties of equality from all other nations in 1926, and "by March 1927 Siam was finally granted judicial and fiscal freedom."⁽⁶²⁾ In honour of his services, Dr Francis B. Sayre was ennobled พระยาภักดีนิยามไมตรี "Phya Kalyana Maitri" (or Lord True Friendship).

A few Americans were employed in the Department of Public Health, and in 1930, Dr Carl Zimmerman of Harvard University made the first economic survey of the country.⁽⁶³⁾ Though the advisers pressed for technological and legal advances, little consideration was given to the slowly emerging political opposition to the absolute monarchy. When asked by King Rama VII for his opinion, Raymond B. Stevens, the American Adviser in Foreign Affairs, discouraged the King from granting any constitutional or democratic reforms as he felt the time was not yet ripe.

Between April and August 1931, King Prajadhipok and his Queen visited the USA. Although the main purpose was for the King to have an eye operation, it was noted that:

"Judging by the accounts appearing in the American press, and by what one heard from Siamese, the US Government and the whole nation appear to have gone out of their way to do honour to their guests. It was a triumph for Siam, and it appeared to herald a triumph for American interests in this country."⁽⁶⁴⁾

At this juncture, the Siamese expected an American loan accompanied by concessions on a large scale. But when Britain went off the gold standard, Siam turned unsuccessfully to the Americans who were also hit by the depression. So, by 1932, "it looks as if Siamese

feelings towards the US have cooled off and, for the moment at any rate, American hopes of carrying all before them in this country have had a setback.”⁽⁶⁵⁾

Although the Americans imparted to the Siamese a growing understanding of the Western values of equality, freedom, progress, humanitarianism, and respect of law, these concepts were applied primarily to the status of the nation which, until the twentieth century, coincided with the interests of the upper-class ruling group. After 1910, there was a growing awareness that these same concepts could also be applied to individuals and that the government should govern in the interest of the people.⁽⁶⁶⁾ It was at this popular level that the American influence seemed to have its greatest impact.

The works of American missionaries were well recognised. A writer even noted in this fashion:

“The abolition of slavery, vaccination, the institution of public hospitals and schools, and the abolition of public gambling are some of the changes that are traceable in no small measure to the influence of the American missionaries.”⁽⁶⁷⁾

Most missionaries remained in Siam for many years and exerted a continual and pervasive influence on the people. They learned the local language and became familiar with local customs.

After the death of Rama V, their influence waned. During the 1920s and onwards, nationalism took its toll on the works of the missionaries which were being imitated, if possible. However, their good works for the people of Siam were well remembered, such as the hookworm campaign and medical education.⁽⁶⁸⁾

As mentioned earlier, American journalists were the first to start criticising the administration. This was later followed by the vernacular press. There were also international news which used to be restricted to a small circle of the upper class. As Andrew A. Freeman, an editor, wrote, “The *Daily Mail*’s sole aim is to bring Siam before the world and to bring the world to Siam.”⁽⁶⁹⁾

JAPAN

Despite the fact that it was not until 1898 that Siam and Japan concluded a treaty in the mould of the Bowring Treaty, the emergence of Japan as a Power-to-be had been apparent for quite a while. The treaty only signified the Siamese acceptance of the fact that Japan, as Prince Chula Chakrabongse describes, “would herself reach a position of eminence after her victory over a European power, Russia, in 1904.”⁽⁷⁰⁾

However, the contact between Siam and Japan existed long before that. Being Asian and thus being commonly branded “yellow race”, both countries had to face European and American imperialism. Again extraterritoriality and tariff limitation were the same yokes that both had to rid. Both modernised in order to induce the Powers to abandon them. Japan was more successful by the end of the 19th century and posed herself as equal to the West. Once the yoke had disappeared, she went on modernising especially in the military and economic fields. Japan became an equal to all other Asian nations. Furthermore, she tried to persuade her fellow Asians to follow suit in expelling the West, accepting Japan as the great Power in Asia instead.

As early as in the reign of Rama II (1809-1824), a Japanese Samurai Warrior called Yamada came to Siam and served as a soldier. He was ennobled Orkya Sena Pimuk (ออกญาเสนาภิมุข) by the King for his service. But no further sign of Japanese influence in Siam is apparent until Rama VI came to the throne in 1910. As part of his nationalist encouragement in terms of songs, plays and the establishment of the Wild Tiger Corps and the Boy Scouts, an observer noted that

“Rama VI held up the Japanese as an example to the Thai, calling attention to their veneration of their emperor and their maintenance of traditional customs and ethics.”⁽⁷¹⁾

The relationship between the two countries thereafter went on smoothly. They later exchanged diplomats at ministerial level. But British diplomats in Bangkok maintained, from their conversations with some Siamese high-ranking officials and nobles, that they distrusted the Japanese. When the King and Queen visited Tokyo for one night on their way home from the USA in 1931, this is what Dormer reported:

“Their reception was cordial, but the visit is unlikely to have any particular effect on the relations between the two

countries, or to remove the Siamese distrust and dislike of the Japanese.”⁽⁷²⁾

When the Japanese occupied Manchuria and changed its name to Manchukuo, the Chinese were resentful. This feeling was shared by those overseas Chinese in Siam. But the Siamese government did not take sides. Neutrality in this issue was maintained. They only kept their country in order, as noted by Dormer:

“The Siamese Government have been vigilant in preventing any hostile demonstration or open boycott in connexion with the crisis in Manchuria on the part of the Chinese population in Bangkok against Japan.”⁽⁷³⁾

Therefore, by 1932, the relationship between the two countries was correct rather than cordial.



CHAPTER THREE

AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Immediately after the June 1932 Revolution, which overthrew the absolute monarchy in Siam, fear of foreign intervention was apparent. It is emphasised by the fact that the People's Party set out national independence as the first of the six principles for the country in their manifesto after the coup. This chapter first examines the interplay between various factions in the Siamese polity at this crucial juncture. Then the Siamese foreign policy will be identified. Towards the end, the attitudes of foreign powers towards the situation in Siam in 1932-1933 will be examined.

In the evening of June 24, 1932, after seizing power, the People's Party held a meeting with a number of ministers and under-secretaries of the old regime who were not regarded as potential enemies of the revolution.⁽¹⁾ A topic of discussion was the danger of foreign intervention. The foreign minister of the old regime was asked to communicate, through diplomatic channels, assurances for the safety of the lives and properties of foreign nationals. This appeared in a note by Mr J. F. Johns, HM's Chargé d'Affaires in Bangkok:

"Note verbal from the Foreign Office informs me 'under instruction' that the provisional government now in control of the state will take every measure to preserve order, protection of life and property and that international obligations will be scrupulously observed.'⁽²⁾

At this meeting, it was also pressed home that foreign intervention would

threaten the nation as a whole; not only the common people, but the royalty would suffer too. Thus, it was urged that everyone should cooperate to avoid this danger.

For King Prajadhipok, who was in the seaside town of Huahin when the coup took place, the event presented him with four rational alternatives. He could mount a counter-coup. He could flee the country. He could go into temporary exile across the border, perhaps in Malaya, to await further development. Or he could accept the new role of a constitutional monarch.

If he chose to fight, foreign powers would likely be on his side. In accepting the King as leader of the country, foreign powers would be given a pretext to send troops into Siam to help restore him. This seems very likely because foreign powers, notably the British, had their interests well served under the traditional regime and would not have liked to be disturbed. Furthermore, the new regime might be too nationalistic and thus might prove difficult to mend.

If he fled the country, where would he go? Wherever he went, the new administration in Siam would find it difficult. They needed something to legitimise their seizure of power. And while the King was staying in another country, apart from the fear of a counter-coup, the new regime might have to face up to statements from the King over which they had no control. The King could also gather foreign support for a return. The new regime in Siam would be in real difficulty.

If he went into temporary exile, the same problems would arise for the new regime. Worse still, there were the old diehards in Siam who would live in hope of his return. They might foment disturbances within Siam to invite intervention, even foreign, if they thought it would bring back the King.

Fortunately for Siam, the King wisely chose to remain in Siam as a constitutional monarch. This greatly reduced the chance of foreign intervention. Recognition of the new government was, thus, no longer a problem, as is shown in a comment in the minute after the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office in London had received a telegram from Mr Johns that the King had chosen this course:

“The King of Siam has not been dethroned, and this fact seems to be the only one which really concerns us. The new government, like the old one, is the government of

the King of Siam, and there is no reason why official communications should not be addressed to it in the same way as the old one.”⁽³⁾

The breakdown of law and order would be the perfect pretext for foreign powers to deploy troops to protect the lives and properties of their nationals. This could, in turn, lead to the expansion of their empires. When there was a mobilisation of British troops in Singapore, the Siamese became very nervous, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs was questioned in the Senate about it. Mr Dormer, the British Minister, dismissed the issue in this fashion:

“(There was)... no reason to suppose that it had anything to do with the political situation in Siam... Whoever had asked the question in the Senate must have had, I remarked, a very bad conscience...”⁽⁴⁾

Dormer might have been absolutely right, but the revolutionary leaders “believed and had successfully convinced many others of the validity of their anxiety.”⁽⁵⁾ This helped unite the nation, at least in the immediate post-revolutionary period.

However, it was not only the revolutionary leaders who exploited this sensitivity to their advantage. Phya Sri Visarn Vacha, the new Foreign Minister, who was a member of the *ancien régime*, also exploited it. He played on the fear of the members of the new administration that any manifestation of extremism might court foreign intervention.⁽⁶⁾ This, he and Phya Mano, the new President of Council of State, manipulated skilfully in overthrowing Pridi’s economic plan early in 1933. Phya Mano’s main stand was that it entailed the nationalisation of some foreign businesses in Siam, including the European concessions to exploit the country’s natural resources. Thus, if the plan was accepted, foreigners would lose confidence in Siam.

Thus, beginning immediately after the fall of absolute monarchy, the main actors in Siamese foreign relations were the King himself, the People’s Party or some of the revolutionary leaders, and the key members of the new Council of State who were members of the *ancien régime*. The main issue, once the crisis of recognition was passed, was the threat of foreign intervention.

FOREIGN POLICY AS A RESULT OF THE REVOLUTION

In 1932, the declared policy of the new regime was that “as regards foreign policy, the government will endeavour to maintain friendly relations with foreign countries.”⁽⁷⁾ Nice words though these were, the Siamese government managed to maintain such relations with other countries as they declared, but, of course, with different levels of cordiality. This is shown by the reactions and attitudes of other countries towards Siam. This section will cover the period from June 24, 1932, to about the end of 1933. It will begin with the general situation of the world, which could affect Siam directly, and Siam’s own actions in the international sphere, including a very brief account of domestic politics. Then it will turn specifically to bilateral relations more or less from the point of view of the countries concerned.

The Western world seemed to view the June Revolution in Siam as “quite one of the world’s most interesting (if hardly one of the most important) by-products of the world’s economic crisis.”⁽⁸⁾ The West, themselves, were badly hit by this economic depression and could hardly deal with their own difficulties, let alone intervening in the affairs of such trivial interest to them as that which occurred in distant Siam.

Meanwhile, the rise of a new power in the East was becoming more and more apparent. Since her victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1902, Japan had become a force to be reckoned with in the international sphere. In 1931, having started an undeclared war with China, Japan occupied Manchuria. A year after that, she set up the client state of Manchukuo under a puppet government there. The West and the League of Nations were powerless against such action. They did their best by condemning Japan as an aggressor. Significantly, Siam cast an abstention from the otherwise unanimous vote. This only resulted in Japan leaving the League, further exposing the League’s weakness. Japan claimed that she did not pursue an expansionist policy but she was forced to expand by her economic and population problems. However, a new pattern had developed since 1931, when the military took the upper hand vis-a-vis the civilian elements in the Japanese government. Cabinet appointments had to be approved by the military. Hence her foreign policy style became more militaristic than diplomatic. This was also the pattern in Germany. By 1933, Germany was a dictatorship. The army was modernised and

strengthened and an expansionist foreign policy completed the pattern. Later, Italy joined the alliance with Germany known as the Axis.

Domestically, after the Revolution, Phya Mano's cabinet took charge of the administration. A crisis arose when Pridi introduced a drafted economic programme which Phya Mano branded "communistic". This led to the closure of the Assembly and suspension of some articles in the Constitution on April 1, 1933. Pridi was subsequently exiled. On June 20, 1933, a coup took place against Mano, with Pahol and Pibul at its head. The Assembly reopened on the following day, and Pahol formed his first cabinet.⁽⁹⁾ Pridi was eventually recalled back in October 1933. A few weeks later, a rebellion led by Prince Bovoradej, an ex-Minister of Defence, occurred, but the government forces (under Luang Pibul) were able to quash them.⁽¹⁰⁾

BILATERAL RELATIONS

As can be expected, the early 1930s saw very little of the Western powers in Siam while Japan became a dominant actor in Siamese international affairs. However, Great Britain, France, America and China still had their roles to play in the Siamese environment.

CHINA

In a letter to Sir J. Simons of August 3, 1932, Dormer described the Chinese reaction to the June revolution in this fashion:

"The Chinese, as far as I have been able to ascertain, have held studiously aloof, but the KMT, according to the press, have addressed a telegram to the executive committee, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, congratulating the People's Party on their achievement. And since then the Overseas Affair Committee is reported to have pressed on Nanking the desirability of sending a special emissary to Siam for the purpose of negotiating a treaty. The proposal is not likely to be more welcome in Bangkok now than it was before."⁽¹¹⁾

In fact China had been attempting to set up a legation in Siam for a long time. But a Chinese Minister was not likely to be allowed for "such a representative... would be a very powerful man. He would have the wealth of the nation behind him. The Chinese in Siam were under Siamese rule. Their passports read: 'Chinese race, Siamese Sovereignty'."⁽¹²⁾

It was also commented by an FO officer, Mr R.V. Bowker, on October 26, 1932, that

"The influence of Nanking on the new administration looks like being considerable and the Chinese question is likely to be one of the most vital in the future development of Siam. There are 440,000 Chinese in a total population of 8,000,000 and they are far more vigorous, both physically and mentally, than the Siamese."⁽¹³⁾

The Siamese authorities seemed to have realised such a problem too and reacted by keeping the issue at arm's length, and thus the Chinese attempt remained fruitless until the end of the Second World War.

THE U.S.A.

In the early 1930s, American policy towards this region was not set specifically for her relationship with any particular country: It was rather a general policy. More attention might have been turned towards Japan and China, but again it was only a trade relationship. However, as Darling mentions, American moral support for the Siamese during this period was still noticeable.⁽¹⁴⁾

FRANCE

During this period, it was not unnatural that relations between France and Siam appeared more than once to be lacking in harmony. There were conflicts over import duties between Siam and French Indo-China. France also wanted Siamese cooperation in the matter of handing over persons suspected of taking part in political disturbances. Dormer summed up in the following manner:

“It may be the case that the French have an unhappy way of dealing with the Siamese government, and adopt a somewhat high-handed attitude with them which drives them into standing on the strict letter of the law.”⁽¹⁵⁾

When the Siamese refused to cooperate because they felt that the movement in Annam was chiefly of a nationalist nature and the root of evil was not communism as the French claimed, the French retaliated by refusing to give up Prince Bovoradej, who lived in exile in Indo-China “although the government asked for his extradition under a criminal charge!”⁽¹⁶⁾

GREAT BRITAIN

With their dominant position in Siam, the British obviously would have liked to keep the status quo in the country. Although there appears to be no clear record of this disposition, it seems that British and French sympathies were with the *ancien régime* during and immediately after the revolution in Siam. Intervention was, as we have seen, feared by the new government in Siam. Slowly and diplomatically, the British had averted this fear. This almost casual attitude seems to have carried the day, represented in a way by a comment by the Head of the FE Dept of the FO, Mr Orde, on the actual day of the revolution:

“One has long looked on Siam as a contented spot in the world of distress, but the peaceful Siamese has at last turned, apparently against the regime of princely privilege; probably financial stringency has brought matters to a head indirectly.”⁽¹⁷⁾

As to their reaction towards recognition, the British took the stand that the Siamese King had not been dethroned, and the new government was in the name of the King. Thus they regarded it as a normal change of government.

However, in England, there were some hawkish views towards Siam as well. For example, in a letter dated July 7, 1932, a former Siamese Customs Adviser, Mr W. Nunn, MP, wrote to Mr Orde urging the FO to be active in keeping British interests intact in the appointment of foreign advisers to the Siamese government departments. He was afraid that other nations might gain a more favourable influence on

Siam.⁽¹⁸⁾ Then, on October 21, the same Mr Nunn wrote to Capt. Anthony Eden, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, about outside intervention in Siam. Here, he expressed his opinion, *inter alia*, that “coordinated intervention by Britain and France would be comparatively easy and would probably avert a serious situation.”⁽¹⁹⁾ In his reply, Eden cautiously pointed out that “anything in the nature of vigorous representations on our part would tend to upset the present precarious equilibrium.”⁽²⁰⁾ And the matter ended there.

Meanwhile, in Bangkok, Dormer did his best to calm the situation down. Having accepted the fact that the new regime was there to stay, he tried to get rid of all the suspicions of the British in the eyes of the new rulers. He asked the editors of the two English newspapers in Bangkok to discuss the situation with him and encouraged them to produce articles of a friendly nature in the hope that they might exert a wholesome and calming influence without offending either moderates or extremists.⁽²¹⁾ The *Siam Observer* of September 23, 1932, duly published an article called “Siam and her Future” which brought the editor “many messages of thanks and praise.” And the article “Much Expected” in the *Bangkok Times* of the following day began in this fashion:

“The good name which modern Siam acquired for herself in the outside world by her policy of quiet and steady progress for the last 40 years, does not seem to have been in the least affected by the recent change in the administration that has been accepted abroad with sympathy and confidence.”⁽²²⁾

In February 1933, when the Siamese abstained from the vote on the Manchurian issue, “the English and the French press mistakenly expressed fears that the Siamese abstention meant a secret link-up between Siam and Japan. This sentiment... continued for the next decade.”⁽²³⁾ Mistaken it was, because it was merely a more severe assertion of Siamese neutrality than had ever been the case under the old monarchy. The Siamese Foreign Minister, himself, told the Japanese Minister to Siam, Mr Yatabe, prior to the vote that “Siam could not afford to take sides in the Sino-Japanese quarrel.”⁽²⁴⁾

The coup of June 20, 1933, went by. In August 1933, Crosby replaced Dormer as Minister to Bangkok. Pridi was recalled home, and the tension between the new government and King Prajadhipok never

abated thereafter. Before Bovoradej's rebellion in October 1933, the King wrote to the British Financial Adviser, Mr Baxter, suggesting that he and all the other advisers resign en bloc to protest against the government's drift towards communism as symbolised by the return of Pridi.⁽²⁵⁾ Fortunately, the FO took the view that "there is no turning back. All efforts must be concentrated on making the constitution work."⁽²⁶⁾

Mr Bailey, the British Consul in Bangkok, went as far as to comment that

"The King is mistaken in thinking that many foreigners hope that 'the King will make war upon Bangkok'... All the foreigners want is a stable regime and as little taxation and interference with trade as possible; they would not much mind how this were brought about if only they were not discommoded in the process."⁽²⁷⁾

During the Bovoradej Rebellion, the British again acted cautiously as shown in a comment by G.W. Harrison, an officer of the FO, in the report of the event, on November 30, 1933:

"The European communities are in favour of the rebels or royalists but they do not, as yet, show signs of uneasiness."⁽²⁸⁾

Harrison's minute on Dormer's Telegram of December 9, 1933, about Japan being the first to congratulate the government was that it was "a further instance of Japanese interest in Siam."⁽²⁹⁾ This fittingly sums up the British attitude towards Siam and the international atmosphere in Asia by the end of 1933.

JAPAN

Despite an undeniable increase in economic relations between Siam and Japan on the eve of the 1932 Revolution, political relations between Japan and the Royal Siamese Government, while not unfriendly, were nevertheless not conspicuously warm.⁽³⁰⁾ This overview is confirmed by K.P. Landon who stated that "until after 1932, the friendship between Siam and Japan had been 'unobtrusive'."⁽³¹⁾ Until the end of 1932, Japan seemed to have made little headway towards this end, despite the industrious attempt by Yatabe Yasukichi, who was the Japa-

nese Minister Plenipotentiary from 1928-1936. It was noted that his major objective in Siam, during his tenure in Bangkok, had been the elimination from Siam of European, particularly British, influence and its replacement by Japanese power.⁽³²⁾

Yatabe was a dedicated foreign service officer who was convinced of the need to guarantee his country an economic footing in Southeast Asia. His methods were, thus, essentially peaceful. But in Japan, many disapproved of this policy, which disregarded the aims of the ultranationalists. Chief among them were the members of the outspokenly anti-European, pan-Asianist *DAI AJIA KYOKAI* [Great Asia Society], which was founded in Tokyo in 1924. The Society aimed to promote cooperation among the “culturally similar” races of Asia. Members of this society varied from ultranationalist military men to journalists and business barons. Hence, it can be established here that the policy towards Siam might not be in concert amongst the Japanese themselves.⁽³³⁾

The first real impact the Japanese had on Siam since the 1932 Revolution was in February 1933. It happened in the League of Nations over the Manchurian issue. The Siamese government informed its delegates to abstain from voting against the motion condemning Japan as an aggressor. Siam became the only one in the plenary session vote of February 24, 1933, who did so. The rest approved the Lytton Report, which censured the Japanese action in Manchuria, *in toto*. The Japanese representative there, Matsuoka Yosuke, rushed up to his Siamese counterpart after the vote. While wringing his hand vigorously, Matsuoka vowed that if Siam ever needed a friend to cast off the yoke of the Europeans, Japan would fight with her to the end.⁽³⁴⁾ Japanese press followed up their gratitude for her “understanding Asian brother.” This mistaken pan-Asian sentiment persisted in Japan well into the next decade.⁽³⁵⁾

The West viewed this with suspicion, but the British attitude was still rather aloof if Consul Bailey’s opinion was anything of a yardstick. In a letter of September 15, 1933, to the Secretary of State, Sir John Simon, he wrote:

“Undoubtedly the Japanese have been taking a keen interest in Siam and would like perhaps to pose as its protectors against the European; and some young Siamese may be inclined to regard Japan as such... The Japanese, with

Manchuria on their hands, could hardly contemplate armed intervention in Siam; they have good reason to be interested in the country commercially... I do not think they can have any Pan-Asiatic designs on Siam..."⁽³⁶⁾

In May 1933, Siamese domestic politics played into Japanese hands. Factionalisation occurred between Phya Pahol and Luang Pibul on the one hand, and the royalist government of Phya Mano backed by Phya Song on the other. The former could count neither on the French nor on the British to help ousting the latter, because these two European nations apparently preferred the *status quo* to keep their interests intact. Thus, Japan became the new power to turn to.

Late in May, some of the coup planners went to the Imperial Japanese Legation, requesting the Japanese "to furnish them with military supplies to equip an armed force."⁽³⁷⁾ Yatabe must have felt that the Japanese chance of increasing her status had arrived but he had to take a circumspect approach. He could not risk confronting the British at this juncture. His FO could not support such an action either. Therefore, sympathetically, he had to tell them that Japan was in no position to arm the rebels, but economic assistance and support could readily come after the coup.

On June 20, 1933, a coup d'état was effected. Yatabe's presence at the coup headquarters was requested. He went secretly and an one and half hour secret meeting with Pahol and Pibul took place. Thus consolidation of Siam's prosperity now relied solely on Japan. In reply, Yatabe congratulated Pahol and went on to stake a claim for a bigger share in Siamese commerce. Once assured, he urged the economic development of Siam through Japanese technology and capital, insisting that commercially Japan should be treated as equal to Britain and that Japanese advisers be attached to the Siamese government. This became a historic, secret, verbal understanding, though without any secret alliance. The significance of this mutual understanding was that the Japanese now had much easier access to the real ruling group in Siam. However, it has to be said too that this came as a result of the Siamese leaders' fear of European wrath rather than an admiration of Japanese foreign policy goals, at least throughout 1933.⁽³⁸⁾

In September 1933, the Japanese Legation in Bangkok learnt with fear that a Japanese South Seas businessman, Iizuka Shigeru, was

engaged in a Siamese political plot on the royalist side. Apparently, Iizuka acted as a contact man for Prince Nakornsawan in his plot to overthrow Pahol's government. Iizuka professed that his objectives for Japan were the same as Yatabe's but his methods were not. He would try to draw Prince Nakornsawan into the Japanese camp. Yatabe, who was resting in Japan, was frightened, lest the Siamese public knew of Iizuka's connection with this plot. Yatabe and his staff in Bangkok tried to stop this foolhardy action. Before anything happened, Bovoradej's rebellion, which could be a result of Iizuka's go-between activity, broke out on October 12, 1933. Iizuka's role in this rebellion could not be established. Fortunately for Japan, his support for Prince Nakornsawan never became known.⁽³⁹⁾ As soon as the government's army crushed the rebellion, Japan was the first to congratulate them.⁽⁴⁰⁾ This pushed the Japanese even closer to the ruling circles of Siam as the French and the British gave political asylum to many of the rebels.

Towards the end of 1933, King Prajadhipok's relationship with the government worsened. The King wished to go abroad, ostensibly for an eye operation. The government feared that, being abroad, the King might have a good platform to negotiate terms with the government, and ultimately he could abdicate, never to return. Japan did not lose this opportunity to gain more favour. Under instruction from Tokyo, the Chargé d'Affaires, Mr Miyazahi Shinro, approached Pahol "in great secrecy." He suggested a Japanese eye specialist to come to Siam to look after the King, but he was told that the King had his mind made up. After more telegrams, Miyazahi asked Prince Devavong to send the King to Japan. The offer was politely declined on the grounds that the King "had no desire to convalesce in Japan".⁽⁴¹⁾ Thus ended another Japanese attempt to gain influence over Siam.

Militarily, Japan began to gain admiration among the Siamese too. Apart from her victories in the Russo-Japanese War and in Manchuria, which might have been secretly admired by many military men in Siam, her navy had been much modernised. Although it was not until 1934 that Siamese cadets and officers were sent to Japan for training and education and that arms were bought from Japan, the close association between Pahol-Pibul and the Japanese Legation made this actual activity only a formality. The trend was already there.

More importantly, Japan's dominant position in Asia was based

upon her industrial prowess. Her competitive advantage in terms of price won many markets, including Siam's. Mr G. Harrison of the FE Department commented on November 13, 1934, that

“Japan is ready to sell other things besides her manufactured articles at a low price; her experts and technical advisers and even her education.”⁽⁴²⁾

Thus Japan's emergence as a rival to Britain in terms of influence in Siam was well recognised by the West as well as by the Siamese themselves.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE REVISION OF THE TREATIES

This chapter covers the period 1934, when Phya Pahol became the PM, to December 1938 when, after operating in the shadow of power for a long time, Luang Pibulsongkhram (Pibul) finally assumed the premiership himself. This period in Siamese history is usually skipped over because little of importance seemed to have occurred, compared with the blood-stirring events of the previous few years (the 1932 coup d'état and its immediate aftermath) and with the very active part played by Siam in Indo-China and the Second World War. Paradoxically, being a period of consolidation after the revolution, many beneficial and coherent movements could be detected in Siamese diplomatic relations. It can also be said that Siam had regained her place, internationally, during this period, especially by the revision of "unequal" treaties with foreign powers, and the quiet, behind-the-scene pulling of strings of influence by some foreign powers aspiring to gain dominance in Siam.

As is always the case in developing countries, foreign affairs are the results of as well as contributing factors to the interplay of domestic politics. In this chapter, I shall begin with the internal politics and the significant external environments during this period. This will be followed by an outline of the main international affairs of Siam. An attempt at analysing the successes and failures of Siamese policies and of the leading decision-makers will then be made.

Meanwhile, two issues that contributed to the shaping of Siamese foreign policy in this period and in subsequent ones surfaced

prominently. They were the rise of Japanese influence over Southeast Asia and, with some connection to this feature, the rise of Pibul and his militaristic view of the world in general and of Siam and his own self interest in particular. These two features went hand in hand. They complemented each other to the extent that the degree of one depended largely on the prominence of the other.

In this section, I shall try to trace briefly how Pibul militarised Siamese politics, concentrating largely on his activities after becoming Minister of Defence in 1934 up until he became Prime Minister in December 1938. The rise of Japanese influence in the Siamese political scene will then be looked at. This will be followed by the interrelationship between these two factors as it will become the basis of subsequent chapters. Finally, the concept of nationalism as applied to Siam will be described in order to set the scene for the years to follow.

INTERNAL POLITICS

On September 22, 1934, the third Pahol Government was formed with Pibul as Minister of Defence and Pridi as Minister of Interior (Home Secretary). Pahol himself also held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. On August 1, 1935, at the resignation of the Minister of Finance, Pahol took control of that Ministry and appointed Phya Srisena, a rather insignificant and inactive figure, to take his place in the Foreign Ministry. This did not last long, for early in 1936, Pridi replaced him in mid-term.

On July 27, 1937, Nai Liang Chaiyakarn, a deputy to the People's Assembly, questioned the government about the sale of the land belonging to the Privy Purse at low prices to private persons. The PM and the entire cabinet resigned, allegedly to open the way for free investigation. The Council of Regency followed suit the next day, but on August 4, they were re-elected. On August 9, Pahol was, for the fourth time, asked to form another government. Pibul and Pridi remained intact. On December 21, 1937, after another general election, the same cabinet was more or less reappointed. This cabinet stayed on till December 16, 1938, after another general election, when Pibul became the new PM and Pridi the new Minister of Finance.⁽¹⁾

After the coup d'état of 1932, the three main factions in the ruling circles were the royalists (or the *ancien régime*), the military (where the young were gradually superseding the old guards), and the democratic-inclined civilians. Public opinion, as observed by Crosby, "exists only in embryo as yet... The great mass of the people — as distinguished from the intelligentsia and the dangerous semi-educated class — are good-natured and tolerant and free from anti-foreign bias."⁽²⁾ The Bovoradej Rebellion put the royalists out of the scene and put Pibul firmly as the figurehead of the young military clique.

Pibul believed that Siam ought to be a dictatorship if it wished to remain strong and independent. In 1937, he stated in a public speech that Siam would advance proportionately as its military advanced, and cited the cases of Germany, Italy and Japan.⁽³⁾ Not only did he talk, his acts proved to be dictatorial too. As soon as he became Minister of Defence, he started a programme to modernise the armed forces. He changed the Conscription Law to improve the pay and living conditions in the services, to make the armed forces more attractive to young men. In 1937, he bought more war ships from both Italy and Japan. He granted honours, created more high ranks, and gave decorations, all of which were designed to gain political support from the servicemen and the civil servants.⁽⁴⁾ Within four years (1934-38), the military budget doubled. The Assembly did not like this style of spending. They preferred to spend primarily on roads, education and economic development, but they were in no position to stop Pibul.

While Pibul was consolidating his position in the military, Pridi or Luang Pradist, the leader of the civilian liberals, moved from the Ministry of Interior to occupy the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs early in 1936. In terms of Siamese foreign affairs, 1936 was important because it was then that the "one-sided" treaties of friendship, trade and navigation with 14 foreign powers came up for termination. Great tact and diplomacy were thus required if Siam was to weather this storm and to come out with some gains. Pridi's calibre was endorsed by Nai Sanit Charoenrath, an elected deputy to the People's Assembly from the district of Nakhon Rajasima, whom Crosby described as "the ablest political journalist whom I have come across in the new Siam."⁽⁵⁾ Nai Sanit wrote in *The Nation* on the 9th and 10th of November 1936 that "...one of the pillars of the new regime is a man who has shown his love for a policy

of universal peace, namely, Luang Pradist Manudharm, the present State Councillor for Foreign Affairs. Statesmen of the various countries having relations with Siam were glad when Luang Pradist took over the control of Siamese foreign policy...."⁽⁶⁾

In his address to his constituency, on December 2, 1935, Nai Sanit rightly pointed out that "...to make our country and our Government regarded abroad with respect and confidence, it is first of all necessary for us to show the same feelings towards our Govt. Self-respect induces respect from others... Nothing earns a Govt the respect of its people so much as orderly and efficient administration..."⁽⁷⁾ To this end, the credit fell upon the PM, Phya Pahol. He gained respect and confidence from every quarter, including love and respect by labourers generally.⁽⁸⁾ The government with Pahol as leader, Pibul and Pridi as colleagues, showed that it was efficient and that it could, through nonviolent means, maintain law, order, and political stability. Hence it was well respected by foreigners.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Beginning in October 1929, Western countries faced the onset of the Great Depression and had to pay considerably more attention to their domestic problems. From 1933, Hitler seized upon this opportunity to lead Nazi Germany into inserting her strength in the power vacuum in Europe. Meanwhile, Mussolini led a totalitarian Fascist regime in Italy. Having suffered so much from WW I, France was apprehensive and, despite lacking internal economic and political stability, successive governments continued the attempt of isolating Nazi Germany through various "security systems".

In 1935, Italy annexed Abyssinia, and in 1936, the German army occupied the demilitarised zone of the Rhineland. Soon, the Berlin-Rome Axis was proclaimed. In January 1937, Italy joined the November 1936 Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany and Japan. Italy and Germany became even closer when they were on the same side supporting General Franco's Nationalists against the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War in 1936-39.

Meanwhile, France, having lost more and more of her allies in

the Eastern European Security System, was driven closer to Britain, which had taken up the policy of appeasement instead of her traditional policy of seeking to redress the balance of power. Having shown indifference during the German occupation of the Rhineland and the annexation of Austria in 1938, the British were apprehensive about the appeasement policy, which ultimately resulted in the Munich Agreement of 1938. The Germans were then allowed to annex the Sudeten areas of Czechoslovakia but this was the last point for the British policy of appeasement. Rearmament to a large scale followed, and in 1939 general conscription was ordered in Britain. The scene for the European War was set.

As for the US, in 1933 Franklin D. Roosevelt became President, and his foreign policy was aimed at international cooperation, despite strong opposition from the isolationists. Diplomatic relations with the USSR were resumed in 1933. In 1935, however, a fearful Congress passed the First Neutrality Act prohibiting the sale and delivery of armaments to belligerent states, but in 1937 it was suspended by the Third Neutrality Act, under which a 'cash-and-carry' basis was allowed. On October 5, 1937, the famous 'Quarantine Speech' was made by Roosevelt in Chicago to the effect that neutrality in the face of an epidemic of lawlessness was impossible. And from the next year onwards, America began to rearm.

In Southeast Asia, the US had no specific policy towards any country in particular at this period. Generally, she cared more about trade with China and Japan⁽⁹⁾, and her own protectorate, the Philippines, which received an assurance in 1938 that it would be granted independence within 10 years. The rise of Japan disturbed the American position somewhat. But she stood steadfastly by her isolationist policy and covered more ground around Latin America. Be that as it may, her recognition of the USSR and her own rearmament indicated her awareness of this 'yellow peril'.

While every Western country seemed to be worrying about its domestic problems and the alliance of the Nazis and the Fascists, in the east, Japan was rising very fast indeed. Her population growth and her industrialised economy forced her to seek new markets. Being blocked by the British and French colonies and protectorates almost everywhere in Asia, she tried her luck in China. This aggressive foreign policy led to

the Manchuria Incident earlier in 1933. In 1936, she joined the Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany to warn the Russians of the possibility of a two-front war.

In 1937, Prince Konoye Fumumaru became Prime Minister. He tried to control the Japanese military faction, but failed. In the same year, an undeclared Sino-Japanese War began. In 1938, Japan carried out a general mobilisation, and also proclaimed the New Order in East Asia.⁽¹⁰⁾

SIAMESE FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Throughout his tenure as the State Councillor for Foreign Affairs, Pridi maintained that “unimpaired balance in world friendships is the watchword of Siamese foreign policy.”⁽¹¹⁾ Towards the end of his office, this principle was still intact though the wording had changed as shown in 1938. “Friends of all, foes of none; a rigid neutrality with no favouritism.”⁽¹²⁾ During this period, the traditional policy of “bend with the wind”, which was used by small states synonymously with “flexibility” by the powers, was replaced by another old Siamese policy of “playing one country against another”, which was more suitable at the time. This was to comply with the first of the six principles set by the People’s Party after the 1932 revolution; that is, to maintain independence.

To maintain independence, one has to have independence or sovereignty first. Siam in 1935 had political independence but not full sovereignty over judicial matters. Extraterritorial rights under the unequal treaties and their protocols posed as the main obstacles towards this end. This became, by far, the most important topic in Siamese foreign policy during this period. However, it has to be borne in mind too that this was not the only policy pursued, as rightly observed by an author, in the following manner:

“Between 1933 and 1938, Thailand’s foreign policy was in a transitional state. Thai leaders feared to antagonise Britain, which still had considerable power in the area, but they also were eager to cultivate the favour of a rising Japan...”⁽¹³⁾

In his attempt to revise the unequal treaties, on September 21,

1908, King Chulalongkorn had promulgated the Penal Code (กฎหมายลักษณอาญา) by issuing a royal rescript, part of which said:

“When all the nations noticed that the Japanese legal and court systems were well-organised in the same way as those of the Western nations, they agreed to revise the treaties, to abolish consular jurisdiction, and to transfer the control of the foreign subjects residing in Japan to the jurisdiction of the Japanese legal system... The nations which are suffering from similar difficulties will be able to proceed in the same way.”⁽¹⁴⁾

Since then, the codification and revision of the traditional legal systems, which was a prerequisite for equal treaty status, became an obsession of most Siamese rulers.

Legally, by August 1, 1935, Siam had fulfilled her part in the various friendship treaties by having codified all the necessary branches of law (Penal, Civil and Commercial, Codes of Procedure and Law for the Organisation of Courts). Extraterritorial courts were no longer necessary for foreign power nationals. However, according to the protocols attached to the treaties, a period of five years must lapse before this would come into force. In that case, these foreign powers (except for Switzerland and Germany) still maintained the right of evocation from Siamese courts. Moreover, the right of changing court to Bangkok or having judges with the power to sit in a Bangkok court was also available to foreign powers' citizens. Britain and France also had the privilege of having European legal advisers to sit in and observe a trial.

Commercially, only with France, Britain and the USA had Siam clauses on monopoly in the treaties. As for Britain and France, any monopoly by either side must be informed and in consultation with one another. Any compensation accrued from such a monopoly would be settled by peaceful means or arbitration. With the USA, only alcoholic drinks, opium, cocaine, heroin (according to the Hague Convention of January 23, 1912) and weaponry could be monopolised. But even then the 'most favoured nation' treatment must be observed. As for import taxes, some were limited by treaties (e.g. 5% on many British commodities and machinery exports).

As for other privileges, the existing treaty allowed the British to have the same rights as the Siamese in holding lands, mining minerals

and harvesting timber, while the Siamese only had the “most favoured nation” right in Britain in terms of land holding. However, most other nations gave Siam reciprocal treatment in these issues.

As for military exactions, the citizens of Britain, France, Japan, Portugal, Spain and the US were exempted. Belgium allowed such but compensation had to be paid. Meanwhile, the Belgians, French, Germans, British, Italians and Japanese had the same right of navigation in Siamese territorial waters as a Siamese did, except for coastal trade. French Indo-Chinese were, by the treaty, to be allowed to cross over and cultivate on Siamese soil.⁽¹⁵⁾

As John Coast rightly observed,

“The revised texts were to signal a new era in the country’s international relationships, because the last traces of extraterritorial privileges were to be abolished.”⁽¹⁶⁾

But whether or not the great powers would be prepared to relinquish all these advantages and at what price served as the crux of the situation and dictated all tactical moves by the Siamese.

TABLE 1: Treaties of Friendship with Various Countries

Country	Date of Signature	Date of Ratification	Date of Effect	Date of Expiry
USA	16. 12. 1920	1. 9. 21	1. 9. 21	1. 9. 31
Japan	10. 3. 1923	22. 3. 24	29. 12. 24	29. 12. 33
France	14. 2. 1924	12. 1. 25	12. 1. 25	12. 1. 35
Indo-China	25. 8. 1926	29. 6. 27	29. 6. 27	12. 1. 36
Neth.	8. 6. 1925	24. 8. 26	24. 8. 26	24. 8. 36
Britain	14. 7. 1925	30. 3. 26	30. 3. 26	30. 3. 36
Spain	3. 8. 1925	28. 7. 26	28. 7. 26	6 months notice
Portugal	14. 8. 1925	31. 7. 26	30. 8. 26	30. 8. 36
Denmark	1. 9. 1925	13. 3. 26	28. 3. 26	28. 3. 35
Sweden	19. 12. 1925	25. 10. 26	25. 10. 26	25. 10. 36
Italy	9. 5. 1926	18. 3. 26	18. 3. 26	18. 3. 36
Belgium	13. 7. 1925	25. 3. 26	25. 3. 26	25. 3. 32
Norway	16. 7. 1926	9. 2. 26	9. 2. 26	6. 2. 36
Germany	7. 4. 1928	24. 10. 28	24. 10. 28	24. 10. 33
Switz.	28. 5. 1931	16. 12. 31	16. 12. 31	1 year and 6 mths notice

The first treaty to expire was the one with the United States of America, on September 1, 1931, with a five-year lapsing period to run afterwards. In mid-1933, the Siamese government decided to alter certain clauses on monopoly with the US rather than abolishing and re-negotiating new ones, which they hoped to do at the same time with all other countries in 1936. The rationale behind this move was that Siam wished to set up some monopolies, like that of the tobacco trade, which was not allowed in the existing treaty.

As for a preliminary negotiation, the Siamese government asked Mr Stevens, the Adviser to the Siamese Foreign Ministry, who apparently

knew President Roosevelt personally, to start the process when he was on his leave in the US. To complete the legality, Prince Damrasdamrong Devakul, the Siamese Minister in Washington, was fully authorised to represent Siam in the signatory ceremony. On October 23, 1933, Stevens handed his proposal to Mr Herpbeck, the head of the Eastern Department of the State Department. On December 11, 1933, the US accepted the proposals but reserved some wording alterations.⁽¹⁷⁾ As no compromise could be reached, on December 11, 1935, the Siamese government called off the revision.

The failure of this venture could be attributed to both internal and external situations. Internally, Herpbeck was able to inform the Thai Minister that Siamese politics was, then, unstable (Bovoradej Rebellion, King Prajadhipok's abdication, etc.) and that the economic situation had been changing, especially on the effect of the potential monopoly.⁽¹⁸⁾ Internationally, the Americans were afraid that Siam would monopolise her petroleum industry. This was the result of the collapse of the US National City Bank and oil company in Manchukuo when the Japanese puppet state monopolised the oil trade and industry in retaliation for the US support of China there. Hence, the US was not so keen when Siam asked for the abolition of the monopoly clause. Furthermore, there was a strong rumour all over the world that 200 Japanese engineers in addition to 20,000 Japanese labourers were involved in the construction of the Kra Canal in the south of Siam.⁽¹⁹⁾ Since the Japanese withdrew from the Naval Conference in 1934, Japan had expanded her navy and the Americans were really concerned lest this rumour, which, if true, would place the Japanese at a strategic advantage in Southeast Asia, became a reality. This would also mean that Siam was under Japanese influence, if not domination, militarily at least. By this time, commercial relations between Japan and Siam were very close too, posing more threats to the Americans.

All these are reflected in the Siamese Minister's report to the Siamese Foreign Minister of October 23, 1935. He related his conversation with Phya Kalyana Maitri (Francis B. Sayre), who worried about Siam joining Japan, pointing out the mistake the Chinese had made in accommodating the Russians to the extent that it was too late to expel Communist influence from western China. The Minister himself felt that

“... American policy towards Siam has changed, not as sympathetic as before... They just refused to revise the Treaty giving the reason that we have been inert towards it for so long. They are afraid that we would be under Japanese influence... This hardening of their attitude by chance, coincided with the King’s abdication...”⁽²⁰⁾

Having fallen at that early hurdle, however, the Siamese were not discouraged. They learned from it. The failure also gave Siam a fresh chance of negotiating with the foreign powers en bloc (including the Americans), at the same time, and on more or less the same terms. Pridi was thus brought in to replace Phya Srisena on February 12, 1936.⁽²¹⁾ As *The Nation*, which was owned by Prince Varn (a very capable and rather liberal civil servant who served under every government so far, usually as Adviser to the Foreign Ministry), put it:

“In view of the necessity for having some influential person in charge of Siam’s foreign relations at a time when foreign policy is so much to the fore, and when the revision of the country’s agreements with the various Treaty Powers is about to be undertaken”.⁽²²⁾

Siam was fortunate that such a task should arise during a period of relatively calm domestic atmosphere. The policy itself was officially declared as early as August 1, 1935, in the opening ceremony of the Assembly, in which the speech from the throne set out among other things that

“...The government will seek an opportunity to negotiate for their revision in due course, with a view to giving them the form of complete equality...”⁽²³⁾

This was, apparently, well received by the Assembly, a deputy of which later addressed his constituency in the following manner:

“With regard to these negotiations, it is the duty not only of the government and of the Assembly but of the people to do everything possible to further our case, and to see that foreign powers are given no possible reason for withdrawing their respect and confidence...”⁽²⁴⁾

But, apart from the ruling groups of Siam, the people at large had no political consciousness at all. Hence there was no public opinion to pressure or condemn whatever was going on as long as it did not affect

them directly. This could be a blessing in disguise for, as an author observed,

“public opinion often tended to be emotional and opportunistic, and fatally lacked in insight into international affairs. Whether there was oversensitivity or apathy on the part of the populace with regard to the diplomacy of a nation, the role of excellent leaders was essential throughout this period of enlightenment.”⁽²⁵⁾

And here the leader was Pridi. He clarified the broad policy in an interview soon after becoming Foreign Minister:

“...The Siamese government will show no bias or favouritism giving one country greater rights or privileges than another country... However, the supreme objective which sets the course of the Siamese government is the good of the Siamese nation and that alone.”⁽²⁶⁾

The strategy was to denounce all the treaties when they expired. Then, and only then, would new treaties be negotiated. Hence the denunciation of the existing treaties would not be conditional to the negotiation of new ones. They must be kept distinctively separate. The new treaties should be based wholly on the basis of reciprocity, equality, mutual benefits and uniformity.

On July 14, 1936, a nine-member meeting with the PM in the chair, approved the principles proposed by the Foreign Ministry. Accordingly, on October 5, preliminary notices about the denunciation of the existing treaties were handed to corresponding legations in Bangkok. Two weeks later, the denunciation notices were served, setting November 5, 1936, as the date the denunciation notice would come into effect with every contracting party (and thus Nov 5, 1937, would be the date that actual effect took place). Drafts of new treaties (to be negotiated) were also attached and negotiations for new treaties began. In giving notice to this effect, Crosby noted, it was stated that

“It is the desire of the Siamese government to secure in its treaties a large measure of uniformity, complete equality of form and entire fiscal and jurisdictional autonomy.”⁽²⁷⁾

Tactically, with the major powers (USA, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan), the Siamese particularly chose Bangkok as the venue of negotiation by sending the draft to each government them-

selves. With other parties, it was taken that if their legations sent the new drafts to their governments, the Siamese would negotiate through Siamese legations. As there was not much that minor powers could ask for which the greater powers did not, the main negotiations were in Bangkok. This gave the Siamese psychological confidence, and the principle of equality was well established. By proposing the new drafts, the Siamese probably felt too that the terms were not to be dictated by the superior powers, which was a change from the colonial era.

The Siamese stood firm on their principles of denouncing the old treaties first and talking later. After his conversation with Pridi and the chief negotiator, Prince Varn, Crosby reported that

“The Siamese government would resist firmly any attempt by the Treaty powers to limit their autonomy in tariff matters in the future. As regards the possible conclusion of pacts of non-aggression or of mutual security with other countries, they declared that that was a separate issue which should be discussed, if and when the time came, upon its own merits and not as a corollary to treaty revision.”⁽²⁸⁾

The denunciation of the expiring and unused obligation met no real resistance but the negotiation of the new treaties, with all the equality principles intact, did not seem to be as easy.

As Nai Sanit Charoenrath rightly pointed out to his audience, in international relationships, even more than in associations of any other kind, “it is quite normal for small countries to be called upon to make sacrifices” but he also pointed out that “...there are historical proofs, both in ancient and in modern times, of the fact that in international politics one country cannot become the real friend of another country until it is capable of becoming the real enemy of that country...”⁽²⁹⁾ However, though Pibul as Minister of Defence had tried his hardest to improve the Siamese armed forces, Siamese capability could hardly match the British or the French in this period. Ingeniously, a solution was reached whereby diplomacy was employed to the full extent so that no sacrifice was necessary on the Siamese part, and favourable and equal treaties could be concluded. This was the use of the principle of uniformity which had the effect of playing equally strong Powers against one another.

No sooner had the old treaties been denounced, than the rivalry between Britain and France began to resurface, to the detriment of each. Crosby, being an "old hand" in Siam, represented Britain well and seemed to be sympathetic to the Siamese cause, but it took time for him to convince London to abandon all the superior attitudes of the past.⁽³⁰⁾ This realistic attitude was not matched by his French counterpart. Fearing the loss of control of the situation in Indo-China, added to the successful colonial attitude in Africa, Paris took longer to yield. Understandably, they seemed to have given little time to this "minor" issue while Europe was, more or less, in a state of tension.

Their rivalry in Siam, too, was interesting. The economic domination by the British was somehow accepted by the French. The French had more influence on the Siamese judiciary system though. But by the end of 1936, the situation was changing. The French position of being challenged was illustrated in Crosby's confidential letter to FO on November 11, 1936, reporting the reception of a letter from Mr Thavenot, the British Judicial Adviser to the Siamese Government, which "confirms the designs of Monsieur Duplatre, the French Judge in Siam, and the French Legation here for obtaining a French monopoly on Siamese legal education in the future."⁽³¹⁾ Crosby soon warned Pridi of this. He wrote to the latter and asked for the Siamese position to be strengthened against the French demands by stating the British wish to have more judicial elements in Siam, thus countering the effect of the French claim.⁽³²⁾ In so doing, Crosby had strengthened Pridi's hand because if the French asked for more advisers, Pridi could say that it was impossible as Crosby had asked for it too.

The rise of Japan was also exploited in Siam's favour. Pridi and Prince Varn told Crosby succinctly that "...when entering into any agreements with foreign governments, Siam could not afford to run the risk of antagonising the Japanese."⁽³³⁾ Apart from blocking any attempt by other Powers from demanding a non-aggression pact as a necessary corollary to the revision of new treaty,⁽³⁴⁾ it also sped up the process of negotiation, as the first Power to agree to the new Treaty was bound to win the heart of the Siamese as being cooperative and sympathetic to them as well. Moreover, it served the purpose of making any power think twice before asking for favourable concessions from the Siamese. This was so because, as far as the principle of uniformity was concerned,

any concession gained would not be favourable any longer, as other Treaty Powers would enjoy the same privilege. To gain Siamese favour, Japan seemed willing to abandon existing privileges and asked for nothing in return. This fitted nicely into the Japanese desire of driving out Western influences to leave “Asia for the Asiatics.” Other Powers, not to be overshadowed by the Japanese, had no choice but to agree in the same manner.

There were also other rivalries between contending Powers in Siam, such as in the spheres of students, teak leases, mining, trade and advisers.⁽³⁵⁾ Suffice it to say here that the Siamese had gained a favourable position in that though everyone wished to drive a hard bargain with the Siamese, they had to be careful not to antagonise other Powers as well as the Siamese. In Crosby’s own words, “it must be admitted that frankness was their (Siamese) best card to play.”⁽³⁶⁾ This, again, showed the position the Siamese stood, by playing the British against the French and other Powers. They merely had to state to one party what the other had asked from them and let the politics of power take its own course. In the end, Crosby noted:

“We do not ask to be preferred above any other country,
but we do undoubtedly ask that no other country shall be
preferred above ourselves.”⁽³⁷⁾

This is, in effect, a restatement of the famous “most favoured nation” clause. In the end, each Power only went on to assure itself of not being overshadowed by other Powers.

Another factor that arose from such rivalry and contributed to the successful negotiation was the kudos of being the first country to agree. The Siamese played this well once again. Seeing that Britain was the real power in Siam at the time, this privilege, if accorded to the British, would only prove favourable to their cause. If Britain refused to cooperate, many difficulties, in every direction, could be expected. This was, by no means, the bait, but it gave a certain psychological gain for the British if they could take this kudos. Convinced, as Crosby was, that as the nationalist feeling in Siam was at such a height, Britain was in no way able to stop it, this gain appeared to be more important than it actually was. Crosby was able to recommend to the FO to accept and sign a new treaty before the French and the Japanese did so. The importance attached to this was recorded by the *Bangkok Times* on the signing day,

November 23, 1937, that

“... After the signing ceremony, H.E. the British Minister... said that Great Britain was the first country to have extra-territorial rights in Siam, and he was very glad that the Empire he represented was the first country to abolish them.”⁽³⁸⁾

APPRAISAL OF THE POLICY

In retrospect, the success of the treaty revision policy could be attributed to tactical handling and timing of the issue, based upon the relatively calm political climate at home. However, on several occasions, Luang Pibul, the Minister of Defence, and his clique produced calculated speeches and articles that hampered much of the diplomatic accord while negotiations were under way. One such instance was Pibul's speech on Siamese New Year's Eve, March 31, 1937, in which he hypothesised Japan's attempt to seize Siamese territory on its way to attack Singapore.⁽³⁹⁾ Both the Japanese and the British protested to Pridi who, probably, insisted that it was rather an attack on the Assembly so as to attain a larger slice of the budget for the Defence Ministry. A high-ranking officer believed that Pibul did so so that the treaty negotiations would not be smoothly carried out, because of his own jealousy of Pridi.⁽⁴⁰⁾ In the end, Pridi was able to ride the storm by reassuring the foreigners of the true intention of Siamese foreign policy.

However, these hitches were not so damaging to the cause of peace thanks to the far-sighted sympathy of the most important foreign figure in Siam at that moment, Sir Josiah Crosby, who understood Siamese politics well enough not to associate them with the effort of the liberal faction on this occasion. Furthermore, it was Crosby who judged the situation correctly from the beginning. As early as July 14, 1936, he wrote to the FO that

“The Siamese are apparently out for new treaties on the basis of full reciprocity, and in view of present conditions I do not think that it would be expedient (or, indeed, possible) for us to resist such a demand.”⁽⁴¹⁾

Subsequently in a long letter to Mr Eden dated September 3, 1936,

Crosby estimated the mood of Siamese internal politics quite well:

“The members of the People’s Assembly and the public in general,...were set upon securing complete autonomy for Siam in the judicial sphere at as early a date as possible, and the Cabinet were bound to do their utmost to bring about the fulfilment of the wish...”⁽⁴²⁾

In approaching the British first, Crosby reported Pridi’s explanation in the following manner:

“The reason for so thinking, Luang Pradist confided to me, was that the Siamese felt it was we who were best qualified to set a lead to the other countries. Moreover... (in negotiations elsewhere)...our recent attitude went to show that HM’s Government were sympathetically inclined towards the aspirations of small nations...”⁽⁴³⁾

Having made the approach work, Pridi went on to break the psychological barrier, as Crosby described:

“...He added that they were going to ask us, as an act of grace, to surrender immediately the right which still accrues to us of evoking cases in which British nationals are concerned from the Siamese tribunals.”⁽⁴⁴⁾

That privilege would last only four more years and Pridi argued that this would help strengthen the hands of the Siamese government when parliamentary elections came along towards the close of 1937, while it would not affect the British much in any case.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Being a very pragmatic diplomat, Crosby asserted his view in the following manner:

“Yet another, and a highly important, point to consider is that, after all, we shall have no means at our disposal of forcing the Siamese to conclude a fresh Treaty of Commerce and Friendship with us upon terms which are repugnant to themselves. If we do not go to the extent of reasonably meeting their wishes, a position will be reached which the British mercantile community is not likely to view with equanimity...”⁽⁴⁶⁾

As to maintaining British relative influence, Crosby wrote: “Should we be reluctant to do so, Japan (and, doubtless, other Powers as well) will be only too glad to step in and

to rob us of that 'kudos' for being the first to adopt an accompanying attitude towards the Siamese which the latter intend to afford us an opportunity of acquiring. I have, indeed, already reported to you upon a previous occasion that the Japanese have been seeking to do us harm by predicting that, when the moment comes for Treaty revision, we shall prove to be obstinate and unyielding."⁽⁴⁷⁾

As to the French, Crosby reported that they would ask for something in return — some assurances as to the continued employment in the Courts of Justice of Foreign Legal Advisers. Crosby thought that to haggle over the concession would be "worse than futile".⁽⁴⁸⁾ In a subsequent letter of September 14, 1936, Crosby reported that the Italians were trying to bargain for certain customs restrictions on the Siamese and that they had asked Crosby to form a "united front". Crosby however was "careful to refrain from giving... encouragement."⁽⁴⁹⁾

Shrewdly, Crosby summed up his opinion as follows:

"...I take the opportunity, Sir, to place on record, with the greatest respect, my feeling that we shall have much to gain and nothing very material to lose, by consenting to negotiate with the Siamese for a new agreement upon those terms of complete equality which they have in mind. It is certain that they will be satisfied with nothing less... The goodwill of the new Siam means much to us. Let us cultivate that goodwill in as frank and friendly a fashion as possible... there can be no turning back of the clock and national aspirations in Siam,...are going to be satisfied. Let us meet the situation betimes and let us make the best, rather than the worst, of it."⁽⁵⁰⁾

Fortunately for Siam, this view prevailed in London, and it certainly was a major factor in the success of the Siamese Treaty revision policy. Once the agreement with Britain was attained, agreements with other Powers were, more or less, a formality.

TABLE 2: Treaties of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation, 1937

Switzerland	5 November '37	Signed at	Berne
Belgium	5 November '37	"	Bangkok
Sweden	5 November '37	"	Stockholm
Denmark	5 November '37	"	Copenhagen
U.S.A.	13 November '37	"	Bangkok
Norway	15 November '37	"	Oslo
Great Britain	23 November '37	"	Bangkok
Italy	3 December '37	"	Bangkok
France	7 December '37	"	Bangkok
Japan	8 December '37	"	Bangkok
Germany	30 December '37	"	Bangkok

By the end of 1937, all the new treaties had been agreed upon and signed (see Table 2). The main principles of equality and reciprocity had been incorporated. The substance of the new treaties could be divided mainly into three main headings — judicial authority, unilaterally binding clauses, and others.

Judicial extraterritoriality was abolished. Those countries that could abandon the right of evocation through their constitutional processes did so, e.g. Great Britain, Italy, Norway, Denmark and Belgium. Those who could not, gave the assurance of not exercising this right, e.g. France and Sweden. However, all these countries had asked the Siamese to pass the Conflict of Laws Act so that law of the individual's nationality prevailed according to international law. Japan and the USA could comply with neither of the above conditions but could legally abandon the right once the new treaties had been ratified. They duly did so. Germany and Switzerland had had no such right in the first place.

As for unilaterally binding clauses, they were all abolished too. The main issue was the Indo-China border customs on the Mekong River. Reciprocal agreement was reached. The compulsory 25 km custom free zone was removed. Any goods to be taxed for import or export would be named in the list attached to the agreement. This list could be extended if agreed by both sides. The principle of mutual interest was also upheld in these border areas. As for the right of land or estate holding, all Powers

were now treated as most favoured nations, with reciprocity as the basis. However, those who used to enjoy exactly the same right as the local people, namely the British, French and Italians, could still do so conditionally on the absolute right of the Siamese government to do anything it wished for national security reasons. From the date of the treaty, all children born in Siam would be granted Siamese citizenship.

Monopoly and military exactions were now within the Siamese authorities' discretion. During the period between the denunciation and the coming into effect of the new treaties, temporary agreements were made to apply the denounced treaties according to international practice. However, the Siamese government was able to set the maximum period of four months and gave assurance only on issues concerning the government of Siam. The British were the exception here, asking for written assurances, and the government did so, pending the Assembly's approval.⁽⁵¹⁾

As Coast rightly observed,

"The period between November 1937 and March 1938, therefore, saw Siam putting herself in a stronger and more sovereign position in the eyes of the world than she had ever assumed before. Both Britain and France relinquished all special privileges, so that vis-a-vis her Treaty partners, Siam now enjoyed genuinely full and equal rights as an independent country."⁽⁵²⁾

On the whole, the Treaty revision caused little domestic change. It affected only Siamese national prestige and pride. The government had everything to gain and hence everyone joined in to give support. Even Luang Pibul, before the old set of Treaties were denounced, spoke favourably for the policy.⁽⁵³⁾ Without military interference, the coast was clear for policy implementation.

However, believing public participation as the basis of democracy, Pridi tried to arouse the interest of the people. In his broadcast on June 27, 1937, the fifth anniversary of the promulgation of Siam's Provisional Constitution, he rallied the support from his countrymen. Having informed them that he had the goodwill of the Powers, which promised to help Siam regain full independence, he asked his countrymen "to cooperate with me in maintaining unimpaired our friendly relationships with them. As mutual loving kindness or friendship is

necessary among fellow countrymen, so also it is necessary among nations.”⁽⁵⁴⁾ Certainly, the success of this foreign policy had gained him high respect among the Siamese as the true leader of the civilian faction and the champion of Siamese independence.

Internationally, Pridi's status was also enhanced. As Coast noted, “(By 1937) the revised treaties...were all successfully negotiated by Pridi, who by this time had already earned the respect of foreigners as the most mature of Siam's statesmen.”⁽⁵⁵⁾

THE RISE OF THE MILITARY

When the coup to transform Siam into a constitutional regime was first contemplated in Paris, Pibul was there. He was a lieutenant in the Siamese army, studying at Fontainebleau. By the outbreak of the 1932 coup, he was the leader of the junior military faction (the others were the senior military faction and the civilian faction, led by Pahol and Pridi respectively). Pibul became a prominent figure after the 1933 coup against Mano and when he led the government forces to crush the Bovoradej Rebellion in October 1933. After that, apart from Pahol, the senior military leaders went into eclipse. In a memorandum by Vice-Consul Whittington of March 22, 1934, which Dormer sent to the FO, Whittington wrote that the most powerful man in Siam was Luang Pibul because “he has the tanks and all the arms. He was a soldier not a politician.”⁽⁵⁶⁾ The junior clique rose with Pibul as their head. When Pahol resigned, Pibul was his successor as PM. Holding this position as well as that of Army Chief and Minister of Defence, Pibul had the full power of a dictator, if he wished to use it.

Pibul's political ideology and style were interesting. It is evident from the overall pattern of his career that Pibul seemed to enjoy being in fashion. Politically, he did not seem to possess a constant ideology. Being in France at his early age with democratic-leaning friends like Pridi and many of the other coup promoters, he seemed to favour a democratic government to cure the ills in Siam. He stuck with this belief throughout the early 1930s. By 1934, having come to hold enormous power in his hands, his tendency changed somewhat.

The rise of militaristic and economically successful Japan led Pibul to believe that Siam could follow suit if her military might was strong. The rise of Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini bolstered his belief (and probably desire as well) that Siam should be governed likewise, if Siam was to progress in the world. Thus he restyled himself to be as acceptable as possible as the leader of the military clique.

At the same time, he seemed to believe that without mass participation, effective political institutions, or public opinion to influence major political issues, military might would become the decisive factor in settling political conflicts. The monopoly of force and the will to employ it enabled Pibul to dominate the domestic political scene. However, it had to be noted that

“(He was) merely willing to utilise it as the last resort. By and large, he preferred to employ political persuasion, bribery, and nepotism to resolve political conflicts in the favour of his interests.”⁽⁵⁷⁾

Thus Pibul did his best, as Minister of Defence, to ensure that the military forces were supporting him, were stronger than any other sources of power domestically, and were always at his disposal.

In 1934, Pibul began his programme of expanding the armed forces. To justify this, he cited the preservation of Siamese independence, the first of the Six Principles of the People's Party, as the only all-important reason. In May 1936, Pibul wrote in the anniversary issue of *Siam News* to the sense that Siam should be a dictatorial state if it wished to remain strong and independent, which Crosby thought was “indiscreet”.⁽⁵⁸⁾ This tendency and Crosby's fear of its effects on Siam herself and her relationships with democratic countries elsewhere were much in evidence. In 1937, his belief confirmed by international events and the modernisation of the local armed forces, Pibul publicly stated that Siam would advance proportionately as its military advanced. The examples of Italy, Germany and Japan were cited.⁽⁵⁹⁾

In a confidential annual report to the FO, on January 21, 1937, Crosby wrote that

“...The most significant feature to note during the twelve months was the growth in influence of Luang Pibul and the military party at the expense of Luang Pradist and the Liberals...”⁽⁶⁰⁾

Crosby then qualified the above statement in the following manner:

“...The soldiers and sailors under the leadership of L. Pibul remain the virtual masters of the country, and militarist propaganda becomes daily more intensive...The honour and glory of military life are drummed into the heads of school children...the “Yuvachon” or “Siamese Youth” movement (started 1935) has continued to grow throughout the year ...and large numbers of the schoolboys in Bangkok now wear their uniform and undergo military drill. This movement is also being extended to the provinces. The creation of a corps of adult volunteers is likewise under consideration...”⁽⁶¹⁾

To emphasise the importance of the military for the country, Pibul produced a slogan that the country was the home and the soldiers were the fences. To popularise this, military parades and tournaments were organised. Books glorifying soldiers were distributed. The militaristic youth organisations, “Yuvachon,” were, as Crosby noted, instrumental in popularising militaristic attitudes amongst Siamese children.

As for the military institution as such, modern equipment was bought. The Conscription Laws were altered. Salaries and living conditions in the services were improved. Apart from boosting the morale of the officers, it made the services more attractive to potential soldiers. The dubious system of patronage was largely employed by Pibul. His men were moved up, in rank and influence, and even more so during his later premiership.

Another important contribution which Pibul and his faction more or less stirred up (yet again) was the element of nationalism as this reinforced the significance of the military. This will be discussed further in the next section. Before 1939, however, this had surfaced, from time to time, in the form of anti-Western attitudes in Siamese papers. In his confidential letter about the Siamese press to Eden on April 27, 1937, Crosby wrote,

“...Unfortunately, there is only too good reason to believe that these anti-foreign tendencies are being fostered deliberately by the military party and that the Minister of Defence connives at them. Anti-French and anti-British references have even been allowed to appear in the

official monthly organs of the Army and of the Navy...it is they who must be held ultimately responsible for the chauvinistic tone of the press and its growing effect upon public opinion..."⁽⁶²⁾

As to its strength within the cabinet, between 1934 and 1938 the military faction under Pibul had made tremendous ground from being a minority of about one third to a majority of two-thirds.⁽⁶³⁾

Now, we will consider the rise of Japanese influence in Siam.

THE RISE OF JAPANESE INFLUENCE IN SIAM

After the Siamese abstained in the vote to condemn Japan in the League of Nations in 1933, the Japanese tried their best to make a mountain out of a molehill by claiming Siamese support and willingness to further associate with Japan. The rationale of the Siamese was rightly pointed out by Crosby,

"(It) amounted to no more than a timely manifestation of Siam's traditional policy of neutrality in face of international alignments involving those among the great Powers with whom her destinies were closely bound up."⁽⁶⁴⁾

This implied the Siamese recognition of Japan as another power in the region that she could not afford to antagonise, and became the starting point of future relationships between these two Asian countries.

In a wider perspective, an observer suggests that there were two elementary sources of conflict in the Far East. The first was the rivalry for domination over a weak China. The other was the dispute for possession of the more valuable colonies in Southeastern Asia.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Either a strong China and independent states or all colonies under one strong colonialist power seemed to be the precondition of peace. But neither seemed to be the case in the 1930s. It is in this light that Japan's rise had to be looked at.

Although Siam was free from Western colonisation, the Japanese viewed her as a strategic area, hence worthwhile to cultivate some influence. Militarily, to expand southward, Japan found Singapore a really hard "nut to crack". Fortifications at Singapore commanded the passage between India and the Pacific, but could be nullified by a canal

through Siamese territory, across the Isthmus of Kra.⁽⁶⁶⁾ However, the project was suspended and shelved by the Siamese government. Still, the Japanese had never stopped thinking of this strategic territory as shown by Lt Commander Tota Ishimaru who wrote

“With [Siam’s] backing our operations against Singapore would obviously be facilitated. Its alliance with us would bring the people of India out in open revolt and leave Singapore in a precarious position...We must bear in mind that our relations with her have their strategical as well as their commercial side...”⁽⁶⁷⁾

These explain some rational intentions of the Japanese in her contact with the Siamese in the 1930s. The manner of activities and style of announcement of their intention could be seen as only a facade covering up these real intentions. The British knew it and so did the Siamese. Unfortunately, none were in a position to halt these ambitions. It is, however, interesting to see how the Japanese attempted to accomplish their wishes and how their wishes affected Siamese politics and foreign relations during this period.

Two factors that chiefly contributed to the closer relations between Siam and Japan were trade and Asianness. Commercially, her cheap commodities began to capture an ever-increasing proportion of Siamese trade and finance.⁽⁶⁸⁾ But, as Vice-Consul Adams of the British Legation noted in 1934, Japan’s comparative advantage in terms of prices applied not only to merchandise but also to other aspects as well. Tokyo was ready to sell anything at a lower price: experts, technical advisers, arms and even education in Japan.⁽⁶⁹⁾ The Japanese also tried to hammer home the growing consciousness among the Siamese of their Asiatic origins and of their country’s position as an oriental state. This point gave the Japanese another favourable standing in relation to the West. However, Crosby thought that in the long run the degree of intimacy between Japan and Siam would be checked because “the differences between the two peoples in race, language, temperament and outlook are in my opinion too great for that.”⁽⁷⁰⁾

From 1934 onwards, Japanese influence followed her increasing exports to Siam, which had advanced by leaps and bounds, superseding all other countries except the British Empire. Japan tried her best to impress the Siamese public. Various missions were sent to Siam with

economic, cultural, and after a few years, military objectives. Influential sectors of Siam were invited to visit Japan. Affordable tours were promoted. The Japanese press published some Siamese news items. Japanese naval and military attaches resided in Bangkok while no other nations had this same prominence, flattering some members of the Siamese ruling circles who viewed it as showing the importance the Japanese attached to Siam.⁽⁷¹⁾ The Japanese attitude was summed up well by their Ambassador-at-large, H.E. Mr H. Matsushima, on his visit to Siam:

“The Japanese Government’s viewpoint is shared by the Japanese people themselves, who look forward to such a cordial friendship between our two countries...We usually take it for granted that the friendship of countries is based on economics on a large measure, but we forget that a good understanding is also an important means to foster progress and advancement.”⁽⁷²⁾

However, Crosby looked at this from a critical angle in his confidential letter of November 8, 1935, to the FO in which he reported:

“In my view, any real threat to our interests is to be feared rather, from the side of the Japanese, who are only too glad to go fishing in the troubled waters of post-revolutionary Siam, and it is my belief that, as regards the present tendency to rapprochement with the Siamese, it is they who have gone more than half-way. It seems reasonable to suppose that, unless and until the star of Japan becomes definitely in the ascendant in Southeast Asia, the Siamese will hesitate to go the length of hitching their national waggon to it.”⁽⁷³⁾

By predicting that London would become difficult when time came to negotiate a new Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Siam, the Japanese started the offensive against the British. Being put into a defensive position, the British had to concede many points, though Crosby made it look smooth and willing. Certainly the Siamese were the happiest of the three. It must be said though that the Siamese should have felt grateful to the Japanese in this sense because had they not made any offensive move, it was possible that the European Powers, and probably the Japanese in the end as well, could unite and bargain successfully

against the Siamese as suggested by the Italians, mentioned earlier. The Japanese had, true to form, seized the opportunity well, in line with their slogan "Asia for the Asiatics."

"Asia for the Asiatics" was certainly acceptable to any Asian, but at the same time something more in line with "Asia for the Japanese" was actually practised. Towards the end of 1936, airmen under the auspices of the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* paid a visit to Siam. When it arrived the aircraft flew around the precincts of the aerodrome in a manner which aroused the suspicions of a British subject who was the traffic manager of the Aerial Transport Company of Siam. He and his crew inspected the machine and found a well hidden automatic mapping camera, complete except for the film pack, plus a complete bomb release apparatus concealed behind the rear cockpit, and many other gadgets. The machine was thus a military one in disguise. This was reported to the Director of the Royal Aeronautic Service, who passed the news on to the Siamese government. But no action was taken, and the whole incident, which could legitimately have discredited the Japanese, was played down.⁽⁷⁴⁾ This showed the increasing fear the Siamese had to live with at the time while they dared not antagonise any neighbouring powers. The event prompted Crosby to write in his Annual Report on January 21, 1937, that

“(The Siamese) admire the Japanese for their commercial success and fear them for their military strength, but they despise them in their hearts for their blundering diplomacy and their total inability to appreciate any point of view but their own.”⁽⁷⁵⁾

However, Crosby was a diplomat and tended to have more contact with civilians, who talked the same language, than with the military men, who did not. Siamese civilian politicians obviously associated Japanese military might with the growing Siamese military domination of internal politics. Unlike Crosby, Siamese civilians despised the Japanese for their militaristic posture rather than their blundering diplomacy, which Crosby cared so much about. Thus, while Japanese popularity in Siam seemed to be diminishing, as Crosby noted above, it was, probably, only true outside the Siamese military circle.

Of the Siamese cabinet, Crosby reported military domination, and added that

“Unfavourable references to Germany and Italy in the vernacular journals are infrequent. Allusions to Japan are in general flattering, but the attitude of the military party towards her is nonetheless a guarded one. In the last resort they fear her... Their avowed object is to preserve their neutrality in the case of a war between Japan and Britain...”⁽⁷⁶⁾

With the irredentist attitude growing in Siam, which he later mentioned, Crosby's report was rather too hopeful. Crosby's view of the situation (if it was clear in the first place i.e., the main Siamese personalities knew their own stand) was probably further distorted because every leading Siamese personality (even Pibul) who confided in him said that in case of war or Japanese aggression, they would side with the British. Towards the end of 1938, the same favourable tone was evident in various reports to the FO.⁽⁷⁷⁾

Crosby tried to point out that it was a common mistake to identify anti-Western feeling in Siam with Siamese sympathy for Japan. This was right to the extent where “real patriotic Siamese” were concerned. They feared the Japanese (as mentioned earlier) even more after the Japanese latest offensive in Southern China in 1937. Crosby once wrote that

“Thoughtful Siamese realise that if Japan were to become mistress of Southeastern Asia Siam would become a second Manchukuo; and they are also bewildered by attitude of Britain and France in standing aside in China as raised by Luang Pradist who also believed that US help is needed or else Britain and France could not stand in Japanese way.”⁽⁷⁸⁾

By 1938, the Siamese armed forces were equipped with some Japanese weapons. Many seaplanes, submarines and gunboats had been ordered from Japan; they were to be manned by officers who had received special training at facilities in Japan.⁽⁷⁹⁾ The FO, at long last, recommended an increase of facilities in Britain for Siamese officers to counteract the advantage enjoyed by the Japanese,⁽⁸⁰⁾ but it was a little too late.

Outside the military circle, the Japanese did not get all their way. For example, there was connivance between Siamese and Western firms

to secure for two Belgian firms a contract for railway construction in Siam. The Japanese bid the lowest but their rivals tendered a revised lower bid to secure the deal. Phya Srishtikar Banchong, the Chief Mechanical Engineer, who was President of the Siamese-Japanese Association, was also relieved of his good office in the process.⁽⁸¹⁾ The vernacular papers also did attack the Japanese from time to time. For instance, *Lak Muang* of July 14, 1938, published an article "The Pro-Japanese Mania" exhorting the Siamese people not to blindly follow the example of Japan, or of any other country for that matter, and the article emphasised the differences between the Siamese and Japanese peoples as regards conditions of living, history, character and culture. *The Bangkok Times* of July 29, 1937, attacked Japanese penetration in cotton farming. This was quite a change from 1935-1937 when Coast observed that "the Siamese press was gradually coming to feature more and more material proclaiming the desirability of Siamese-Japanese friendship."⁽⁸²⁾

Thus, when talking about Siamese relationship with any other country, and Japan in particular, one should always bear in mind, the division between the military led by Pibul and the liberals led by Pridi. Although the rise to power of Japan was so overwhelming that it was impossible to avoid involvement, the manner and effects adopted by these groups were markedly different. This fits in well with the notion of competing elites in the decision-making model.

Within the Siamese military, the Japanese warmongers had more or less created a favourable impression. Their Naval and Military Attaches in Bangkok had taken many opportunities to impress upon influential personnel in the military establishment and the cabinet the mighty war potential of Japan and also to inflame their minds against Europeans and Americans, whom they characterised as "intruders upon the continent of Asia."⁽⁸³⁾ Under the "Asia for the Asiatics" banner, they had, more or less, brought Siam over to their camp militarily.

With the civilians, more resistance was made to Japanese overlordship. Although economically Siam was in no position to stop the Japanese growing influence through "trade", in other fields Japan did not make the same headway. An observer rightly commented at the end of 1938 that

"(Siamese policy is) double-edged, a kind of wary friend-

liness-fear of Japanese aggression combined with cautious attempt to buy it off... Yet to state that Japan dominates Siamese policy would be an exaggeration.”⁽⁸⁴⁾

This will be partly explained below.

NATIONALISM

Nationalism has always been present in Siam. It can be related to every state which upholds its own independence and sovereignty to its utmost. From the time of Siam's opening up to Western influence onwards, Siamese leaders had been concerned with the preservation of its traditional culture and political independence even to the detriment of its territorial loss. Since then, efforts had been made to remove the restrictions placed by foreign powers and, as seen earlier, all these had been successfully negotiated by the end of 1937, but nationalism did not disappear with them.

Once political and financial independence was achieved, nationalism asserted itself in other spheres within the society, in the form of economic and militaristic assertiveness. The first was a response to foreign domination in the economic field. The latter was more of a nation-building cult, hammered home by the dominant group in the armed forces, culminating in the “pan-Thai” or “irredentist” movement, which will be discussed in the next chapter. The following section will deal mainly with the development and the results of these two factors.

Crosby observed, in his book, that

“Not only were the ‘promoters’ (of the 1932 Revolution) one and all of them determined that Siamese should be masters in their own house vis-a-vis the other Powers, but they were equally set upon ensuring that the national life should be lived primarily for the advantage of the Siamese people and not in such a way as to benefit unduly and foreign sections of the population.”⁽⁸⁵⁾

Economic well-being was one of the six principles set out after the 1932 coup. At that time, according to Carl Zimmerman's survey, 95 per cent of the country's businesses were in foreign hands.⁽⁸⁶⁾ Public debt, albeit small and harmless, was held in Great Britain. Rice and fishing

industries were in Chinese hands. Control of other exports, teak and tin, was shared by the Europeans and the Chinese. The usual pattern was for the Europeans to supply capital and technology and the Chinese, the labour and control of the retail market. To become her own economic master, Siam had to adjust her relationship with the Europeans as well as the Chinese. Furthermore, she had to counter the traditional attitude of apathy among the Siamese who regarded disapprovingly any but administrative employment.⁽⁸⁷⁾

Self-sufficiency was the answer as the effects of world depression were felt in Siam. Production of other foodstuffs such as sugar, animal husbandry, and home vegetables was encouraged. Import-substituted basic industries were attempted to reduce currency outflow and dependency, e.g. cotton and silk to replace imported textiles. Semi-industrialisation, based on agricultural products, was introduced by government agents, with native capital and labour. The cooperative movement was encouraged as it had the psychological advantage of encouraging thrift and group action could help in building up national capital to be invested locally and nationally. The government tried hard to relieve the heavily indebted peasantry who came to such a position through lack of capital for recurring agricultural, social and fiscal needs, and partly through long-standing habit and inertia. All of these factors had been ably exploited by the Chinese.⁽⁸⁸⁾ Pridi's draft economic plan, which was unfortunately for the Siamese too advanced for its time and thus rejected by Mano's government in 1933, was really aimed at gradually rearranging the control of basic economic resources so that ultimately the Siamese government could have full control. Therefore a good opportunity was missed.

The government steadfastly held the Chinese responsible for the indebtedness and poverty of peasants in Siam. In 1935, Dr James Andrews of Harvard University made the second rural economic survey of Siam in which he informed the government that the alleged profiteering role of the Chinese middlemen had been greatly exaggerated.⁽⁸⁹⁾ There was only a negative response from the government and the Chinese remained the main scapegoat.

The inflow of Chinese immigrants, after female immigration began during the First World War, was felt economically as well as politically. A growth of Siamese nationalism soon followed, increas-

ingly criticising the economic hold of the Chinese as a parasitic drain on the resources of the country and as a political danger to the regime.⁽⁹⁰⁾ A series of increasingly stringent anti-Chinese measures to protect and develop Siamese abilities were adopted, starting with regulations requiring health, financial and literacy qualifications from the immigrants in 1931. The new policy checked the number of immigrants considerably.

However, by 1938, economic nationalism was felt but was not vigorously implemented officially or otherwise. The drive in this form of nationalism did not take place until Pridi became the Minister of Finance in 1939, which will be described in the next chapter. Meanwhile, the nation-building elements of nationalism, which had well been drummed up in plays and songs by and since King Vajiravudh (Rama VI), began to exert itself.

As H.D. Cohen asserts,

“Nationalism has both an internal and external connotation: internally, it applies to the feeling of involvement and attachment to a particular state; externally, it involves the ideology of a political movement dedicated to the establishment of an independent and sovereign state.”⁽⁹¹⁾

Once the Siamese house was in order, a nation-building element of nationalism pushed itself to the fore: militaristic nationalism. As the purely militaristic assertiveness within Siamese politics has been discussed earlier, I shall now talk about the general aspects of this nationalism with emphasis on its externally oriented features.

The Siamese had always resented the losses suffered at the hands of Western imperialists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but they had to be content since they had no power to do anything about it. Gradually, as the tide turned against the doctrine of colonialism, Siam began to ponder its case anew. After the First World War, her status was recognised and she became a founding member of the League of Nations. However, any realistic claim of nationalism in the external sphere only came from the Siamese government alone and little was known about the feelings of the people in this matter.

From the advent of the constitutional regime in 1932, nationalism was drummed up outside the ruling circles too. One Dr Joti Kumbandh formed a nationalistic movement whose two principal aims were “opposition to those who do not respect the nation and who recognise those of

other nationalities and tongues to be better than their own people” and “constantly to try and remind foreigners to keep in mind that they are seeking shelter in this country as guests.”⁽⁹²⁾ The movement was not lacking in followers. Phya Pahol had to ask Dr Joti to abandon it towards the end of 1933 as it created anti-European feelings and, thus, too much tension while the new administration already had a handful to cope with.

Dr Joti's case was not an isolated incident though. The feeling seemed to have been widespread, at least among the Siamese who could read. This was well illustrated in a local paper *Thai Num*, September 9, 1933, after the Japanese had been making a mountain out of a molehill over Siam's abstention over the Lytton Report. Fear of the Powers was played down, as the paper put it:

“The Siamese have far too long been apprehensive to the colonial policy and imperialistic designs of the Great Powers... today, thanks to the mutual fears of the Great Powers interference with the internal affairs of small countries, and territory-grabbing are difficult to accomplish...”⁽⁹³⁾

As the press was, more or less, under the control of the ruling elites, this could be interpreted as a signal of Siamese real independence and the beginning of a challenge to external powers.

By early 1934, this challenge to the Western colonialists had shaped itself into the “Pan-Thai” strategy. It aimed at the incorporation within the Siamese Kingdom of all those territories whose peoples are of Thai extraction.⁽⁹⁴⁾ Outside Siam, these peoples could be found in the Laos Protectorate of French Indo-China, the (British) Shan States of Burma, and even some in Cambodia and China. As the name itself suggests, the movement was based on the claim that “all countries populated by the Thais are racial brother of the home Thais...(and) must be united under the leadership of Bangkok...It disregards the political entities which in the past were free from feudal obligations to the king of Thailand.”⁽⁹⁵⁾

In 1935, the “Pan-Thai” attitude had emerged openly even in the Assembly,⁽⁹⁶⁾ in which a representative of Lampang, a northern province, asked “if it was possible to seek the assistance of the League of Nations for the return of certain territories lost by the country in the past.” Although the premier replied that such could not be done, it showed the

anxiety in the Siamese ruling circles in response to this “Pan-Thai” feeling. However, the more educated class tried to be more realistic by leading the way in discarding the ambiguously wide “Pan-Thai” strategy and replacing it with a narrower “irredentist” movement, claiming only for those areas which used to be within the Siamese Kingdom at one time or another.

It did not take long for irredentist nationalism to increase its momentum. In 1936, the Survey Department of the Ministry of Defence drew up a map showing the former boundaries of Siam at the beginning of the Bangkok era (circa 1786). 10,000 copies were distributed to schools and public institutions. Some were sold.⁽⁹⁷⁾ The Survey Department argued that the maps were for the study of history.

In April 1937, Pibul delivered a speech, citing the examples of Italy, Japan and Germany that “military strength alone could enable a country to realise its historic destiny.”⁽⁹⁸⁾ Apart from encouraging irredentist nationalism, Pibul used it to enhance the mass support for expanding the military too.

As his aide, Pibul had a civilian of high capability, Luang Vichitr Vadhakarn, the Director General of the Department of Fine Arts and Minister without portfolio. He was a fanatic nationalist who had written many nationalistic songs and plays, usually emphasising “Thaism” among the peoples of Thai race. Common culture and racial origins as well as the love of the motherland were apparent in his themes. Crosby once said that Vichitr “has lately come out as a pocket Dr Goebbels.”⁽⁹⁹⁾

Towards the end of 1938, Crosby wrote an appraisal of the Siamese situation with nationalism as one of the topics. He observed that the spirit of nationalism had developed greatly since the 1932 coup. With some, especially the military, this had taken the shape of an irredentist movement. Crosby viewed this transition as

“the product of the time, born of Siamese vainglory, of the desire to emulate the Japanese and of the thought, if not the hope, that France and Britain may one day become so entangled in a European war that their hold upon their Far-Eastern possessions will be weakened fatally...”⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

This view was endorsed by another writer who described Pibul in the following manner:

“A position of extreme nationalism and negative reaction

to the West...The model he took was Japan which was then showing increasing signs of military strength and nationalistic tendencies..."⁽¹⁰¹⁾

When Pibul became Prime Minister at the end of 1938, the writing was on the wall. Nationalism was driven and led according to Pibul's militaristically trained attitude. The country's prestige and position became of utmost importance. Strong armed forces were prepared. While Pridi was busy legislating for economic nationalism, Vichitr manipulated Pibul's position and in June 1939 had the country's name changed to "Thailand", or the "land of the Thais." The word "Thai" was substituted on all occasions for "Siamese". This gave a concrete basis for claiming that many Thais, speaking a Thai language and possessing a Thai culture, should not be living outside Thailand under oppressive foreign rule. Along with this "Pan-Thaism" went another expansionist movement that attempted to justify itself on historical grounds, the irredentist movement.⁽¹⁰²⁾ This was carried on from strength to strength until a crisis arose against the French in Indo-China in 1940.

Nationalism was appropriate after the 1932 coup. Its momentum helped Siam set its own house in order. It united the Siamese in acquiring full sovereignty through the 1937 series of treaties with foreign powers. Once these had been achieved, nationalism was exploited by Pibul and his militaristic ideas. Like fire, nationalism can be a good servant but a bad master. So far, nationalism had been beneficial to the Siamese causes up to 1939, internally as well as externally.



CHAPTER FIVE

PIBUL'S DOMINATION OF THAI POLITICS

As in previous chapters, this one will be structured as follows: domestic politics; external events that have effects on the country's outlook, attitude and external environment; and salient issues that were predominant in Thai foreign policy of the time, leading to bilateral relationships between Thailand and the powers. This chapter roughly covers the period 1939-1940.

INTERNAL POLITICS

On December 20, 1938, Colonel Pibul announced his first Council of Ministers (Cabinet). Pibul also held the portfolios of Defence and Interior. Other notable Ministers were Pridi (Finance), Commander Luang Sinthu Songkhamchai RN (Public Instruction), Khuang Aphaiwongse (Public Instruction, Deputy), Police-Colonel Luang Adul Detcharas (Interior, Deputy), Commander Luang Thamrong Navasvasdi, RN (Justice), Colonel Phra Boriphan Yuthakit (Economic Affairs), and Nai Thawee Bunyaket (Secretary to the Council). Apparently there were only 10 civilians out of the 26 positions available in the Council.⁽¹⁾

According to Pridi, the formation of the cabinet was not without difficulty. At first, Pridi, Phya Chaiyos and Chao Phya Sri Thamthibes were assigned to maintain their portfolios of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Justice, respectively. But when Phya Chaiyos learned of the

composition of the entire Council, he thought that the military would dominate it and felt uneasy. In the end, he declined the post. Pibul was unable to find any able replacement and had to turn to Pridi for help. As the treaty revision was fulfilled, Pridi found this new challenge worthwhile and accepted the post to help out his friend.⁽²⁾ Thus Chao Phya Sri Thammathibes became Minister of Foreign Affairs for a while, while Luang Thamrong took over the portfolio of Justice.

We shall now turn our attention to how Pibul dealt with his political enemies, the Assembly, the Royal Family, and the Siamese economy to set the scene for the War years.

POLITICAL EXECUTIONS

Pibul's reign did not start very smoothly. After an earlier attempt on his life, on November 9, 1938, another one was made by his own valet. The accounts of his survival varied.⁽³⁾ Some believed it might have been exaggerated to enhance popular sympathy for Pibul and further his political ambitions. For example, Prince Chula Chakrabongse shared this cynical view.⁽⁴⁾

On becoming the premier, Pibul realised that the danger to his life, and, allegedly, to other members of the People's Party, had not died down. The above attempts and other lesser known ones led to many arrests, with some killed whilst resisting, in January 1939, both in Bangkok and the provinces.⁽⁵⁾ The press was severely censored for any comments or interpretations. Despite this, the news of an abortive conspiracy led by Phya Song Suradej to restore ex-King Prajadhipok or the Prince of Nakornsawan to the throne leaked out to the world press.⁽⁶⁾ Luang Adul Detcharas, the Chief of Police, "claimed to have unearthed a great royalist plot, and insisted that an example must be made if he was to guarantee the future safety of the government officials."⁽⁷⁾

On February 2, 1939, the Special Courts Bill was passed through all its stages in a single afternoon, though not unchallenged in the Assembly. Among those to be tried were an elected representative of Bangkok and two nominated members of the Assembly. Significantly, in guiding this Act through, Thamrong, the Minister of Justice, made it clear that being Special Courts, the onus was on the Ministry of Defence,

and the trial procedure would be under martial law as it was in 1933 for Prince Bovoradej's Rebellion trial and another plot uncovered in 1935.⁽⁸⁾

One of the two nominated members was Phra Sitthi Ruangdejpol, an army officer, who was a very close associate of Phya Song. There were also many other senior officers including Lieutenant General Phya Thephasdin, the leader of the Siamese Expeditionary Force in WW I, and a few more colonels.⁽⁹⁾ This purge could be seen as the imposition of Pibul's dominance on the army. Given time, as premier, Pibul could have done it gradually, but as Crosby noted, the situation was acute, and he had to act swiftly. Allegedly, Phya Song himself made the first move. He and some other officers came down from the Chiangmai military training school to Rajburi, west of Bangkok, and stayed with the battalion commander.⁽¹⁰⁾ This posed a danger to the People's Party as Phya Song was known to have a grudge against them since he was not well rewarded after the 1932 success of the coup that he plotted militarily. Furthermore, it was known that Phya Song gained some support from the battalions around Bangkok. Hence Pibul and Adul moved swiftly and Phya Song was exiled to Indo-China.

The trial went on secretly for almost a whole year. Not much of the details were known to the public. The accuracy of existing published accounts is of debatable quality.⁽¹¹⁾ On November 20, 1939, the Special Courts read out the verdicts. Six were acquitted. Twenty one were to be executed. Of these 21, 3 had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment instead. They were Phya Thephasdin, Prince Rangsit of Chainat, and Colonel Luang Chamnan Yuthasilp, a member of the People's Party. A further twenty-odd were condemned to life imprisonment. In early December, Phra Sitthi Ruangdejphol, and the other 17 condemned prisoners were executed,⁽¹²⁾ the first political executions in the constitutional period.

This episode demonstrated very well that Pibul's government would not tolerate any threat to its security or stability at all. It was prepared to act as swiftly and harshly as it saw fit. At the same time, there were other important competing elites that Pibul had to deal with, namely, the Assembly, with many liberal members, and the Royal Family, which still held considerable influence.

THE ASSEMBLY

The governments of Pahol and Pibul had troubles with only the elected representatives because they appointed the nominated ones. Each category comprised half the members of the Assembly. In 1938, when Vichitr, a Minister in the State Council, gave a lecture elsewhere, comparing the Chinese in Siam to the Jews in Germany, the question was raised in the Assembly. The government dissociated itself from Vichitr's view. However, an elected representative, Nai Liang Chaiyakarn, a main critic, was ducked in the pond by a number of the appointed members. Subsequently, the majority of elected members retaliated by boycotting the session.⁽¹³⁾

In September 1938, a motion to amend the budget procedure was tabled. It proposed that full details of the budget be presented for thorough scrutiny. This was opposed by the Ministry of Finance and the cabinet. The motion was, however, passed by 45 to 31 out of the total membership of 183. Instead of resigning, Pahol decided to dissolve the Assembly.⁽¹⁴⁾ Most of the government's critics were re-elected to the new Assembly; Pibul became Prime Minister. In a vote of confidence for Pibul's government on Christmas Day 1938, the Assembly criticised the premier for retaining the portfolios of Defence and Interior as well. The vote was passed with only two dissenting voices, but almost 30 abstained.⁽¹⁵⁾

When the Special Courts Bill was introduced on February 2, 1939, the elected members made their presence felt yet again. In the debate, the representatives from the northern and northeastern constituencies questioned its necessity. They argued that the existing three-tiered system of courts and its procedure were adequate and just. If the new bill was passed, people in general would lose faith in the existing system. But it was passed anyway by 101 to 39 votes.⁽¹⁶⁾ Although an elected member from Bangkok was the victim of this Special Courts, little was recorded or debated over in the Assembly, probably because it was prohibited by the administration.

Meanwhile, a series of financial and economic measures streamed through the Assembly during this session, thanks to the energetic efforts of Pridi and Phra Boriphan, the two ministers responsible for these issues. The session was adjourned in October and was told that the

December session would not be held. Allegedly, Pibul feared its criticism since the verdict of the Special Courts would be announced around that time. As special thanks to the Assembly members for their cooperation, Pibul held a party for them at his residence.⁽¹⁷⁾ He also rewarded them for their compliance with a salary increase at the end of 1939.⁽¹⁸⁾

In March 1940, Crosby wrote a confidential letter to the FO describing the general situation in Thailand. The end of the ten-year transitional period of the constitution would come soon. He was hopeful that universal suffrage of all MPs might lead to liberal dominance led by Pridi. However, he doubted whether the military would allow it.⁽¹⁹⁾ Crosby's doubt was not groundless as Pibul remained uncommitted to such a path. He kept reminding the members and the public of the consideration of, the oft-quoted, peace, stability and security of the country. Pibul's argument was that the majority of the people were still illiterate and thus the country was not ready for full democracy. The opposition, naturally, saw this as yet another attempt to stop the progress towards democracy.

The bill to prolong the transitional ten-year period was passed in its first reading in August 1940. In September, when the second and third readings required a two-thirds majority, as an amendment to the constitution does, the debate was expected to be fierce. But this happened at the time when the irredentist feeling was running high. The demand for the return of the lost territories affected the vociferous northeast constituencies more than the others. In the event, to show their support, the Assembly dropped their opposition to the bill and the transitional period was extended from 1943 for another 10 years.⁽²⁰⁾

D.E. Nuechterlein's passage gives a very apt conclusion to this relationship: "Pibun's attitude towards the assembly was one of tolerance and then of indifference."⁽²¹⁾ But he could not do the same with the Royal Family, which still retained the respect of the people at large. At least, royal consent was still necessary if any legislation was to be passed smoothly. Thus, Pibul had to deal discreetly with this institution.

THE ROYAL FAMILY

Ex-King Prajadhipok and many other members of the Royal Family were regarded throughout as thorns to the constitutional government, at least by Pibul's supporters. Among those arrested and sentenced in the 1939 plot was Prince Rangsit of Chainat, a son of King Chulalongkorn. On hearing about the purge, he returned to Bangkok from the provinces and was promptly arrested at Hualampong, the central railway station.⁽²²⁾ Another prince later claimed that Pibul did so to forewarn others that he would deal with everyone as an equal, royal prince or otherwise.⁽²³⁾ The reason for this detention has never been clear, even in terms of the sentence handed down, beyond the accusation that he had been conspiring against the government. Queen Ramphaiphanni, consort of ex-King Prajadhipok, once stated in an interview that Prince Rangsit "went to visit the king and he was also charged with conspiring with the king."⁽²⁴⁾ This may be substantiated a little further.

Being a favourite uncle of the young King Ananda and having visited ex-King Prajadhipok, Prince Rangsit was suspected by the government, notwithstanding his widely known interest in art and "never giving the least sign that he was interested in politics."⁽²⁵⁾ The two persons were linked in the only evidence the search of his house produced — correspondence about King Ananda's education. Some were from ex-King Prajadhipok. These became evidence used against Prince Rangsit, whatever their contents.⁽²⁶⁾ On his sentence to life-imprisonment, the Princess Mother, on behalf of King Ananda, appealed from Switzerland that he be banished rather than kept as a criminal all his life, but this appeal was rejected. It has been claimed that King Ananda nearly abdicated for this.⁽²⁷⁾ There is no record of ex-King Prajadhipok's intervention in this sentence. In an interview in London, he "expressed no surprise at these periodic upheavals in Siam; and in reply to a direct question said that the Siamese people had never expressed to him a wish for his return."⁽²⁸⁾ So it seems that he had not given up hope of returning, if the people wished.

Later on, ex-King Prajadhipok was accused of asserting his political influence upon Siamese students studying in England where he resided. Prince Varn, the adviser to the MFA, told Crosby in March 1939,

about the government's concern. He volunteered that unless something was done to curb this or expel the ex-King, no Siamese would be allowed to study in England, especially the young King Ananda, in the near future. Assurances were given and the matter was left silent.⁽²⁹⁾

A few months later, Pibul's government changed its tactics towards the ex-King. They sued him and his queen for having wrongfully transferred 6,250,000 ticals (about 11 ticals to £1) of Crown Property abroad. Furthermore, their pensions were withdrawn, and photographs of the Royal Family were removed from public buildings.⁽³⁰⁾ His widowed-consort later explained that the stated amount of Crown Property had been taken with them earlier when they left for England for the last time. She gave an account that he had written a letter instructing that the fund should be drawn from his private estate of Sukothai Palace to repay for the amount he withdrew from the Crown Property while he was abroad. She alleged that by the time the dispute turned into a court wrangle, the compensation document could not be found. The ex-King proposed returning to fight the case or staying in India to instruct his defence but this was refused by the government. In the end the government won the case, which was stopped at the lowest court.⁽³¹⁾

On May 1, 1941, ex-King Prajadhipok died at his home in Virginia Water, England. By that time, the ex-King's influence over his subjects was on the wane as the government of Pibul had asserted its authority as the only master of Thailand. From then on, the Royal Family never again constituted a real threat to the supremacy of the government.

It seems appropriate to note here that the governments had not excluded all Royal Family members from cooperating with them nor had they all been despised for being born in the higher class. For instance, Prince Varn, a grandson of King Mongkut, had always been prominent in his capacity as Adviser to the Prime Minister as well as to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was a favourite to every military Prime Minister until his death, and held many ministerial posts in his career. However, most members of the Royal Family turned to the academic sphere, and/or pursued private enterprises rather than becoming civil servants.

THE ECONOMY

On becoming Minister of Finance, Pridi applied all his energy and ability in pursuing the reform needed in his ministry, as he had done in his previous posts. Pridi still upheld the ideals that he professed in the 1933 draft of the national economic policy, a policy paper that had been used as a pretext to banish Pridi temporarily from Siam. He now, however, modified his previous proposals into a much less radical form and made it a practical drive for the prosperity of the country. Though he lived up to his own tag of being an “agrarian socialist”,⁽³²⁾ Crosby noted that “it is nationalism, and not socialism, which is at the back of these schemes.”⁽³³⁾

The reform of the country's fiscal system, under Pridi, started by the abolition or reduction of many of the direct imposts, like the poll tax, paddy land and other agricultural yield taxes, to help the peasants who formed the backbone of the country. To offset the loss of these revenues and thus to maintain the stability of the currency, he toiled laboriously at revolutionising the whole taxation system, which resulted in the long awaited Revenue Code in the spring of 1939. He also improved the accountability of government departments and succeeded in tracking and taking back the funds allotted by previous budgets that were lying idle in various government departments due to bureaucratic delays.⁽³⁴⁾

Because of his previous investment in the conclusion of new Treaties on the basis of complete autonomy and reciprocity, Pridi was able to increase revenues from foreign trade. He cashed in on its fruits by revising tariffs, by lifting the import duties on whatever contributed to agricultural and industrial development, and by raising the duty on the import of food, alcohol and textiles.⁽³⁵⁾ On the whole, the new Revenue Code now transferred the burden from the peasants to the commercial class. As the Siamese did not deal much in trade, alien traders — Indian, European as well as Chinese — were much affected to the extent that the cry of discrimination, especially by the Chinese, was not uncommon. Thompson summed up the situation in this fashion:

“By a curious coincidence this code now leaves the support of the country's administration very largely in the hands of those best able to bear it — the foreign

community.”⁽³⁶⁾

The drive for economic nationalism was assisted in other quarters of the government too. Phra Boriphan, the Minister of Economic Affairs, and a protégé of Pibul, guided many a bill through the Assembly during this period. For example, the Birds Nest Concession Act of January 1939 cut short the monopoly of a trade handled heretofore by and for the Chinese. Then there were the Salt Act and Tobacco Act in April, creating more or less the same effects, but the Signboard Act was passed largely to allay the irritation of many Siamese who were tired of the ubiquitous Chinese signs that gave Bangkok the appearance of a foreign city.⁽³⁷⁾

Crosby described other activities in the following manner:

“The most notable sign of the times is the prosecution by the Siamese government of their policy of encouraging native industry by the setting up of factories with the aid of state capital for the manufacture of treatment of various products which have hitherto been imported either as raw materials or as fabricated articles...(the govt) also try to monopolise for themselves the sale of suitable articles to the public at large...”⁽³⁸⁾

Sugar, paper, tin, cement, cigarettes, and oil were examples of the former measure, while tobacco, oil and rice represented the latter. For example, in January 1939, the Thai Rice Company was set up by the government, apparently to eliminate the Chinese control of that key industry.⁽³⁹⁾ In August, Crosby reported the registration of a “Thai Niyom Banich Co, Ltd,” which was formed to carry on the business of general merchants, importers and exporters, commission agents and agents for the establishment of handicrafts and industrial concerns. Three out of the eight directors were members of the cabinet, the rest were government officials. Crosby believed that this company was formed with the encouragement of, if not by, the government to pursue its present policy.⁽⁴⁰⁾

In July 1939, the Fuel Oil Act was passed, demanding the existing suppliers — Royal Dutch Shell and American Standard Vacuum — to stock a minimum quantity of their products in Thailand at all times, apparently equivalent to a year’s supply. Although the two companies agreed to supply the Siamese Fuel Oil Department of the Ministry of Defence with certain amounts on condition that they controlled the pricing system (the Department was allowed to sell them to the people at

large), the companies could not comply with the minimum stock requirement and, in August, they closed down their operations completely.

Three major reasons could be assigned for this folding up. Firstly, it was improbable that adequate storage facilities for such a huge quantity of fuel were then available. Secondly, because of the increasing tension in Europe, the two companies were under pressure from their governments not to stock any large amounts of oil in foreign lands lest they fell into enemy's hands. Thirdly, Nai Vanich Pananont, the pro-Japanese Director of the Fuel Oil Department, "was at that very time secretly arranging with Japanese authorities to make Japan the sole supplier of Thailand's fuel."⁽⁴¹⁾ This might have leaked out. Only a few months later, the Fuel Oil Department itself was unable to comply with the said Act as the world price rose enormously and countries began to hoard oil in anticipation of war. Meanwhile, Japan did not supply sufficient amount to the Department, alleging its own need for the war in China. The outbreak of the war in Europe meant that Japanese supplies from the Dutch East Indies were reduced.⁽⁴²⁾ With very little room to manoeuvre, Thailand's oil supplies suffered accordingly. All the wheeling and dealing under the banner of economic nationalism could be self-defeating for the country as a whole if one must rely on another country for necessary resources. This also showed the dawning of an unwise strategy by departing from the age-old policy of playing one (economic) power against another. This trend was, unfortunately, to be further intensified.

In the south of Thailand, the hunt for tin and rubber persisted. Even there, for the government, the control of both raw materials was not entirely in its hands. Rubber plantations were largely financed by British investors while Chinese labour was predominantly at work. In 1937, Japan began to invest in this sector through its South Seas Enterprise, Inc, to procure strategic raw materials.⁽⁴³⁾ Although the amount produced in Thailand accounted for about 2% of world production in 1940, both the British and the Japanese found it advantageous to obtain this in order to cut off the other's supply, rather than for its own necessity.

As for tin, by 1940 British and Australian firms held a very large share of the Thai product, including the only smelting plants nearby in Malaya. In 1940, the Thais set up their own smelter to secure economic independence, to be free of price control by the British, and to sell some

products to America in order to obtain income in dollars. The British were in no position to stop this venture, as they feared anti-British feelings might cause the Thais to switch all their tin production elsewhere — worst of all, to Japan.⁽⁴⁴⁾ This was not groundless because as early as 1936 the Japanese Mitsubishi Shoji Zaibatsu had already begun operating tin mines in Thailand.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Towards the close of 1939, Crosby also reported attempts by the Japanese to acquire an economic footing in the Thai portion of the Malay Peninsula.⁽⁴⁶⁾ As it was, in 1940, the Anglo-American side controlled two-thirds of tin products from Thailand, the rest were competed for in the open market.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Financially, Thailand was also influenced by the disturbed state of the currency market. When Europe was going to war in August 1939, Pridi was able to transfer some currency reserves from London to New York without causing alarm to anyone.⁽⁴⁸⁾ This, coupled with the sale of tin to America for dollars, meant that the Thai government was able to spread its riches in various markets. This gave some flexibility and bargaining power too.

On the whole, Thailand managed quite well economically and financially during this period. The government started well by putting its own house in order. Nationalism, in the economic sense, found more footing for the Thais in business, previously dominated by aliens, especially the Chinese. International trade attached with it political implications but the Thais rode the prospective troubles quite well before they occurred by declaring open market for tin and rubber, the only raw materials of note that were produced in the country. Thus, no pretext was available to anyone to disrupt Thai neutrality and independence. Admittedly, the Fuel Oil Department did badly, being in total reliance on the Japanese. But this could be explained by the fact that oil policy was pursued by the pro-Japanese faction of the government.

FOREIGN POLICY OF STRICT NEUTRALITY

Although Pibul himself took on the portfolio of Foreign Affairs when Chao Phya Sri Thammathibes resigned on July 14, 1939, he also appointed Nai Direk Jayanama, a liberal civilian, as his deputy. As Pibul also held other posts, it was usually Direk who entertained heads of

foreign diplomatic missions, for Pibul could hardly find time to do so. This was true for most diplomats but not the Japanese who seldom visited Direk. The Japanese minister preferred to contact Pibul directly or through other persons whom Pibul assigned specially for such a purpose.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Hence, it seems that Direk had, during this period, a firm hand on Thai foreign policy that did not involve Japan.

Within the foreign policy enthusiasts' circle, Pridi was still in the cabinet and Prince Varn was Adviser to the MFA. With Direk, these three leading liberals maintained Thai foreign policy to the utmost benefit of the country, that is, neutrality. With this policy in mind, the declaration of neutrality was contemplated when the world conflict approached its breaking point in Europe in August 1939. Foreign advisers were consulted on the exact concept of neutrality. It was recommended that the government should openly declare that Thailand's neutrality would be based on certain conventions, such as the Hague Convention of 1907, Rules of Air Warfare (1923), the Siamese Royal Decree of August 17, 1914, etc.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Consequently, a draft was prepared. When Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and France and Britain declared war on Germany a few days later, the Siamese government was ready. On September 5, 1939, a Royal Proclamation for the Observance of Neutrality was enacted. The Proclamation stipulated that

"... All Thai authorities and subjects, and all persons residing in Thailand, are ordered and commanded to observe strict and impartial neutrality in and during the said state of war, and to observe the laws of this kingdom, her treaty engagements and the law of nations in respect of neutrality."⁽⁵¹⁾

Thus, when notified of the state of war between Great Britain and France, on the one hand, and Germany, on the other, on September 3, 4 and 9, 1939, respectively, Pibul was able to reply on September 5 and 12 in the following manner:

"I have the honour to state that HM's Government will, during the conflict, observe and fulfil all the rights and duties of Neutral Powers."⁽⁵²⁾

The three European Powers therefore duly recognised and guaranteed Thai neutrality on September 11, 21 and 22 respectively as long as her neutrality was effective.⁽⁵³⁾ Furthermore, the Thai government notified

her posture of neutrality to other countries through their legations in Bangkok.

Internally too, the Thais appeared to be obsessed with this key word — neutrality. For instance, the government set up a committee to consider the duties of Thai neutrality in September 1939 and enjoined the population to behave in a strictly neutral manner according to the Proclamation.⁽⁵⁴⁾ This obsession was observed and reported in a secret September 1939 memorandum by Mr Cleary, the Deputy Director of Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India, in this manner:

“...Since the outbreak of the war, Thailand has developed a neutrality complex to an almost ludicrous degree. All officials have had instructions to say and do nothing that could possibly be construed as sympathising with one side or the other.”⁽⁵⁵⁾

Not only was the topic constantly mentioned in official circles, but also elsewhere. The *Bangkok Times* dated February 29, 1940, gave extensive coverage of a speech by Mr J.W.G. Sparrow (the British Judicial Adviser to the Thai Government) at the Bangkok Rotary Club on the rights of neutral countries.⁽⁵⁶⁾

Up to this point, strict neutrality seemed to be in the mind of most foreign policy-making elements in Thailand. Thai neutrality was proclaimed, notified to and guaranteed by both sides of the conflict in Europe, and was well observed in Thailand itself. This was further confirmed by the signing of non-aggression pacts, which will be dealt with below.

NON-AGGRESSION PACTS, 1940

In his radio broadcast to the Thai people on October 20, 1940, Pibul said that in 1936 Siam had proposed a border redelimitation between Siam and Indo-China with the French while negotiating the Treaty of Friendship and Navigation but the French asked the Siamese to wait until a Treaty with Indo-China was concluded. Long before the Second World War broke out in Europe, the French had then asked for a pact of non-aggression but were refused. The French then asked for an exchange of letters for military non-aggression only, but were again

refused for fear of misunderstanding by other nations. In 1939, when war was imminent, France asked once more. To show the Thai's real love of peace, the government agreed but with a provision for the redelimitation of boundaries according to the rules of international law and justice.⁽⁵⁷⁾

The reason for Siam entering into these pacts could have been simply to maintain her neutral stand. Pibul also stated that he was in favour of Siam entering into pacts of mutual non-aggression with Britain and France as he was worried by French military preparations in Indo-China and he could see no better way of stopping rumours of foreign invasion than by concluding such pacts.⁽⁵⁸⁾ This also served to allay the French suspicion that by changing the name of the country to Thailand⁽⁵⁹⁾ the government had aspired to unite all the Thais under the Bangkok administration.

In October 1939, having decided upon the principle of the pact the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a memorandum to the French Minister to the effect that the government was prepared to conclude a pact but the Indo-China frontier should also be redelimited according to the internationally accepted principle of the *thalweg*. The French government agreed in principle. Having gone that far, the Thai government decided that a pact of the same nature with the British was appropriate. Meanwhile, although Japan had no frontier with Thailand, she was an Axis member. To protect Thailand against suspicion from any side, negotiation with the Japanese was also necessary.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Consequently, a memorandum inviting the British and the Japanese each to conclude a non-aggression agreement was sent to Crosby and Murai, the respective ministers. Thence, the negotiations began, with Prince Varn as the chief Thai negotiator in his capacity as Adviser to the Prime Minister's Office and the MFA.

When Prince Varn began drafting the pacts with representatives from the French and the British governments, some differences were apparent. With the British, there were no border problems as the frontiers had been drawn up according to international law. Hence, the Thais put in a non-attached proposal for a non-aggression pact with Britain, while, with the French, the Thais expected a small redelimitation of frontiers along the Mekong River too.⁽⁶¹⁾ On November 7, 1939, Pibul asked the British to help persuade the French to agree as the territory to be ceded by

the French was useful only to the Thais for sentimental and administrative value, but not to the French.⁽⁶²⁾

Crosby was sympathetic to the Thai cause and duly recommended so. Lepissier (the French Minister) himself also recommended acceptance to his government. But the French Foreign Office saw otherwise and regarded Crosby as “the villain of the piece” as Crosby wrote on December 30, 1939:

“...Apparently, the French Foreign Office either think that I instigated this idea on my own account, or they resent my not having turned it down as soon as it was made to me. Needless to say, I am entirely innocent, and I not only brought the subject up at the insistent request of the Thai Prime Minister but also of Monsieur Lepissier himself, who virtually went down on his knees to me when soliciting my help. The poor man is greatly upset by the trend which things have taken...”⁽⁶³⁾

On the same day, Crosby sent a telegram to the FO reporting his conversation with Prince Varn in the following manner:

“The French Minister had asked that the Pact should not be signed with us before similar agreement had been concluded with France and the Thai government were accordingly waiting for result of my French colleague’s efforts to persuade his government to consent to redelimitation of the frontier...”⁽⁶⁴⁾

Crosby and Prince Varn agreed to set February 1940 as the deadline. Crosby reported that Prince Varn also asked him not to relate their conversation to the French Minister.⁽⁶⁵⁾

This telegram was greeted with caution by the FO in London. Mr Henniker-Major, an officer at the Thai desk, commented that

“...The Thais are quite clearly trying to play the French and ourselves off against each other and if we let them know that we are going to negotiate whether or not agreement is reached with the French one can clearly envisage Prince Varn exerting pressure on the French Minister by informing him that if a favourable decision about the Mekong is not reached by the end of February H.M.G. will negotiate with the Thai Govt. I do not think there is very much

harm in the French being pressed to be reasonable about the Mekong, but it should not, I think, be done in this way..."⁽⁶⁶⁾

Mr Henniker-Major also noted that that the French Minister was the one who asked that no agreement should be concluded with Britain before with France made it look as if the French, and not the Thais, were making agreement with Britain dependent on the redelimitation of the Mekong frontier. However, the fact that Prince Varn asked the French not to be informed of the conversation led to the suspicion that the French Minister might never have said this and that it might only be part of the game of playing the French and the British off against each other.⁽⁶⁷⁾ This was concurred by Mr Ashley-Clarke, the Assistant Head of FE Department, who recommended asking the French government about any objection to Britain signing a pact with Thailand independently. He hypothesised that if the answer was negative "it will mean either that M. Lepissier has gone beyond his instruction (which I think unlikely) or that Prince Varn is not telling the truth (which seems to be quite possible)." And if the answer was affirmative "it at least gives us a *locus standi* for pressing them to be reasonable over the Mekong frontier."⁽⁶⁸⁾

From this evidence, one can deduce that the British found the French government unreasonable not to agree to the redelimitation of the Mekong frontier, but had to avoid a quarrel with their friend and ally, the French. That the Thais were in fact employing the old tactic of playing off the British against the French was realised and later confirmed in a subsequent confidential letter from Crosby, reporting three reasons why Pibul hurried the Pact with the British. They were:

- "1.) in the hope of forcing the hand of the French.
- 2.) he is very anxious to gain 'kudos' both at home and abroad for making Thailand the first country in the Far East to sign a Non-Aggression Pact with another Power, and
- 3.) he is at the same time genuinely desirous of taking a step which will help to stabilise the international situation in this part of the world..."⁽⁶⁹⁾

But, the British were not in a position to reject Pibul's proffered hand either, lest they risked offending him and driving him into a more

intimate friendship with the Japanese, hence making Thailand a jumping board for Japan to attack Malaya and Singapore. Thus, Crosby recommended the conclusion of a Non-Aggression Pact with Thailand for its intrinsic value as well as "to diminish Japanese influence here and to increase our own in proportion."⁽⁷⁰⁾

Towards the end of January 1940, the French FO declared that they did not have strong views on the Pact nor the Mekong redelimitation, since it was a matter for the Ministry of Colonies. However, Mr Chauvel, the Head of the Far Eastern Department of the French FO, made a personal suggestion that if France and Siam failed to reach agreement "HMG might be willing to conclude in their pact a clause to the effect that the pact would cease to operate in the event of hostilities between France and Thailand."⁽⁷¹⁾ Mr Ashley-Clarke replied that the Thais were unlikely to accept it as it would nullify the provisions of notice and termination.⁽⁷²⁾ This was simply refusing the French unofficial proposition as it stood.

As for the Thais, Crosby reported in a telegram dated January 30, 1949, that there had recently been some anti-French and anti-British pamphlets published emphasising the loss of Thai territories in the past years. This might inspire pro-Japanese quarters to oppose the non-aggression pacts. Crosby ended by suggesting a quick signing of the pact.⁽⁷³⁾ Although it was seen in London as an attempt to rush the British, it had its result in Ashley-Clarke's comment that "we should be well advised to proceed with the non-aggression pact as quickly as we can after further consultation with the French."⁽⁷⁴⁾

By the end of February, after more recommendations from Crosby,⁽⁷⁵⁾ the FO in London saw its necessity. This could be seen in a comment by Mr Henniker-Major on February 26, 1940, which reads:

"We are in agreement with Sir Josiah Crosby about the necessity of concluding the pact as soon as possible, but more important is the consideration that there should be no illusion in the minds of the Thais about Anglo-French Solidarity on this question."⁽⁷⁶⁾

In the end, agreement was reached both with France and Great Britain in April 1940.⁽⁷⁷⁾ By then, however, only a month remained before the German invasion of France.

As for the Japanese, there was no progress until Direk told Murai

on April 11, 1940, that negotiations with Britain and France had reached agreement. The Japanese Minister told Direk that, privately, Japan had little interest in it as there was no common frontier with Thailand. Nevertheless he would report to Tokyo.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Japan's unwillingness to adopt a similar pact was further explained by Prince Varn to Crosby in these words:

“One was that they did not wish to offend the Axis Powers by appearing to associate themselves too closely with the Allies, the other was that there was as yet no precedent with the Japanese for a Treaty of Non-Aggression with another country.”⁽⁷⁹⁾

However, Crosby read the game differently. He thought that Japan had recently refused a Thai proposal because they wanted something of a more “definite” nature.⁽⁸⁰⁾

To allay any possible misunderstanding, on April 13, Direk invited the Ministers of Germany, Italy and the USA to call upon him. He confided to them the process of the negotiations of the non-aggression pacts with Britain, France and Japan and showed them the copies of the memoranda as well as the drafts. He obtained from these representatives an assurance that they quite understood the intentions of the Thai government in this matter.⁽⁸¹⁾ On April 22, the Japanese Minister told Direk of Japan's agreement in principle but stated that they would like it to differ somewhat from the other two Pacts. As for the date of signing, Japan asked it to be done on the same day with, or before, the British. In the end it was agreed, at Thai insistence, to use the same date.⁽⁸²⁾

The Japanese agreed upon the mutual respect of territorial integrity but also asked for the exchange of information and to consult one another on any questions of common interests that might arise. This seemed to indicate a special friendship which Direk did not like but Pibul and the cabinet agreed to have.⁽⁸³⁾ Then on May 10, the Japanese asked for and obtained the deletion of the clause which called for “mutual respect for one another's political regime”. Apparently the Japanese thought this reflected on the status of the Emperor.⁽⁸⁴⁾

By May, the French had agreed to the readjustment of the Mekong frontier and the Pact could be concluded. However, there were some minor hesitations on the way to agreement, as the French and the British, under pressure from the deteriorating situation in Europe, insisted on

exchanges of semi-official letters in order to cover the interval foreseen between the dates of ratification of the respective instruments.⁽⁸⁵⁾

The Thais did not find these exchanges of semi-official letters appropriate. In reply, Direk sent a very diplomatic but firm confidential letter to Crosby, and presumably to M. Lepissier as well, part of which said:

“...Indeed, the conclusion of the Pact is in itself an evidence of the desire of the Parties concerned to ensure peace and to improve and develop the mutual relations between them; and viewed in this light, the contemplation, at the moment of the conclusion of the Pact, of the contingency of a violation of the Pact by one of the Parties, cannot but cast a shadow, however slight, over what should be a clear and bright horizon. It would be desirable therefore to avoid such contemplation if it is at all possible to do so...”⁽⁸⁶⁾

This was echoed by Mr Henniker-Major who agreed that the Thais were right in feeling that the letters were rather an insult to them.⁽⁸⁷⁾ This was eventually ignored by both countries. June 12, 1940, was then set as the date for signing with the French, British and Japanese Ministers, in that order of negotiation. But on May 23, the Japanese Minister called on Direk carrying his government's message stating that they would like to sign the pact a day or two before the French and the British. The reason given was that Japan pursued a non-involvement policy in the European War. If they signed on the same day as the Allies, other countries might misinterpret the situation in the belief that Japan was cooperating with the Allies in Asia. Direk politely insisted on the same day signing, informing the Japanese Minister that the German and Italian Ministers had already informed Direk that this was well understood. In any case, if this was changed according to the Japanese, the Thais would have no good reason to explain to the Allies. In the end, the Japanese agreed on the set date but asked it to be signed in Tokyo, and this was agreed.⁽⁸⁸⁾

On June 12, 1940, Pibul, in his capacity as PM and MFA, signed the Pact of Non-Aggression with France and Britain represented by Lepissier and Crosby in Bangkok. Meanwhile, Phya Sri Sena, the Thai Minister in Tokyo, and Mr Hachiro Arita, the Japanese Foreign

Minister, signed a Treaty between Thailand and Japan concerning the Continuance of Friendly Relations between the Two Countries and the Mutual Respect of Each Other's Territorial Integrity.⁽⁸⁹⁾

The gist of the Pact with Britain was contained in Articles 1, 2 and 5, which briefly stated that neither of the High Contracting Parties would resort to war or any act of violence or of aggression against the other, either alone, or in concert with one, or more than one, third Power, and to respect the territorial integrity of the other High Contracting Party. Each High Contracting Party would not assist any other country that was waging war with the other High Contracting Party. Each High Contracting Party undertook to respect in every way the sovereignty or authority of the other High Contracting Party over its territories. On August 31, 1940, ratifications between Britain and Thailand were exchanged in Bangkok and the Treaty became effective.⁽⁹⁰⁾

As for the Treaty with France, which was substantially the same as that with Britain, there was attached an exchange of letters on the same day. These committed both parties to redelineate the Mekong frontier according to the *thalweg* principle, which would enable the Thais to navigate the river at all seasons. Thus, all territories to the right of this line (west bank) would be Thailand's. To define this line, a joint commission composed of representatives from both countries, with ambassadorial status from the French side, would be set up and given due power and authority. The agreement would be made effective within a year of this exchange of letters. It was also emphasised that all these clauses would be effective only if ratifications of the Non-Aggression Treaty had been exchanged.⁽⁹¹⁾ In the end, this was not carried out and the whole Pact was just paper to be ignored when either party saw fit to do so.

The Treaty with Japan was a little different. The main points of this five-year treaty were included in Articles 1, 2 and 3 which provided for mutual respect for each other's territories; exchange of information and consultation on matters of mutual interest; and "non-assistance" by either contracting party for any country attacking the other. The exchange of ratifications duly took place in Bangkok on December 23, 1940.⁽⁹²⁾

From the Thai point of view, these treaties, once ratified, would have provided guarantees for its posture of strict neutrality in any war involving any of the High Contracting Parties. Being a small country, situated at the crossroads of Southeast Asia, this was invaluable to its

hopes of survival without any scar. On the day of signing, Pibul made a statement that these agreements had no relationship to present hostilities in Europe. He then emphasised that

“These several treaties are a further example of the peaceful will of the Thai government and people, and may be considered as a further application of the policy of equal friendship, consistently pursued by the Thai government...”⁽⁹³⁾

While the British and the French did not acclaim these treaties as a victory, partly because they were deeply engaged in the European War, the Japanese were not slow to grab the chance. On the day of signing, the Japanese FO issued a communiqué in the following fashion:

“The Treaty has been concluded to reaffirm and strengthen the traditional relations of amity between the two countries, thereby contributing to stability and peace in East Asia.”⁽⁹⁴⁾

This was echoed in Bangkok through the Japanese Legation. On the following day, The *Bangkok Times* rightly commented that the Japanese placed more importance on mutual cooperation than only on the principle of “no-foes”.⁽⁹⁵⁾

However, opinions in Japan diverged on this matter. The military, from the beginning, never wanted such a pact. This was shown in a secret telegram from the FO to Crosby dated September 15, 1940, passing on information from Mr Dolbeare, the Adviser to the Thai MFA, who had handed it to a friend in Singapore and requested that it be passed to Crosby. The first information in this message is

“Military circles in Japan considered themselves affronted by signing of Japan-Thailand non-aggression pact as they had not been consulted by the Japanese Foreign Ministry and had wanted military agreement...”⁽⁹⁶⁾

This whole exercise appeared to be a triumph for Thai foreign policy. It seemed that the Thais had employed different tactics with different parties. With the British, the intimate relationship with Crosby, who was very well disposed to the Thai liberals,⁽⁹⁷⁾ and the appearance of the anti-colonialist pamphlets seemed to have settled the agreement. With the French, it was established that the Mekong frontier was unreasonable and should be redelimited. The British were also exploited as a

springboard to pressure the French to be reasonable. With the Japanese, the loss of a diplomatic race which would lead to the loss of some prestige was pointed out to attract their response. By explaining the process to the Americans, the Germans and the Italians mid-way through the negotiations, the Thais showed their neutrality stand to the full and gave no country any excuse to blame them for leaning on either side, especially the Japanese and the British, the main rivals in this part of the world. More significantly, the intrinsic value of the Non-Aggression Pacts with the three Powers was the acceptance of Thailand as their equal, the fruit of the 1937 series of Treaties.

The unswerving declared policy of Thai neutrality was also emphasized by a radiogram from Lausanne to Bangkok as late as the day the Japanese entered Thailand in December 1941 (received four days later), from King Rama VIII to the government:

“As trouble is very near us, I am hoping with all my heart
that we will be able to keep our strict (sic) neutrality
STOP Best of luck to all

Ananda Mahidol”⁽⁹⁸⁾



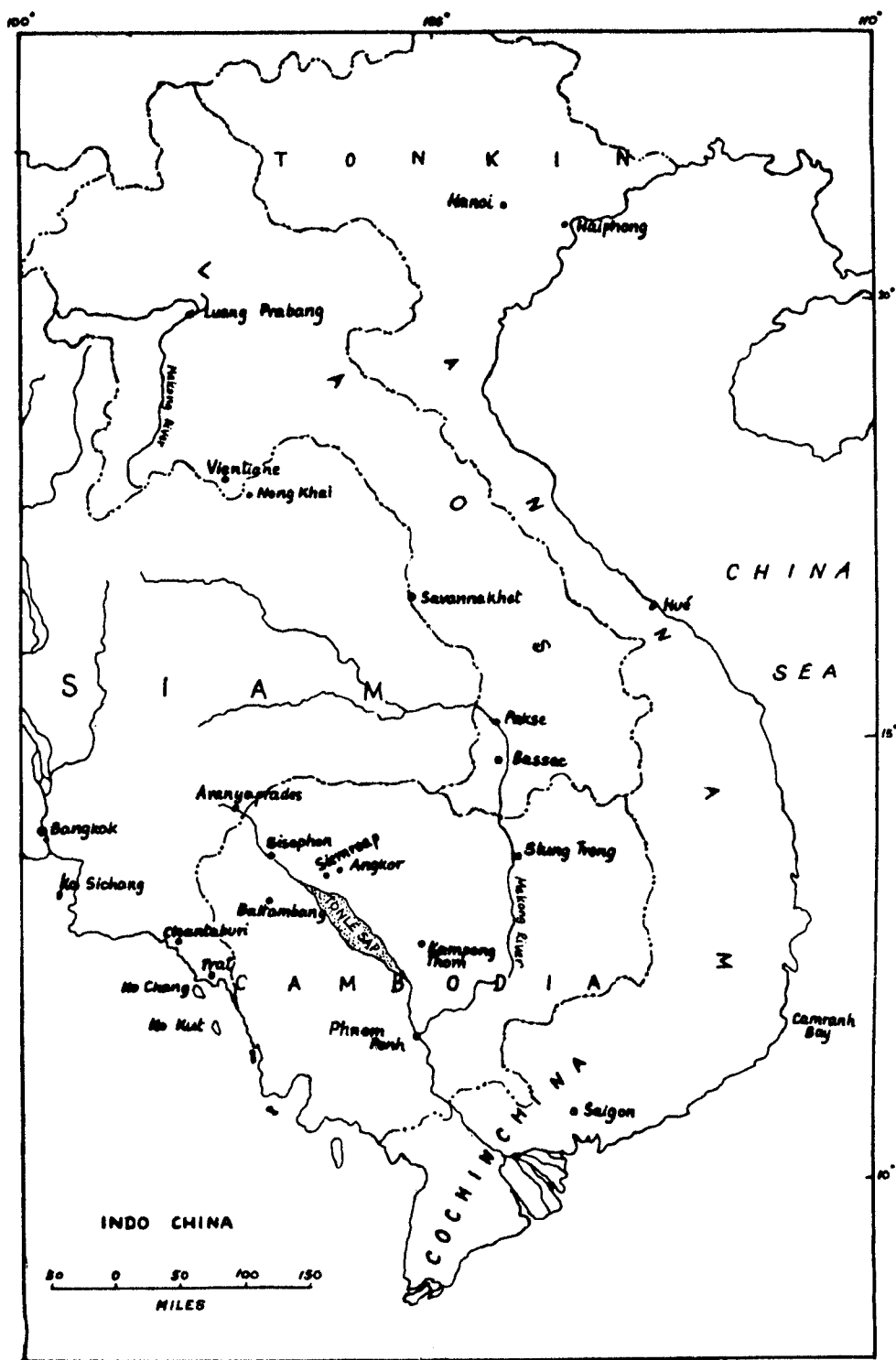
CHAPTER SIX

THAI - INDO-CHINA CONFLICT

On June 14, 1940, only two days after the signing ceremonies of the Non-Aggression Pacts, the German army entered Paris, without much resistance. Eight days later, France officially capitulated. As France was still the mistress of Indo-China, this event changed the whole complexion of the situation in this part of the world.

This chapter is intended to illustrate that Thai foreign policy towards Indo-China was a consequence of the French capitulation. This will be done by depicting various relevant aspects of the domestic and external environments that Thai foreign policy decision-makers had to operate in. Thus it will start by briefly discussing the external environment; that is, the changing situation in the region that resulted from the French capitulation. Then the domestic factors that contributed significantly to the internal environment that decision-makers had to take into account will be explained.

Thai diplomatic proceedings will then be discussed, to show the peaceful manner in which the Thais, at first, attempted in the pursuance of their aspirations. This covers the period June-October 1940. At this juncture, bilateral relations between Thailand and the Powers concerning this issue will be described in terms of the attitude of each Power towards the Thai aspirations. Having set the scene, abortive diplomatic moves were superseded by military conflict. This will be described only briefly as to the aspects which will have some bearing upon the attitudes of the belligerents when mediation began. The rivalry between Britain



and Japan to become the mediator is described together with the final mediation and the difficulties it encountered. Finally, this chapter will end with an appraisal of the Thai-Indo-China conflict and its consequences.

CHANGING REGIONAL SITUATION

On June 19, 1940, five days after the German army entered Paris, the Japanese began to pressure Indo-China by presenting a memorandum asking the Indo-Chinese authorities to close down the frontier with China to ensure that (Chiang Kai-shek's) Chungking Government would not receive any military supplies from the Allies. By the beginning of July, the Japanese began to occupy the port of Haiphong and a few other ports in eastern Indo-China.⁽¹⁾ This proved to be only the beginning of Japanese pressure on French Indo-China.

Within Indo-China, the French capitulation also resulted in a change of personnel. Governor-General Georges Catroux who supported General de Gaulle was replaced by the pro-Pétain Admiral Jean Decoux on June 25, 1940. Decoux hoped for changes in the international scene before the Japanese made any inevitable advance upon Indo-China. He employed a delaying tactic by referring every Japanese demand to Vichy and let it be known that he would resist any invasion in proportion to the support he got from Vichy and Washington.⁽²⁾ This was an indication of how weak the French position in Indo-China had become. Two years earlier, for instance, it was claimed on behalf of France that she was firmly determined not to allow the slightest violation of her territories, or the slightest attack upon her acquired rights.⁽³⁾

In Japan, on July 16, a new cabinet was set up with Prince Konoye as Prime Minister, Yosuke Matsuoka as Foreign Minister, and General Hideki Tojo as Minister of Defence. This government desired to include Indo-China in the Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere for economic as well as strategic reasons. If Japan could establish a base in Indo-China, it could not only deal with the Chinese easily, but also move southward to weaken the British.⁽⁴⁾

When Japan put pressure on Indo-China in mid-July, the Vichy government asked the Americans for help but no military aid could be

sanctioned for fear that the Japanese might take it as a pretext for war while the Americans were not yet ready.⁽⁵⁾ Thus, at the end of August, Vichy ordered her ambassador to Tokyo to exchange letters with Matsuo. In these letters, France recognised Japanese vital political and economic interests in the Far East and allowed the Japanese special privileges in Indo-China to wage war against China. In return, Japan would respect French rights and interests in the Far East, especially the territorial integrity of Indo-China.⁽⁶⁾

To the Thai government, the capitulation of France and the growing arrogance of Japan caused them to speculate over the fate of Indo-China. Crosby described the situation thus,

“Their first feeling is one of nervousness and the threatened break-up of the international status quo in South-eastern Asia; they are perturbed by the possibility of an Allied defeat in the war, which, as they know only too well, is bound to strengthen the hand of Japan very greatly and to leave her the paramount Power in the Far East.”⁽⁷⁾

The Thai nervousness greatly increased on September 27, 1940, when Japan signed a treaty of alliance with Germany and Italy in which Tokyo was allowed to become the master of Asia.⁽⁸⁾ If Japan took over Indo-China without the Thai border issue being settled any return of Thai territories would then be at the mercy of the Japanese. Thus the increasing Japanese pressure on Indo-China also hastened Pibul to resolve border problems with the colony.⁽⁹⁾

INTERNAL POLITICS

Ratification of the Pact with France was dependent upon the redelimitation of the Mekong border as long as peace prevailed. Now that France had capitulated, the Thais began to rethink what they should demand of Indo-China. The turning of the tide was well observed by John Coast who wrote:

“Just as the French had previously deprived Siam of much of its territory by force, the nationalist Siamese now felt no compunction about taking advantage of France’s plight and demanding the return of what they had been forced to

surrender in King Chulalongkorn's time."⁽¹⁰⁾

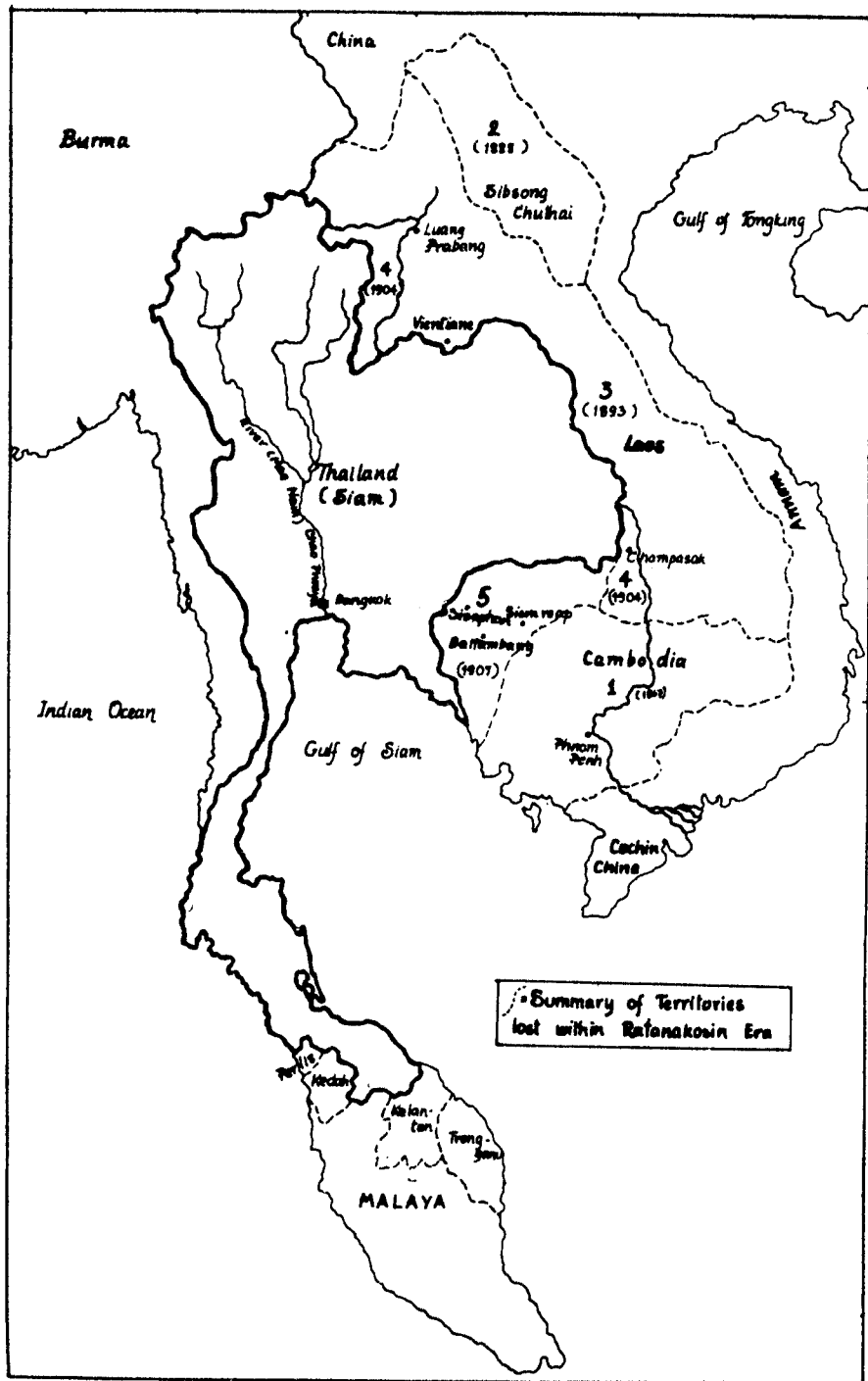
It is in the light of the above passage that this section will be discussed. It will begin with a brief survey of the contention between Thailand and France over Indo-China. This will be followed by Thai internal politics which had the bearing upon this issue. This includes Pibul's domination of the political scene, the nationalist movement, the different claims, the support for and the warning against these claims. It is hoped that these factors would give sufficient evidence on how, within the domestic environment, Thai foreign policy towards Indo-China at this juncture was made and executed.

BACKGROUND

The points of conflict between Thailand and French Indo-China in 1940 had to be traced back to the latter part of the nineteenth century. Between 1867 and 1907 the territories lost by Siam to France could be summarised as follows:

Date	Territories	Square KM (approx.)
1. 1867	Cambodia (except Battambang Siemreap and Sisophon)	124,000
2. 1888	Sibsong Chuthai	87,000
3. 1893	The left bank of the Mekong (Laos)	143,000
4. 1904	Right bank enclaves opposite Luang Prabang and Pakse	62,500
5. 1907	Battambang, Siemreap and Sisophon	51,000
1867-1907total.....	467,500 ⁽¹¹⁾

The first two losses did not have much effect on the feeling of the Thais because the Siamese never held proper sovereignty over them, rather a loose suzerainty. However, when added to later losses, they could be drummed up, without distinction between sovereignty and suzerainty, to incite jingoism by able propagandists like Luang Vichitr.⁽¹²⁾ The inhabitants of these areas had only a distant connection



with the Siamese, culturally, ethnically and linguistically.

Apart from renouncing all Siamese claims to Laos on the left bank of the Mekong, the Franco-Siamese Treaty of 1893 stipulated that all islets within the River belonged to the French too. In 1904, the Siamese also lost the two enclaves on the right bank of the River. And in 1907, Battambang, Siemreap and Sisophon, which used to form an integral part of the Siamese Kingdom, were also lost. Hence, the Mekong River was no longer a natural boundary between Thailand and French Indo-China from the north down to Cambodia as before 1904. And the thalweg principle was not recognised where the Mekong was the boundary. This had become a long-standing problem for the Siamese in terms of administration.

In 1926, France agreed to make the Mekong thalweg the riverine borderline except where there were islands in the river, in which case the riverine border would be the channel between the islands and the Siamese bank. Furthermore, a mixed high commission was set up to determine the implementation of this new convention.⁽¹³⁾ This was favourable to the Siamese, but was by no means satisfactory administratively. The French also held commercial and strategic advantages over the Siamese as they, more or less, controlled the navigation of the river.⁽¹⁴⁾ Thus, when the Non-Aggression Pact was initiated, the Thais had high hope of, at least, reconciling this issue; that is, to be on a par with the French in the use of the Mekong River. But the temptation to settle old scores with France created by the opportunity which her defeat in Europe apparently offered, was obviously too great to be resisted. A writer appraised the situation thus:

“The minor question of the Mekong islands which France in (sic) 1935 had promised to reconsider might have been amicably adjusted but for the stubbornness of Vichy.”⁽¹⁵⁾

The Thai demands grew as the French became weaker. French Indo-China rejected it, but the Thai claims expanded with the belief that Indo-China was about to be broken up.⁽¹⁶⁾

PIBUL'S CLIQUE AND THE IRREDENTIST FEELING

Pibul's domination of the Thai political scene since becoming the premier has already been discussed. By 1940, the Siamese military leaders viewed ultra-nationalist programmes in Germany, Italy and Japan as a source of virility and power as well as the trend of the time. The constitutional methods of the democratic nations made them appear weak and declining.⁽¹⁷⁾ A rising spirit of nationalism, which led to irredentist sentiment against the French, gained momentum with Pibul's ascendancy. A highlight of this was the changing of the country's name to "Thailand" in 1939.

These nationalist aspirations further enhanced the necessity and the power of the military. In terms of politics, by holding the portfolios of Defence, Interior and Foreign Affairs as well as being Prime Minister, Pibul was supreme to the extent that he was hailed as "the leader" of the nation. Having also dealt with the Assembly one writer described his supremacy in this fashion:

"By 1940, he was in complete control of the government, he had virtually no opposition within the country, and he was thus in an excellent position to turn his attention to foreign affairs and to play the game of international politics which he hoped would bring him and his country unprecedented influence in Southeast Asia."⁽¹⁸⁾

Pibul himself was ambitious and patriotic, but he allowed his personal and family affairs to interfere with state affairs.⁽¹⁹⁾ This made him patriotic if it coincided with his personal ambition. Furthermore, he began to see the opinions that were contrary to his as being wrong altogether, and thus moved towards dictatorship. Contrary to popular belief, Adul's evidence shows that Pibul was supported only by sections of the Army and the Air Force, but not at all by the Navy and the Police Force.⁽²⁰⁾ But at the time, the Army was so superior to other forces that Pibul held the reins tightly.

In agreement with Direk's account, Adul said that Pibul did inform the cabinet on all matters. There were some that he kept within his clique alone. This is supposed to have been true when he sent Vanich to sound out the new Konoye cabinet in Tokyo concerning Asia and the British in mid-July 1940,⁽²¹⁾ or concerning Luang Sinthu's conversation

with Asada and his own commitment to Torigoe. All these were significant but were not recorded either in Direk's account, or Adul's. (See below.)

Pibul was jealous and suspicious of any colleague who had done some worthy task or had become popular, and he would try to push them down and to keep himself above all. Pibul was neither strong-minded nor decisive, as Adul commented that "he usually changes his orders, not sticking to his own line."⁽²²⁾ This probably accounted for his display of different attitudes towards the same issues to different persons. No one really knew what Pibul wanted as his tone could be very pacific with Crosby in their private conversations but then would become aggressive when he talked to the French or the Indo-Chinese.

According to Adul, Pibul's cabinet ministers could be divided into three categories: the first were those who studied carefully the internal and external events and then gave their opinions; the second were those who studied some of what happened but did not fully know what happened; and the others did not care about what was going on at all but put forward opinions in ignorance, or even gave consent because of fear.⁽²³⁾ It seems that Pridi, Direk, Adul, Thawee Bunyaket, Khuang and Vilas were in the first category. The bulk of the ministers were in the second and most of Pibul's clique, which included Luang Sinthu, Luang Phrom, Luang Vichitr, Prayoon and Vanich were in the third. But with Pibul's dominance and power, the last two seemed to merge and they voted with Pibul on every issue usually because of fear, ambition or sycophancy. Pibul did actually dominate the cabinet with the support of a majority. The liberals in the first category were in no way to rival him. They were outweighed, outvoted, and out of Pibul's circle in important matters.

The rise of Thai nationalism was not new but it was intensified even further with the ascendancy of Pibul. Having the control of the government in his hands, Pibul also wished for the support of the Thai people at large. Taking Germany and Japan as his models, Pibul realised that

"To achieve similar success, Siam's economy had to be made self-sufficient, the Chinese minority had to be divested of its commercial monopoly, the people had to be taught patriotism and inculcated with faith in the military

as the protector of the nation, and the leader, Pibun, should be revered as the national genius who would bring back the glories of old Siam.”⁽²⁴⁾

The issue of economic nationalism has already been dealt with. The issue of political nationalism will now be discussed. Political nationalism provided the opportunity for Pibul to realise his ambition, using Indo-China as the context. As Flood observed,

“Indo-China’s inflexibility on this no doubt encouraged the relatively mild Thai chauvinism that was on the rise in Bangkok in the 1930s.”⁽²⁵⁾

In describing this political nationalism, Crosby reported that “...There has come into being during the past 2 or 3 years a racial and cultural movement in Thailand...(and “Greater Thai” Movement)... the originator and the chief apostle of this movement is Luang Vichitr Vadhakarn. This versatile person composes music, writes plays, designs ballets and poses as the authority *par excellence* upon Thai history and culture. His artistic productions (with the exception of one or two songs) are of the poorest quality, the main purpose of them being to kindle the fire of patriotism, in this case chauvinism would be a better word within the breasts of his fellow-countrymen... Whilst his presentation of the case for Thai nationalism is thus crude and childish, it must be admitted, however, that he does at least possess energy, a low form of talent and above all a gift for ‘getting across’ to his listeners whatever he may have to say. He has thus developed into the most blatant and the most widely heard of all the Thai “jingo” agitators...He has, in short, become a dangerous nationalist agitator and he stands in high favour with Luang Pibul, the PM, to the worse, that is to say to the chauvinistic, side of whose temperament he makes a strong appeal...”⁽²⁶⁾

Whatever the merit of the entire passage, it can be established clearly that as Director General of the Department of Fine Arts, Luang Vichitr had become a government mouthpiece in propagating the idea of chauvinism — some may even call it opportunism — to the people. This certainly helped to enhance Pibul’s position as the leader of the nation.

More importantly, Luang Vichitr also sold his ideas to Pibul and his clique, of which he was surely a prominent member as well. Thus, whatever Luang Vichitr said was usually complimented and echoed by Pibul and the rest of his clique, and vice versa.

Luang Vichitr led his audience to believe that Thailand must become a power or perish, the contention of which he alleged to be Pibul's opinion. His view was expounded in the course of a lecture that he delivered before a gathering of instructors and students of the Military Education Section of the General Staff of the Army. It was reported in the *Bangkok Chronicle* of November 2, 1940:

"What the Premier said was true. When the present war was over, there would be no small nations in the world; all would be merged into big ones. So there were only two ways left for us to choose, either become a Power or be swallowed up by some other Power. If we got back our lost territories, then we could have the hope of becoming a Power, for, besides increasing the area of our territory and increasing the population, we should be able to get into contact with those vast regions inhabited by Thais..."⁽²⁷⁾

Luang Vichitr referred to Thai blood, Thai descent and Thai language as the main reasons for the return of these territories. No doubt he also had in mind the return of the Burma Shan States and the four Northern States of Malaya from the British as well but he neither spelled that out publicly nor gave it any official endorsement. In his methods, he certainly followed in the footsteps of Goebbels, with Pibul as Hitler, in this double act.

In concert with the theme of irredentism, other organisations, both official and non-governmental, did play their roles too. For example, *Yudhakos*, a journal of the Thai Army, published the article "Wake up, Thais" as early as August 10, 1939. It referred to the 19 million Thais living in British, French and Chinese territories and called upon them to join the other 14 millions who inhabited Thailand.⁽²⁸⁾ Then again at the end of 1939 there appeared what Crosby described as "an objectionable pamphlet" in his confidential letter to the FO, dated January 30, 1940. It appeared in a vernacular paper in Bangkok under the title "Thais should remember". It was an abbreviated version of the book published in August 1939 by a pseudonymous author and dealt in "provocative

fashion with the various cessions of territory during the past 100 years.”⁽²⁹⁾ Whether this was a Thai ploy to speed up the conclusion of the Non-Aggression Pact with Britain was never known. But it surely further instilled irredentist instinct into the minds of those Thais who read it. Its case became firmer and firmer through various sources. There appeared to be no alternative sources to stand up against this hammering. There might have been a silent minority or even majority, which no one knew of.

Although the government had never acknowledged the irredentist movement, it seemed to have given tacit approval, as Prince Varn told Crosby as early as the beginning of 1939 as follows:

“The authorities were not very active in checking that movement, which they rather looked upon as a useful safety-valve for letting off superfluous patriotic steam ...”⁽³⁰⁾

This implies that the government was then in a position to control the movement if it wished but after the fall of France the movement had carried its momentum further and further to the extent that Pibul told Lepissier in September 1940 that “irredentist discontent, especially in the Army, is now flowing so strongly that he has much difficulty in controlling it.”⁽³¹⁾ Pibul himself had told Crosby many times that if he did not follow the aspiration of this movement, his resignation from the premiership was ensured, which Crosby believed to be true.⁽³²⁾ This provides a very good example of the intertwined linkage between external environment and the domestic polity.

While irredentism was riding high, the Thai government responded by procuring an amendment to the Immigration Law in virtue of which persons of Thai race crossing the Eastern frontier from Indo-China into Thailand were to be exempted for two years from the necessity of showing documents of identity or certificates of residence. To the French, this bore the appearance of an attempt to entice away the Thai-speaking inhabitants from the border regions of the Laos Province and Cambodia, but the Thais contended that it was really a philanthropic measure.⁽³³⁾ Another instance of governmental tacit support for the movement was seen in November 1940, when the Department of Publicity issued a monograph, illustrated by maps, setting forth the territories claimed as formerly Siamese and lost, through force, to France between 1863 and 1907, and that she had a just case for their restoration.⁽³⁴⁾

THE THAI CLAIMS

At this juncture, the differences between the claims of the irredentist and of the Greater Thai Movement, as propounded by Luang Vichitr Vadhakarn, should be pointed out. Concerning this, Crosby probably hit the nail on the head when he wrote:

“...The collapse of France and the consequent vigorous Greater Thai agitation which, unlike the irredentist proper, does not confine its attention to the recovery of regions that used at one time to form part of the Kingdom of Thailand. In other words, the politico-military aspect of the new agitation in addition to the cultural one, is now coming to light. Hence it is that Luang Vichitr Vadhakarn is now demanding “the whole works” for Thailand...”⁽³⁵⁾

Here Crosby used cultural similarity as the criterion to define and limit irredentism. Any claims over and above would be included in the Greater Thai Movement, with imperialistic or opportunistic overtones. If racial and cultural similarity was the criterion then the irredentist demand would amount to all the territories lost from 1893 to 1907, which included the whole of Laos but neither Cambodia nor Sipsong Chuthai.

However, the official demands of the Thai government did not correspond exactly with the above distinction. At first, the claim which accompanied the ratification of the Non-Aggression Pact, according to the secret exchange of letters, was to make the *thalweg* principle operable wherever the Mekong was the frontier and other adjustments that the mixed commission would agree upon. This seemed to constitute the smallest claim which the French should have agreed, as the British had done over the Mesai, Pakchan and Ruak rivers on the Burmese borders early in 1940. This would amount to the return of only a few islets within the Mekong River and the recognition of the *thalweg* principle.

With the fall of France and the threat of Japan on Indo-China, the Thais increased the demand as a condition of ratification of the Pact to include the two enclaves lost in 1904, opposite Luang Prabang and Pakse, both on the right bank of the Mekong. This would have made the Mekong the national border running from the north down to Cambodia. This was of strategic value for Thai defence, assuming the threat was from the east.⁽³⁶⁾ This still constituted a small claim by the Thais. Whether it

included the territory ceded in 1907 as well was not clear. According to Direk, it did not. But according to the irredentists, and it was hard to distinguish them from the government's official aspirations as many government officials did speak as irredentists too, this claim might even have included the whole of Laos.

The largest claims seem to have come entirely from non-governmental nationalist movements including the "Greater Thai Movement" and the group calling itself "Thai Blood". They aspired not only to gain Laos but also to the whole of Cambodia, disregarding the difference between absolute sovereignty and suzerainty in history.

All these claims might vary in degree but they all contributed to a build-up of domestic support for the belief that Thailand had a god-given right over these "lost" territories. The only question was how much to claim. Here the irredentists won the day, psychologically.

SUPPORTS AND CAUTIONS

Parallel to this irredentist psychological propaganda, and probably in a favourable response to it as well, there was a nationwide support for some territorial claims. Again, it has to be mentioned that the degree of support for which claim was never clear. It was up to the spokesman at any rally to manipulate the amount of support for whatever claim he wished. All of the general public wished the return of "ceded territories".

The most emphatic and illustrative support came in the form of demonstrations. On October 8, 1940 about 3,000 militant youths from Chulalongkorn University and its affiliates paraded to the Ministry of Defence. The photograph of Pibul addressing the demonstrators from the balcony of the Ministry building was widely publicised. These students went there to donate money and show unity in claiming back the ceded territories.⁽³⁷⁾ On the same day, about 5,000 students from the University of Moral and Political Sciences — generally known as Thammasat — proposed a demonstration to show their support to the government's policy. On October 26 there were spontaneous demonstrations in most provinces, with the backing of government officials, in order to support the policy. This publicity stunt was much reported, even by the Governor

General of the Dutch East Indies who told the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs that

“Everywhere in Thailand there were belligerent demonstrations, encouraged by the army... (and that)...the Prime Minister seemed inclined to support the army and it was thought that hostilities would break out about the middle of November as soon as the dry season started.”⁽³⁸⁾

As early as September 1940, Pibul told Crosby that French resistance would not be strong enough to matter. “The Thai army was spoiling for a fight and that some officers had declared their wish for one, even if they were to lose it...”⁽³⁹⁾ A few days later, Lieutenant-Colonel Hartman, the Military Attaché to the British Legation in Bangkok, reported a militaristic feeling among the armed forces which confirmed the above.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Hence the Thai military seemed to be absolutely behind the recovery of ceded territories, and posed as a pillar of strength to be backed up by the irredentists and the people in general too.

To show their support, many Thais donated gifts and money to the government. A notable and well-publicised case was that of the ex-Prime Minister Phya Pahol who offered his service and also a large sum of money to the government.⁽⁴¹⁾ This overt support from such an influential and well-respected statesman certainly had an effect upon the general public and the government. The degree of unity could be seen further when on October 28, 1940 the Royal Palace Bureau issued a circular No. 1523/(B.E.) 2483 asking those who received a royal annual salary to donate ten percent each to the Minister of Defence in order to buy up-to-date equipment to defend Thai independence ever after.⁽⁴²⁾ It is significant to note that the Royal Family had been on bad terms with the government for quite a while, and thus this move must have been initiated by very strong feelings towards the cause of the donation. The manner in which the circular ended must also be pointed out. It put the onus on those who disagreed with the donation to declare their intention and they could thus be branded as not being patriotic or even as disliking the government. Few indeed could have shown their disapproval in the face of such pressure.

Even the People's Assembly went along with the bandwagon. As Crosby reported on September 21:

“The rising tide of irredentist feeling here may be judged

by the fact that the People's Assembly have passed, unanimously, motion congratulating the government on the aide-memoire sent to Vichy..."⁽⁴³⁾

An external factor that became favourable for the irredentists and was reiterated in Pibul's speech was the fact that the (British) Burma Office had already agreed to the *thalweg* principle of the River Pakchan, Mae Sai and Mae Ruak as the boundary between Thailand and Keng-tung.⁽⁴⁴⁾ The change of course of these rivers meant that the Thais gained some territories as well as administrative convenience while the British gained some praise and respect from their friends. The irredentists felt satisfied and increasingly turned their attention to French Indo-China. The French were seen as being difficult, uncompromising and giving too little and too late, a case of "penny wise, pound foolish."

All these factors were echoed in an address broadcast by Pibul on October 20, 1940, which Crosby described as "regrettably bellicose" on the face of it.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Here the possibility of war was contemplated and the people were told to be prepared for it. He did not scruple to appeal to racial prejudice by contrasting the white-skinned French rulers with the yellow-skinned native population in Laos and Cambodia over which they tyrannised. He talked about different treatment to different races there and predicted the expulsion of the French from Indo-China which would be followed by restoration of Laos and Cambodia to the Thais whilst an independent government would be set up in Annam. He pragmatically pointed out that there were many other ways and means which could not be divulged and which would be the tools used by the government in carrying their objective to a successful conclusion. He also warned that whilst force might attain its immediate objective easily and quickly, it might be followed by repercussions of the most serious kind and he quoted the case of Danzig as having involved Germany in a world war.⁽⁴⁶⁾

This broadcast revealed Pibul's inconsistency very well. He had pandered to the military and the irredentists, if not the opportunists, but there was evidence of his shrinking from extreme measures. He was probably trying everyone both ways by talking of aggression and caution in the same breath, not really revealing his underlying intention.

Officially, especially when he talked to Crosby, Pibul always maintained that the Thai government wanted only the two small enclaves, the rest of the claims would be shelved as long as the *status quo* in Indo-

China had not been disturbed.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Representing the liberal view in the Foreign Office, Direk also maintained the above-mentioned. However, he also said that “in his personal view Cambodia was of less importance but those Thai-speaking territories ceded to France including the present Cambodian provinces of Battambang, Siemreap and Sisophon were very near to the hearts of Thai nationalists.”⁽⁴⁸⁾ It was also noticeable that the return of the two right bank enclaves and the Mekong’s thalweg as the natural border had now, implicitly, become a foregone conclusion.

However, not everyone in the Thai ruling circles was aggressively behind the irredentist or the opportunist moves. Apart from the foreign diplomats from democratic countries, especially Crosby, the Thai liberals also preached caution whenever they could air their views. They could not swim against the tide but they showed up well by trying to moderate the tone of the demands. This meant excluding the territories of Laos and Cambodia over which Siam previously had suzerainty only.

As a shrewd statesman, Pridi proved to be the pillar of the Thai liberals, and in this matter he stuck to his principles and tried hard to preach moderation and caution, even at the peril of losing his own popularity. Nevertheless, he was not against the retrocession of some territories. Towards the end of June 1940, after the French capitulation, he talked to Lepissier and emphasised that

“In the ordinary way, he would be opposed to any aggressive action by Thailand against France. He was still of the opinion, he said, that the Thais would have enough to occupy them for many years to come in developing the territory which at present belonged to them, and that the acquisition of fresh territory would strain their administrative resources very greatly. But, notwithstanding these considerations, if Indo-China was going to be divided up, the opportunity would be one which Thailand could not afford to lose. She would want her own back ‘and a little more’.”⁽⁴⁹⁾

What “her own back ‘and a little more’” meant was not clear. ‘A little more’ might signify Battambang, Siemreap and Sisophon. And in the event of France being unable to perform its duty as the Protector over the Protectorate States of Laos and Cambodia, then that little more would probably include these two territories as well. However, their return

would be argued in a diplomatic and judicial manner; e.g., that the 1867 and 1893 Agreements recognised France as Protector of these territories and, as France ceased to function as such, they should duly be returned to Thai protection, or even annexed into the Kingdom of Thailand. It was in this smooth diplomatic move that the retrocession should be effected, and not through the use of force.⁽⁵⁰⁾

Then, in a daring move on October 8, 1940, Pridi forbade the proposed demonstration in support of Thai demands on Indo-China by students of the University of Moral and Political Sciences of which he was rector. He also told the financial adviser that the irredentist feeling had been allowed to run so high that it was out of control and that the government was in real danger from it.⁽⁵¹⁾ In forbidding this, Pridi was using his influential personality to cool down the irredentist fury, probably to give the government more diplomatic room and time to manoeuvre.

In his crusade to lessen the tension, in mid-October, Pridi, in his capacity as the Minister of Finance, submitted to the cabinet a memorandum showing that for financial reasons Thailand was not in a position to engage in a rash conflict with the French over Indo-China. The cabinet duly heeded his warning and decided that the popular manifestations in favour of recovering territories on the right bank of the Mekong, if necessary by force, had to be discouraged gradually, whilst newspapers were to be advised to moderate their tone.⁽⁵²⁾

Apart from Pridi and Direk, Luang Siddhi Sayamkarn, the English educated Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, also spoke of the danger Pibul faced if territorial claims were left altogether unsatisfied.⁽⁵³⁾ As for Prince Varn, his view was described by Crosby as something equivalent to the barometer of the day. At the end of June 1940, he expressed to Crosby his opinion that Thailand should take all the right bank of the Mekong and the trans-Mekong region of Cambodia as a "protective buffer region".⁽⁵⁴⁾ By mid-November, Prince Varn turned more aggressive as Crosby's 'very secret' telegram showed in reporting that he had "confided but not to be quoted that Thailand would take Laos and Cambodia if Japan takes Saigon."⁽⁵⁵⁾ This also showed the general mood of the Thai population at the time.

On the whole, the attitude of the Thais was that initiated tacitly by the government to gain a bargaining lever against the West and then

carried out of proportion by the rising tide of strong nationalism-irredentism. Pibul proved to be a "sorcerer's apprentice" who could not control his own magic. The extremists made it impossible for him to draw back without risking an internal upheaval or, at least, his own downfall. However, this could not have been so easy if Pibul had run a democratic country. Then he could have had the guts to stand by his own thoughts and principles. If that did not satisfy the electorate, let them elect someone else. All Pibul did was to do everything in his power to keep himself in power. This close linkage between external policy and internal politics only precipitated the tension and in the end force had to be employed to satisfy the extremists, notwithstanding the cautious warning from the liberal quarter.

A writer noted in retrospect as follows:

"Though it is often wrongly construed as one of neutrality, in fact it has always been a diplomacy which has been 'hard' towards small neighbours and 'soft' towards the dominant regional power."⁽⁵⁶⁾

At the time French Indo-China was weak and Japan was the dominant power. The domestic politics also favoured some territorial claims from Indo-China. This fits in well with an old Thai saying: "When the tide ebbs, the fish eat the ants; when the tide recedes, the ants eat the fish". Now we shall see how foreign policy makers implemented these aspirations.

DIPLOMATIC PROCEEDINGS

After signing the Non-Aggression Pact with Thailand, France seemed to be delighted as shown in a Saigon broadcast on the night of June 12. Even when France had capitulated, on the Thai national day, June 24, Pibul still showed the spirit of the Pact in his broadcast by asking his national brethren to sympathise with their friends, the French. The same day, Saigon radio gratefully reiterated this Thai friendship.⁽⁵⁷⁾

As the French did not send any officials for the purpose of the mixed commission to determine the frontier line between Indo-China and Thailand as stipulated in the exchanged letters,⁽⁵⁸⁾ Pibul empowered Direk to press the French Minister. Lepissier could do no more than to

evade the issue with the apology that France was in great confusion due to German occupation.⁽⁵⁹⁾

As the Japanese intensified their demands on Indo-China, Pibul proposed to the cabinet that if France gave up Indo-China to Japan and Thailand did not show any concern over the lost territories, the government would have to account for its action to future generations.⁽⁶⁰⁾ In this, he was probably considering other territories than those on the border. This must have always been on his mind as illustrated in his private message to Lepissier, who imparted to Crosby early in July that the

“Thai Government are well content that France should remain mistress of Indo-China and in that case they will observe loyally provision of recent treaty of non-aggression. But should Indo-China pass out of French hands they will feel obliged to advance certain territorial claims.”⁽⁶¹⁾

Pibul later told Crosby that if French Indo-China should succumb to the Japanese, he “would like the River Mekong for a frontier save as regards the Trans-Mekong territory where the population is of the Thai race. There he envisaged the Central Annam mountain range desirable as a boundary from the military point of view.”⁽⁶²⁾ This includes the whole of Laos and some part of Cambodia to the east of the Mekong River. If this was a preliminary inquiry on Pibul’s part, it was not wholly rejected by the British. Mr B.E.F. Gage, the Assistant Head of the Far Eastern Department in the FO, commented thus

“Our interest clearly lies in the maintenance of the *status quo* but if this proves impossible to maintain (sic) & the territory is partitioned with the tacit consent of the Indo-China authorities there would seem to be some advantage in our not opposing the Thai claims.”⁽⁶³⁾

Early in August, Lepissier visited Direk and told him that the French government asked that the Pact come into force at once without ratification. Direk replied that it was not in accordance with Thai constitutional procedure.⁽⁶⁴⁾ This only added to the Thai suspicion that the Vichy government probably wanted the Pact more than the Thais did, and that the French were trying to evade the issue of redelimitation of the Mekong. The cabinet cautiously decided that before a further step was taken, the attitudes of foreign powers should be ascertained.

On August 15, Direk invited the British, American, Italian and

German ministers to the MFA to enquire about the attitudes of their respective governments if, in the event of the collapse of Indo-China, Thailand were to advance further territorial claims on it. The German and the Italian ministers did not take long to give their support. The Americans and the British, after long deliberation and consultation, maintained their attitude of backing the *status quo*; anything else, they said, should be negotiated after the existing war. As for the Japanese, Pibul told Direk not to bother because he already had special agents working closely with them.⁽⁶⁵⁾ This will be illuminated later.

By mid-August, the Thai position was firmly established. Crosby reported in a telegram as follows:

“Thailand would wish to recover all of the territories that she had at any time ceded to France, and she would wish to get the whole of Cambodia.”⁽⁶⁶⁾

It went without saying that the Thais had by then taken for granted that, at least, they would be allowed to count the Mekong thalweg as their boundary up to the Cambodia border. That meant the cession of some islands and two right bank territories by France, opposite Luang Prabang and Pakse. Further than that, the claims were not so clear.

On August 20, Direk told Lepissier bluntly that either Indo-China did not understand Thai policy or they tried not to. Poor Lepissier could only apologise and then confirm Thai suspicions that Japan had submitted an ultimatum to Indo-China to admit Japanese troops and to use naval bases there.⁽⁶⁷⁾

In reply to the French request presented to the Thai Minister at Vichy, on September 10, that the Pact should be ratified at once without further ado, on September 11, an aide-memoire was forwarded to Lepissier that the Pact was made when Indo-China was at peace and now that the situation had changed, the Thais would like the French to agree on a few issues first. The first was to accept the Mekong thalweg as the border as set out in the exchange of letters. The second was the recognition of the Mekong as the natural border as far south as the Cambodian border, which meant the French cessation of two small territories on the right bank. Furthermore, the Thai government would appreciate it if the French could give an assurance in writing that if France were to bow out of Indo-China, then Laos and Cambodia would be returned to Thailand.⁽⁶⁸⁾ This seemed to constitute the first formal demand by the Thais.

Pibul was reported to have proclaimed "We are merely seeking the return of what is rightly ours," or else there would be no ratification.⁽⁶⁹⁾

On September 17, the French government replied all in the negative, claiming that there was no change of situation in Indo-China and that it would fight to protect its territorial integrity against all-comers.⁽⁷⁰⁾ On September 25, the Thai government reiterated its stand and urged the French representatives to come to Bangkok as soon as possible.⁽⁷¹⁾ Meanwhile the Thais were trying to win Crosby's support, with considerable success.⁽⁷²⁾

THE ATTITUDE OF THE BRITISH

Crosby's unrivalled knowledge of Thailand, in terms of its characters and politics in particular, proved to be the most important factor in constructing British policy over Thai claims on Indo-China territories throughout 1940. At first, the FO seemed to favour the strict maintenance of the *status quo* in the area but with Crosby's insistence and reasonable assessment of the situation as it developed, the FO's stance shifted towards his understanding.

To the Thai liberals, Crosby was known as a true friend who appreciated the development of the changing world situation. He was an intimate friend to most of the Thai ruling elites, especially Pridi and Prince Varn, since the days of the negotiation of the equal treaty in 1937.⁽⁷³⁾ To the military elites, Crosby was publicly frank but privately suspicious. Pibul, while undecided as to which camp to join, tried to be frank with Crosby to the point of assuring him of the British being the best friends of the Thais. But of course, Crosby was never told of any secret arrangements Pibul and his clique had made with the Japanese.

Generally, the British supported the Thai case, because of a greater familiarity with the Thai people and because they realised that only the Japanese would in the end benefit from such a dispute if the Thais were not supported by the West.⁽⁷⁴⁾ This certainly reflects Crosby's realistic and far-sighted view. But this was not easily achieved though, for the British had to toe the American line to a considerable extent, as they were not themselves sufficiently equipped to pursue such a policy on their own. Hence the above statement had to be qualified.

At first, apart from the maintenance of the *status quo*, the British wanted to keep out of the dispute as far as they could.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Then they favoured an Anglo-American initiative towards a settlement as suggested by Crosby.⁽⁷⁶⁾ But failing that they found it advantageous not to oppose the Thais.⁽⁷⁷⁾ They definitely rejected a hawkish suggestion about negotiating for passage of British troops through Siam⁽⁷⁸⁾ because it would provide the Japanese with an excellent pretext for immediate intervention. This would probably precipitate the crisis which the British were trying to avert as long as possible, as they were, by no means, ready for it.⁽⁷⁹⁾

It was clear to the FO, from Crosby's assessment, that the Thai claims could be divided into two categories. The first, as a condition of the ratification of the Non-Aggression Pact with the French, was to make the Mekong thalweg a natural border from the north down to the Cambodia border. The other, in the event of a collapse of French sovereignty in Indo-China, France should return to Thailand the territories of Laos and Cambodia, which were once under Thai suzerainty.⁽⁸⁰⁾ This realisation was a crucial step that the Americans never appreciated. Crosby himself had supported the former and was not unsympathetic towards the latter either.

Diplomatically, Crosby might have a big lead over his American counterpart, but in terms of hard material support to back up diplomatic promises, the British had to rely mostly on the Americans. This was a considerable drawback to the desire of the British (and especially Crosby's) to present themselves as the friends most sympathetic to the Thai claims. As Crosby once remarked:

“A strong Britain will always find a firm friend in Siam;
a weak Britain will at best find a wavering and a doubtful
one.”⁽⁸¹⁾

But, though the British might have found it expedient not to oppose the Thai claims, and probably even to encourage them mildly, in order to prevent them from throwing in their lot with Japan, they had to be careful not to antagonise the French nor to give them ground for suspicions.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE FRENCH

The French negotiated the Non-Aggression Pact with the Thais in 1939-1940 for the obvious purpose of securing her colonies in Indo-China from Thai attack, while she was waging war in Europe. French authorities in Paris and Bangkok gave the impression to the Thais, then, that their basic desiderata on the Mekong would be favourably considered in return, as written down in the exchange of letters attached to the Pact. The French capitulation and the emergence of the Pétain government changed the situation considerably, with more authority over this issue in the hands of the now quasi-independent Indo-China administration. The previous commitments were thus stalled, if not ignored.

In terms of personnel involved, the stern attitude of the French side could be clearly understood. Lepissier, who had begun to follow Crosby's sympathetic diplomatic stand on the Thais, was officially recalled even before June 12. In any case, his new boss in the Pétain administration was the former head of the Banque de l'Indochine, a Monsieur Paul Baudouin, "who was committed to the policy of retaining as much of the French colonial empire as possible."⁽⁸²⁾ More importantly, the burden of all the coming negotiations was shifted to the Governor General of Indo-China who had, hitherto, enjoyed no role in the whole matter. It was Admiral Jean Decoux who assumed this unenviable position in July 1940. He and his advisers viewed any negotiations with the Thais with extreme distaste, and they were so bitter about the commitments Lepissier had already made that Decoux viewed him as "almost a traitor" for having suggested territorial concessions to the Thais.⁽⁸³⁾ Therefore, Lepissier, until his transfer from Bangkok, could do no more than to evade the issues everytime the Thai FO pressed him for the coming of the negotiating team.

During August, Vichy changed tactics by asking for the Pact to be effective without further ado. This would bypass the ratification procedure and, thus, the redelimitation of the borders. To the Thais, this constituted a default on the French side. Coupled with the news in the air that Japan was pressing hard on Indo-China for military facilities in Tonkin, and thus a step on the mainland, the Thai authorities argued that as the Pact had damaged Thailand's eastern strategic interests when France yielded to other Powers, it was proper for the terms to be revised

to compensate for this loss of benefit. This only angered Decoux even further for he had no thoughts of capitulating to the Japanese at all. In return for granting the Japanese demands, he asked Tokyo to guarantee his administration's sovereignty over the whole of Indo-China.⁽⁸⁴⁾ The French, understandably, felt that they were encountering an oriental conspiracy, with the Japanese considering the guarantee on the one hand and encouraging the Thais to make the claim on the other; unbeknown to the French, the Japanese were not consulted by the Thais and were also annoyed by this claim.⁽⁸⁵⁾ This resulted in protests by the French Ambassador in Tokyo in September.⁽⁸⁶⁾

Meanwhile, the visit to Hanoi of Luang Phrom Yodhi, the deputy Minister of Defence, on his way to Tokyo, was not well received by Decoux, who opposed even the slightest alienation of Indo-China's territory. This refusal convinced the Thai leadership that Indo-China was defaulting on its previous commitments, and the Thais sought Japanese help diplomatically via Luang Phrom's talk in Tokyo late in September 1940.⁽⁸⁷⁾

Luang Phrom's visit prompted Decoux to re-evaluate the situation. He was compelled to get the ratification done "before Phrom concocted any joint plans with the Japanese."⁽⁸⁸⁾ Thus, on September 10, Lepissier was able to hand over a list of members of French negotiating party although still unable to say when they would arrive.⁽⁸⁹⁾ But there seemed to be no coordination, probably because of the lack of communication due to war, when the Thai Minister at Vichy was asked by the French Foreign Minister on the same day to ratify the Pact without the usual formality of exchange of ratification documents.⁽⁹⁰⁾

The Thai reply⁽⁹¹⁾ was conditional and only a request with points for negotiation,⁽⁹²⁾ but the French construed them to be "demands" as was evident from Vichy's reply of September 17. This also stressed French determination to defend the territorial integrity of Indo-China against any attacks.

On September 25, the Thais sent a conciliatory reply, merely pointing out the advantage of the Mekong as the frontier, thus including the return of the two enclaves, to be discussed by the agreed mixed committee. The request for a letter of assurance was also withdrawn.⁽⁹³⁾ On September 28, Lepissier admitted to Direk that he agreed with the Thai cause but was in no position to do anything about it. Seeing that his

diplomatic offensive failed to gain anything, Pibul thus turned to his friends, the Japanese, and Decoux's fear was soon to be fulfilled.

On reflection, had Lepissier been listened to at the Quai d'Orsay in the way Crosby was by the British FO, the matter would have been settled long before, probably with very little ceded. The stern attitude of the post-capitulation France coupled with the imminent encroachment of the Japanese, and the irredentist force at home drove the Thai authorities to claim for more, with some good reasons too.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE GERMANS AND THE ITALIANS

Proximity seemed to govern the relationships between Thailand and Germany and Italy who had no colonial interests in this part of the world. Their relationships were thus of a business rather than a political nature. But to keep the relationships cordial, when Direk attempted to sound out foreign attitude over Thailand's small claim on August 15, 1940, the Italian and the German ministers promptly replied that they understood their governments to be sympathetic.⁽⁹⁴⁾

In mid-October, the Thai authorities stepped up the relationship with the Germans. Colonel Prayoon Pamornmontri, a Minister without portfolio, whose mother was a German, undertook a mission to Europe "ostensibly to arrange for the return to Thailand or for education elsewhere of Thai students now in various European countries."⁽⁹⁵⁾ Pibul told Crosby that Prayoon was also charged with the task of sounding out the German and Italian governments about Thai territorial claims in the event of the break-up of the *status quo* in Indo-China.⁽⁹⁶⁾

The alarm bell was rung in December 1940, in a 'most secret' telegram, 'to be burned after perusal', from the FO to Crosby which said: "I learn from a reliable source which on no account be compromised that Luang Pibul has informed Colonel Prayoon in Berlin that Thailand will be prepared either to come to a Gentleman's Agreement with Germany or to afford her moral support, but only when it appears that England is on the verge of collapse..."⁽⁹⁷⁾

If this source is absolutely reliable, it could mean the opportunistic stand by Pibul and that he would do whatever he could to impact the claim on

Indo-China. It also looked as though the Germans would support the Thai claims in full if Thailand was prepared to depart from her neutrality.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE AMERICANS

Among the Powers of the time, the Thais probably regarded the US with less distrust than any other on account of her distance from Thailand. As the Thais had experienced, distance could mean a proportionate absence of probable predatory designs. However, the Americans' attitude towards the Thai claims on Indo-China had all along been strictly unsympathetic. The American Minister in Bangkok, the newly arrived Hugh Grant, visited Direk many times to reiterate the *status quo* policy of the US government.⁽⁹⁸⁾

Looking from the American point of view, it is understood that the Americans were in a very awkward position over this issue. On the one hand, the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, had denounced every aggressive act by Japan.⁽⁹⁹⁾ On the other, he would surely like to keep Thailand as a good friend by not opposing its "reasonable" demands. The Americans could not very well compromise by having one attitude to Japan and a contradictory one to Thailand. Furthermore, not yet being involved directly in the war, the American government had to keep diplomatic relations with Vichy too. Hence it was really "on the spot".

Had the Americans been indifferent to the matter from the beginning, they might not have been in such an awkward position. But not only was Mr Grant (a political appointee) new to Thailand, he was seen by Crosby as "temperamentally unfitted for his post. He is doctrinaire, vain and extremely jealous."⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ When the popular irredentist campaign was reaching its peak in Thailand, Grant warned the Thai government in general terms against organising any agitation for the recovery of the lost territories.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ In so doing, he made no distinction between the claims Thailand was making even though Direk insisted that all the Thais wanted was the adjustment of the frontier according to the exchange of letters attached to the Non-Aggression Pact unless or until the *status quo* in Indo-China was disrupted when it would demand more. Inevitably, the American attitude incensed the feelings of the Thai nationalists to the

extent that Grant's warning went unheeded, and the Americans were thought to be unsympathetic. This was also seen in London, as commented by B.E.F. Gage on October 20:

"It seems to me that as usual the US attitude in this matter is too didactic and uncompromising and that there is urgent need of coordination of their attitude and ours if the Thai extremity are not to take the bit between their teeth and force the hand of the PM into a pro-Axis policy."⁽¹⁰²⁾

Meanwhile, the Indo-Chinese authority had asked the Americans for military supplies. Although the Americans did not respond in kind, they ordered the off-loading in the Philippines of ten military planes being delivered to Thailand, having already been bought and paid for.⁽¹⁰³⁾ The Thais complained bitterly but to no avail.

After the British intervention to warn the US authority to tone down their rigid attitude, the Americans relaxed a little at the end of October. A Department of State official told Mr Butler of the British Embassy in Washington that the US government was not unalterably opposed to revision of the *status quo*; their attitude was that this should wait until the eventual peace conference.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ But as Crosby noted in reply, though the US Minister might cease forcing his opinions on the Thai government, he had already made a mess of things.

As Britain and France as well as Germany and Italy were involved in the European War, the only Power left to Thailand to turn to for its claims on Indo-China was, thus, Japan. The Americans' rigidity over the whole issue had been counterproductive in this sense.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE JAPANESE

The Japanese planners had always recognised the key role that Thailand would play in their strategy given an Anglo-Japanese confrontation in Southeast Asia. Since 1938, when the Emperor, reviewing the proposed hypothetical war plan, unprecedentedly gave a firm order not to violate Thai neutrality,⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ the military planners had been keeping an eye on any possibility of Thai cooperation to bypass this order and keep their war strategy intact. Apart from being a step towards an attack on Malaya and Singapore, Thailand, if it came into the Greater East Asia Co-

Prosperity Sphere, could also offer rice and other raw materials like teak, rubber, and tin. Thence, the more imminent the Japanese planners saw an Anglo-Japanese war to be, the more urgent it was for them to seek Thai cooperation.

At the same time, Japan was still waging a long-drawn-out war with Chiang Kai Shek's regime in China. In March 1940, Pibul declared publicly that Thailand was not taking sides in this conflict.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ This seemed to be a proper stand to take because if Thailand had sided with any power she would have to face the consequential linkage upon the maintenance of her domestic law and order over the Chinese residents.

The capitulation of France, however, changed the balance of power in the area. Japan began to make demands upon French colonies. As regards Indo-China, following the closure, under Japanese pressure, of the Haiphong-Yunnan railway to war material for China, and the arrival of a Japanese economic mission in Indo-China, by the end of August 1940, the French government had received an ultimatum from the Japanese government demanding a right of passage through Tongking, the province through which the Haiphong-Yunnan railway runs, and the use of naval and air bases "for the purpose of bringing the 'China Incident' to an end."⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ These demands amounted to a major occupation and officially resulted in the Matsuoka-Henry agreement of August 30, 1940, and General Nishihara-General Martin (French C-I-C in Indo-China) military agreement of September 4, 1940.

Pibul and the irredentists thus felt that a Japanese takeover was imminent, and found it necessary to resolve Thailand's eastern border problems with Indo-China as quickly as possible, a distant but significant linkage indeed. But although the Japanese had, indeed, a plan for the partition of Indo-China in certain eventualities, in 1940 they would like Indo-China to be kept under France still as it was easier to exploit.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Hence, part of it was used as a bait to lure Thailand into cooperating with Japan.

Just before the Non-Aggression Pact was signed, Crosby reminded Prince Varn that the Japanese were continually trying to persuade the outside world that Thailand was united to them by ties of especially close friendship, and they would exploit to that end, for all they were worth, any new pact which they might sign at Bangkok.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ This observation was later proved to be correct. For instance, towards the end of

1939, when the air services agreement with Thailand was signed, Japan's Minister of Communications pushed the point of Thailand's cooperation and understanding "as regards the work of creating a new order in East Asia."⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Thus Japan was trying to misinterpret and mislead people to believe that Thailand was in league with her.

At the same time, Japan's propaganda machine was working to destroy any close relationship between Thailand and Britain too. At the end of October 1940, Japanese news agencies (Nichi Nichi Hanoi, and Domei) accused Britain of supporting Thai claims against Indo-China for various benefits of Britain. The British FO saw this as possibly a warning to the Thais not to associate with Britain.⁽¹¹¹⁾ Since Crosby was so close to the Thai cabinet ministers, Britain could not deny it without strengthening the Japanese conviction either. Hence the matter was left to phase out gradually.

Overtly, the Japanese, at times, showed their high-handed posture too. On August 21, 1940, Direk was, for once, visited by the Japanese Chargé d'Affaires, Mr Asada, who arrogantly told him that the Thai government should not have asked the British and the American opinion on Thai claims on Indo-China. To this Direk replied that the Thais did so to express its pure intention which was no secret to anyone.⁽¹¹²⁾ That Direk felt obliged to find excuse for a bona-fide and legitimate act was a good indication of Japanese aggression. Meanwhile, Japan also tried another diplomatic move to gain kudos by suggesting promoting diplomatic relations between Japan and Thailand to ambassadorial level, but the negotiations were not far advanced when Mr Murai was appointed the next Minister to Thailand.⁽¹¹³⁾

As an acknowledgment of the Japanese dominant position in this part of the world, Pibul decided to send a military and naval mission to Japan, in August, headed by Luang Phrom Yodhi, the deputy Minister of Defence. There was also to be another mission headed by Luang Sinthu to go to Europe in September, including Germany and Italy, but not Britain.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Crosby promptly pointed out to Pibul that these were bound to be exploited to the fullest extent by Japan and the totalitarian Powers and that anyone could construe that Thailand was departing from her declared policy of neutrality. To this Pibul replied frankly that he was only concerned with the recovery of the lost provinces and he realised that Thailand would never get them back without the consent of Japan. Hence

the forthcoming mission to that country, whilst the mission to Europe would visit Germany and Italy for the purpose of inducing the governments of those states to put in a good word with Japan for Thai territorial aspirations.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ In the end, Pibul accommodated Crosby's suggestion of another mission to British territories, and the issuance of an official communiqué in advance respecting both missions so as to anticipate exaggerated or mendacious reports from the other side. While Direk was seeking the opinions of all the other foreign powers about the Thai claims in mid-August, one of Pibul's close confidential emissaries, (Rear-Admiral) Luang Sinthu, commander of the navy, secretly confided to Mr Asada, the Japanese Charge d'Affaires, in the absence of the Minister in Tokyo, that Thailand considered it essential to work in concert with the Japanese as far as irredentist plans were concerned. In view of Luang Sinthu's high position — he was also the Minister of Public Instruction — Asada reported, "there can be no doubt that his words reflected the desires of his chief,"⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Pibul. Luang Sinthu asked Asada to use his "good offices" to support Thailand's irredentist claims when Luang Phrom discussed this in Tokyo. But when this was done in September-October 1940, the emphasis was merely on Japan's diplomatic support, probably because Pibul did not trust Luang Phrom enough to grant him plenipo-tentiary powers as the Japanese had demanded.⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Thus no military cooperation was achieved yet.

Meanwhile in Bangkok, on September 28, 1940, another of Pibul's private emissaries, Vanich Pananont, secretly approached Commander Torigoe, the Japanese Naval Attaché, and informed him on behalf of Pibul that he had made the decision to rely on Japan.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ This signified his readiness to make a firm commitment in favour of Japan's "New Order in East Asia."

On October 1, Pibul confirmed this as being his intention by declaring bluntly that Nai Vanich's words "represent my true feelings." He gave Torigoe his oral commitment in this manner:

"He would permit Japanese troops to cross Thai territory if necessary. He also said that he would consider providing the Japanese armies using his territory with necessary supplies. Finally he agreed to supply Japan with the raw materials it needed... All these commitments were made on the assumption that Japan would reciprocate and assist

Thailand in its irredenta.”⁽¹¹⁹⁾

This was what the military planners in Tokyo had been looking for since the hypothetical attack plan was objected by the Emperor in 1938. Although Pibul could not give a written confirmation, the Japanese could accept that it might leak, if written, because the Thai cabinet might know.⁽¹²⁰⁾

The British also got some wind of these negotiations as shown in an ‘immediate and secret’ telegram, in December 1940, which was ‘to be burnt after perusal’, condemning the alleged agreement with Japan who would, in turn, help the Thais to regain her territories.⁽¹²¹⁾ The Thai liberals, however, had no inkling of this as Direk still earnestly insisted to Crosby in November that Thailand had not entered into any agreement with Japan.⁽¹²²⁾

In November, to show her sympathy for the Thai cause, Japan decided to sell Thailand some fighter aircraft⁽¹²³⁾ as a direct result of the Americans stopping the delivery of Thai planes in Manila.

Crosby once recorded his opinion that if the Thais “lose faith in our ability to protect ourselves, let alone them, they will walk over into the Japanese camp. There will be nothing else for them to do!”⁽¹²⁴⁾ By October 1940, Pibul probably had given up on the British. At the same time, the welcome attitude of the increasingly powerful Japanese beckoned Pibul into their orbit, using Indo-China as the main bait. Flood perceptively described Pibul’s view in this fashion:

“Yet, in his eyes, the only alternative would be the abandonment of the claims on the Mekong that he earlier believed could be realised easily. This would in turn cause him a loss of face among his countrymen, and there were domestic political rivals waiting to take advantage of such an eventuality.”⁽¹²⁵⁾

Hence Pibul turned to the Japanese, the pattern which was epitomised by his secret commitment to Torigoe.

THE CONFLICT

Diplomatic talks seemed to be suspended in November when fighting broke out, sporadically at first. The account of the hostilities

varies according to the sources. Crosby, with hindsight, wrote that

“It may be a disputed point as to who actually fired the first shot in these hostilities, but there can be no question that the Siamese prosecuted them with ardour, albeit the conflict, fortunately, never attained the proportions of a serious war...”⁽¹²⁶⁾

What was undisputable was that recrimination occurred first. Accusations flew across the borders. Raids were followed by retaliatory raids and counter-raids, etc. There were considerable bombing and exchange of gunfire and artillery. Each government accused the other of border violations and maltreatment of the other's nationals in the classic manner, but both sides showed genuine reluctance to come to grips.⁽¹²⁷⁾

Parallel to this fighting was the war of words or propaganda. Both sides tried to make sure that every advantage they made was known to their citizens as well as the other side's. Any disadvantage was kept as secret as it could be. A good example of this was the naval battle near the Island of Sichang (เกาะสีชัง) on January 17, 1941. The Thai public enthusiastically greeted this as a naval triumph. In fact it was a disastrous and crushing defeat with over 800 Thais dead.⁽¹²⁸⁾

Each skirmish reported only acted as a catalyst to the Thai irredentist aspiration. As early as mid-November a broadcast by Vichitr, allegedly in the name of the public, virtually demanded that Thailand go to war.⁽¹²⁹⁾ This was echoed by various extremist groups, especially the “Thai Blood”. Anti-French feeling was at its height. Thai propaganda was popularised by the daily conversation between the two characters on the government-controlled radio — “Nai Man and Nai Kong” (นายมัน นายคง) who traded insults with a Thai language broadcaster on Radio Saigon whom they nicknamed “Mr Kerosene.”⁽¹³⁰⁾ (นายน้ำมันก๊าด) Prince Varn was also involved in this brawl with “Mr Kerosene.” Using his pseudonym “Waivarn,” (ไวยรรณ) he wrote many articles attacking various French policies as propounded by “Mr Kerosene.”⁽¹³¹⁾

While the border fighting was going on, diplomatic games were also being played behind the scenes, some secretly, some overtly. It seems that both the Thai and Indo-Chinese leaders would have liked to settle the issue on their own, but needed mediation by a third party,⁽¹³²⁾ as they faced the problem of trust between them. At the same time the Japanese were trying to exert their dominance by intervening in the

dispute as an arbitrator or at least to emulate the British in the matter. The British, for their part, wished to act as mediator to win prestige, but found themselves unable to back it up with strength, without support of the US.

In November, and again in December 1940, the Japanese informally proposed mediation in the dispute, but both were refused by the French.⁽¹³³⁾ This probably gave the Japanese a pretext to give more military assistance to the Thais while refusing to furnish French Indo-China with ammunition and arms.⁽¹³⁴⁾ When the French protested, the Japanese did not deny these activities but minimised them and said that Japan's objective was to keep pace with Great Britain which was constantly trying to increase her hold over Thailand by supporting Thai territorial claims. The Indo-Chinese authorities also stated categorically that the Germans gave the Thais a helping hand because the German Armistice Commission had forbidden the transport of troops to Indo-China from any other French territory except Djibouti.⁽¹³⁶⁾

Meanwhile, Crosby was busy reiterating his belief that it would be best if Britain could talk the US into participating in the mediation of the dispute. This would outdo the Japanese. But he met with disapproval as the US Minister in Bangkok was "indiscreetly pro-French in his manifestations of sympathy" and had been known to declare that both Crosby and the British government "are encouraging Thai claims."⁽¹³⁷⁾ Crosby firmly believed that Japan would try hard to get the better of any bargain with Thailand and that Japan was "double crossing" both Thailand and France by inciting each party to fight in the hope that, when they were exhausted, she could intervene as arbitrator at her own price.⁽¹³⁸⁾ Thus, Crosby had been preaching to Pibul urging him to play an honourable and independent role instead of joining up with the Japanese political and economic systems. If so, the solution would be for Britain to mediate. But again, the British realised that unless France was willing to cede the two enclaves and accept the Mekong thalweg as the boundary Britain would not offer as a mediator, and they could not see France agreeing to that. Hence, Crosby recommended quick action and that negotiations be directly between the two parties with British influence "being exercised in the background."⁽¹³⁹⁾

Meanwhile, both the Thai and Indo-Chinese authorities were trying to solve the problem themselves too. The most tangible move

was when Decoux sent Captain Jouan, his aide-de-camp to Singapore towards the end of December 1940. Captain Jouan gave his account to the Governor of the Straits Settlements that Decoux wanted to settle the dispute and wished, as a preliminary, to obtain secret contact with a Thai representative, probably through the Governor's good offices. Decoux would welcome mediation by the US or with Great Britain jointly.⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

By January 16, 1941, the Governor of the Straits Settlements had asked Crosby to act, more or less, as a link between Captain Jouan's preliminary offer and the attitude of the Thais. No immediate answer to the proposal was given, but Pibul invited Captain Jouan to Bangkok for negotiation instead.⁽¹⁴¹⁾ That very night, Pibul sent Vanich to the Japanese Minister in Bangkok, to inform him of Crosby's approach.⁽¹⁴²⁾ Crosby's demarche was also misinterpreted by M. Garreau, the French Chargé d'Affaires in Bangkok, as a British offer of mediation too. In fairness, had it met with success it would have amounted to the British becoming the influential third party in the negotiation and would certainly have reduced the Japanese dominance in the region considerably.

The secret information from Vanich, coupled with the reports of the Thai naval defeat at the Island of Sichang, forced the Japanese to act quickly and decisively. Although Thai reports never showed any Thai disadvantages, it was clear from other sources that the Thais were not doing well.⁽¹⁴³⁾ These might also be known to those people in the informed circles too. Pridi, for instance, said that Pibul realised that the Thai military were beginning to lose the war and thus asked the Japanese to intervene.⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ What he, and most other Thais, did not know at the time was the prior pledge that Pibul had committed to Torigoe.

In Japan, itself, a division occurred. The military clique wished to grab the chance and take action in Indo-China, but Foreign Minister Matsuoka won the Emperor's backing in insisting on asking once again that both parties in the conflict accept Japanese mediation at once.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ On January 20, 1941, a formal request to accept Japanese mediation was made by Matsuoka to the French Ambassador in Tokyo, to be telegraphed to Vichy. As for the Thais, it was not publicly known to whom the offer was made, probably directly to Pibul who, inevitably, promptly accepted. A day after this formal offer, Matsuoka made a speech in the Japanese Diet reminding members of Thai abstention in the League of Nations in 1933, and concluded that "Japan as the leader in East Asia cannot afford

to remain indifferent to such a dispute, which she hopes will be settled at the earliest possible date.”⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ This reflected the Japanese partiality from the start.

To force the French to accept the offer, the Japanese informed the French Ambassador, a day or two after the offer was made, that the British had offered mediation to the Thai government and that the latter had informed the Japanese Minister. The French were warned in violent terms that Japan would not tolerate British mediation (this would amount to French-British collusion), and that unless the French accepted Japanese mediation Japan would be obliged to “take pledges” in Indo-China.⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ This source, a member of the French mission, understood that Decoux “in his telegram to Vichy had consistently taken the line that a direct settlement was possible until a short time ago.” This corresponds with Flood’s account of how Matsuoka confronted the French Ambassador with Decoux’s attempt to arrange a secret deal with the Thais, with British help.⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Vichy, thereupon, felt it had no alternative but to accept.

Although Tokyo Radio announced, on January 25, that Japanese mediation was being accepted by both parties, the Thai cabinet was not notified by Pibul until that same day. Pibul informed, rather than consulted, the cabinet that he could see no way to refuse the Japanese offer and so he had already agreed. Pibul told Direk a day before but asked it to be kept secret. Pridi had no knowledge of this at all until then.⁽¹⁴⁹⁾

On the next day, Pibul sent Prince Varn to see Crosby. Prince Varn thought that “although mediation is not equivalent to arbitration,... both France and Thailand would be under obligation to abide by the decision of the mediator.”⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ His attitude, surely reflecting Pibul’s, made it more likely that a prior arrangement to squeeze the French had been struck with the Japanese. Once the French accepted, they were as good as dead.

The cease-fire on every front was effected at 10.00 a.m., January 28, 1941. The agreement was signed on a Japanese cruiser, the *Natori*, anchored in a river in Saigon, on January 31, 1941. Meanwhile, Japan stepped up her influence by patrolling the waters of Thailand and Indo-China allegedly to prevent clashes between the two fleets. Furthermore, since January 28, a Japanese destroyer had been at Paknam, almost the very place the French man-of-war was when effecting Siamese cessation of territories forty years ago. Direk said it was to ensure “communi-

cation" between the Thai government and their armistice delegation which was then at Saigon, but could not give the "definite" nature of this communication.⁽¹⁵¹⁾ Thus, within a few days of mediation, Japan was able to station her warships both at Saigon and Bangkok, setting a very advantageous precedent indeed.

THE MEDIATION

Once the truce was called, the process of negotiation and mediation began, not surprisingly, in Tokyo, to the disappointment of Direk. The Thai negotiating team was headed by Prince Varn and included more military officers than civilians.⁽¹⁵²⁾ Before leaving Bangkok, Prince Varn told the US Minister, among other things, that

"France will be led to slaughter-pen in forthcoming negotiations. Thailand will seek to obtain such territory as she can, and hopes even to secure Cambodia and Laos which are not coveted by Japan. (latter being content with Tongking)...Japan might possibly ask Thailand for a military pact against Great Britain."⁽¹⁵³⁾

On February 8, a day after the opening ceremony, the harsh claim was made by Prince Varn, to the great surprise of the French side who found it totally unacceptable.⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ The negotiation began to drag on as both sides had to telegraph their governments on most counter-proposals and for further instructions. Meanwhile, there were cross-accusations of violation of the armistice by both sides.⁽¹⁵⁵⁾

The deadlock became apparent and the Japanese military circle began howling for action again. But Matsuoka, believing firmly in diplomacy, proposed his compromise plan to the two parties, on February 17. The Thais were to receive the two right bank enclaves and the three northwestern provinces of Cambodia, except Angkor which was the sore point that the French would never yield, at least for its archaeological and symbolic values. The Thais were also to pay an indemnity of around £1 million for the estates they were to receive.⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ The Thais were disappointed in not getting Angkor and having to pay as well. Prince Varn, the chief delegate, also wrongly believed that Thailand had won the war and thus should get all these territories free. At the same time, Vichy felt that

their pride was being hurt by compensation which might be construed as the purchase of land. The cession of any territory proved hard to swallow too as a member of the French Mission told Sir R. Craigie earlier about the two enclaves that "...although recognised in informed circles to be valueless, the general public, while prepared at a pinch to accept concessions to Japan, would not understand concessions to so weak a Power as Thailand."⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ Hence this Japanese compromise proposal was rejected.

Having rejected the proposal, the Thai government told the Japanese mediator that they would not consent to the extension of the armistice beyond February 25. To add credibility to this, troops were reinforced along the border and the army and air force chiefs of staff were also recalled from Tokyo to Bangkok to prepare the strategy.⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ At the same time, Decoux warned that if hostilities broke out again Bangkok would be attacked from the air.⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

But Matsuoka would not give up easily. He pressured the Thais into agreeing to extend the cease-fires date to March 7, which the French favoured. Immediately he drew up a second plan, similar in nature to the first, and had it approved by the Emperor to bypass any military objection. The final date of February 28 was also set. Furthermore, the Japanese made some indicative measures, notably urgent preparations for the evacuation of Japanese subjects from Indo-China.⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ Berlin was asked to apply pressure on Vichy. Matsuoka also threatened to disregard the guarantee of French sovereignty over Indo-China under the Franco-Japanese agreement of September 1940.

Under such pressure, after some mix-up between Vichy and its representatives in Tokyo,⁽¹⁶¹⁾ the cabinet in Vichy accepted this second plan on February 28 with five conditions attached. The significant features were the demilitarisation of the retroceded territory and the retention of some vital sites along the Mekong as well as some islets in it. Also, the French insisted that and that any settlement must be guaranteed final.⁽¹⁶²⁾

This final offer to the Thais, apart from the two right bank enclaves, included the whole of Battambang, about two-thirds of Siem-reap and about a third of the province of Kampong Thom.⁽¹⁶³⁾ The head of the French negotiating team argued with the Japanese that most of Indo-China's rice surplus came from Battambang and thus France was not prepared to yield to Thailand, but was prepared to part with other less fertile areas like North Luang Prabang, stretching right up to the border

with China instead.⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ This sounded reasonable to the Japanese but Pibul's refusal was also logical. He argued that the territory in question was coterminous with China and the Thais did not wish to have common frontier with China at any point.⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ Although this point was not yet settled, the Thais could easily accept the Japanese second plan which favoured Thailand on this point although they were somewhat disappointed that the Japanese 'final offer' "should after all have been subject to change on French insistence."⁽¹⁶⁶⁾

While agreement could still not be attained, the Japanese military factions were itching to overrun Indo-China. Matsuoka could only postpone their aggressive plan to March 8,⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ and disregarding the point at issue, a communiqué was issued at 14.00 hr. on March 7, 1941, stating that "The plan of mediation presented by the Japanese government has been agreed to by both the French government and the Thai government on the principal points and the remaining points of detail are likely to be settled within a few days."⁽¹⁶⁸⁾

Thus further fighting was averted as it was the cease-fire dateline, and the Japanese military men were appeased, at least for the time being, as they were convinced by this move that diplomacy did work.

Although the joint communiqué had been issued, Matsuoka's team shuttled between the two camps to influence an agreement over Battambang. Prince Varn insisted upon taking Battambang and the mediator turned to Vanich, a member of the Thai team. They would probably have succeeded too but Tojo, the War Minister, asserted that the Japanese were coercing the Thais too harshly.⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ This strengthened the Thais' hands tremendously and ultimately the French had to yield on this issue.

On March 11, 1941, the settlement was initialled by the three parties. The Peace Treaty proper between Thailand and France was signed on May 9, 1941, and ratified on July 5, all in Tokyo. The most significant feature out of this settlement was probably included in the attached protocols on political insurance and understanding between Thailand and Japan, and France and Japan. It stipulated that neither country would enter into any agreement with a third country whether political, economic or military which might be detrimental to Japan directly or indirectly.⁽¹⁷⁰⁾

THE APPRAISAL

When the dust cleared, the real gainer was neither Thailand nor France, but Japan, as Crosby observed:

“No one except the Japanese was content with this award; the French resented bitterly having to yield up any territory at all, whilst the Siamese nationalists were far from satisfied at having obtained so much less than they wanted.”⁽¹⁷¹⁾

The unhappiest party was surely the French, whose government considered that they had only yielded to *force majeure*. This was well reflected when, after the signing ceremony, the chief French delegate “sardonically recommended Prince Varn to keep Battambang carefully as it was unlikely to remain Thai territory for long.”⁽¹⁷²⁾ This, once again, suited the Japanese who would be glad of any disturbance, whether self fomented or otherwise, as a pretext to further advance into the region.

The Thais seemed ever so grateful to the Japanese too. The People’s Assembly passed a motion of gratitude to Japan for successfully mediating the dispute.⁽¹⁷³⁾ To impress the leading personalities in Thailand, the Japanese cleverly arranged a tour for the members of the Thai delegation after the initial signing. As Netr recollected, he was certainly impressed and proud at seeing the Thai and Japanese flags flying together everywhere he went.⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ (Netr was then a Major and a member of the Thai delegation.)

Within two months of Vanich’s stay in Tokyo as a Thai delegate, news began to leak to Bangkok that trade negotiations between Thailand and Japan were taking place concurrently with the mediation. This was, of course, denied by Direk who had no such knowledge and asserted that the Thai delegation had no authority to conclude a commercial treaty with Japan. Even so, Vanich was finally promoted from ordinary to plenipotentiary member of the delegation. A month later, Direk informed Crosby that Japan had proposed that Thailand should reserve for Japan all Thai rubber in return for which Japan would supply all Thai requirements of oil. He also said that Pibul was disposed to favour acceptance through fear of Japanese coercion.⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ However, this was not approved by the State Council. Though the matter was suspended, it showed the influence being exerted by the Japanese through favourable channels, without the knowledge of it by any other faction.

Naturally, the Japanese press construed most activities as favouring Japan. An *Asahi* special report from Bangkok said that the settlement, through Japanese mediation, had made two great contributions towards the establishment of the mutual prosperity sphere. They were the elevation of Thailand's international position and the establishment, through her overwhelming diplomatic success, of Japan's right to lead.⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ The emphasis was on the right of Japan to lead and the importance of the mutual or co-prosperity sphere in East Asia. The success of the mediation became only a further proof of Japanese dominance.

In Thailand, towards the end of April, a victory parade was held. There was a nationwide celebration for the return of the territories. Promotions were effected for the officers, with Pibul himself rising from Major General to Field Marshal.⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ To the public, his position was enhanced, as "the leader" who had brought back some "lost" territories to the country. But to foreign observers, Pibul's action resembled that of an erratic man who had something to hide, which he had. His indecision was noted by B.E.F. Gage in this manner:

"Luang Pibul is in a state of dithering uncertainty. He fears Japan's immediate striking power but he is by no means convinced of her ability to win ultimately... He swings backwards and forwards in an endeavour to put off the evil day when he has to make the fateful choice."⁽¹⁷⁸⁾

Earlier on February 11, having learnt of further Thai-Japanese intrigue in various schemes, Gage went as far as to brand Pibul "a treacherous villain who does not hesitate to give the most solemn assurances with every intention of breaking them if it suits him."⁽¹⁷⁹⁾

Domestically, Pibul tended to become more and more a military dictator. Crosby described it thus:

"...Scant attention has been paid to the principles, as distinct from the show, of democracy and of constitutionalism in Thailand...Luang Pibul sometimes communicates his decisions for approval only after he has committed himself by taking action upon them. In a number of instances, more especially within the domain of foreign policy, he has been known to conduct negotiations of the greatest importance in secrecy and without notifying his

colleagues in the Government at all..."⁽¹⁸⁰⁾

Pibul once said in the cabinet meeting that the Indo-China dispute was only his excuse to defer his own reply to the question of siding with any party to the War. He meant to regain the territory peacefully but failed and suggested that once the territory was regained, a new cabinet should be set up, without him as the premier.⁽¹⁸¹⁾ But as he neither resigned nor reshuffled his cabinet, it was only words in thin air to gain some sympathy.

On the whole, the Indo-China dispute was a result of the linkage of Thai external and internal factors. The increasing challenge by Japan to dominate Asia and the fall of France were the main external factors. The domestic drive by the rising irredentists forced Pibul's hands to act likewise. But the most important factor that coiled the external situation and internal aspirations together was probably Pibul's own disposition to indecision and the commitment he made to Torigoe. The timing and the people's attitude seem to coincide for such a policy to take place.

As for Thai policy, although strict neutrality was out of the question for Thailand because, unlike Switzerland, Thailand lacked many factors which were essential to support its own stand of neutrality, it seemed that Thailand went to the other extreme without exploring other possibilities. For instance, Thailand could have stayed indifferent to French capitulation and maintained only the small claims. It surely was not a "black or white" case. But once the dispute flared up into fighting between the two weak nations, the situation was only ripe for the plum to be picked by the strong power of the day.

Believing that Pibul's action was opportunistic,⁽¹⁸²⁾ Seni was in a difficult position as the Thai Minister to Washington. But when a listener compared the whole affair to the fable of a fox which first fattens up rabbits and then eats them," Seni wittily quibbled "What would you do if you were a rabbit?"⁽¹⁸³⁾ Looking at it from the rabbit's point of view, the Thai foreign policy was quite successful here if no further commitment had been made.



CHAPTER SEVEN

INTO THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The Thai-Indo-China War and the consequent mediation by the Japanese was just a phase in the fast-developing, tension-ridden situation in the Far East. No sooner had the Thais realised the full implications of their adventure that they were faced with an even greater strain — being fought over by the democratic Allies and the dominant totalitarian Japan. Both sides put severe pressure and counter-pressure on Thailand economically, politically and militarily. This chapter sets out the development of these pressures, which are of major importance, leading up to the Japanese invasion. In response to these pressures, Thai reactions to show the country's declared policy of neutrality are similarly listed.

This chapter and the next will be different from previous ones in that it will not attempt to distinguish Thai domestic and foreign affairs. This is so because the external inputs, at this juncture, were so dominant that domestic policies were merely reactions to environmental circumstances. Even domestic infighting was not how to control power at home, but how to control the ways and means of foreign policy to achieve Thai independence, sovereignty and, above all, survival. Thus, domestic arguments within the ruling circles concerned mostly how to implement such foreign policy objectives and not what the objectives were or should be. Furthermore, unlike the categorical process in earlier chapters, there will be no separate account of the bilateral relationships between Thailand and each Power. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the position and attitude of the Powers has already been set out in

the last chapter and the time to be covered in this chapter coincides with the last few months of it and approximately another six months after it. Secondly, within these six months, events moved so fast that one event usually led to another, with more than one Power being intensively involved.

ECONOMIC PRESSURE

When the Japanese lured Vanich into agreeing to sell them all tin and rubber produced in Thailand in 1941, Direk and Adul objected to such a contract which was an *ultra-vires* act on Vanich's part, and they prevailed in the cabinet. To show neutrality, Thailand resorted to a competitive open market for both commodities and acquitted itself of the situation. Nevertheless, the Japanese blamed the Thai FO as obstructionist.⁽¹⁾

When the Allies froze Japanese assets in July 1941, the Japanese turned financial pressure on Thailand. They pressurised the Thai government for some loans to buy Thai commodities. The cabinet asked Pridi to consider the whole matter. In the Financial Adviser's opinion, "(Thailand had) no choice but to make a financial gesture to Japan in order to maintain trade and particularly to secure the completion of large rice contracts outstanding with Japan."⁽²⁾

Pridi agreed that Thailand had to bend a little to survive. Even so Pridi, the Minister of Finance, was the one to dictate the terms. Tactically, to implement the loan, a consortium of three Thai banks granted the Japanese Yokohama Specie Bank a credit of ten million ticals, to be repaid in gold. Article three of the agreement stipulated that "such gold to be freely transferable to Thailand or to remain earmarked in Japan." This insistence was based on a determination to avoid having anything to do with the yen which was what the Japanese wished to repay in.⁽³⁾

The Japanese tried to circumvent Pridi by threatening Pibul in a letter that if these terms were insisted upon, the Japanese Bank would have to close its doors in Bangkok and that Pridi "was a partisan of gold and hard currencies and an old-fashioned conservative financier and was an intransigent Minister with whom it would be quite impossible to

harmonise Japanese ideas..."⁽⁴⁾ However, Pridi's insistence won the day because it was undoubtedly beneficial to Thailand and thus Pibul could not jeopardise it without damaging the country's finances, and hence, his government.

Though this loan, on the surface, might seem to outsiders as evidence of Thai cooperation with the Japanese, it had to be borne in mind that if the Thais did not comply, the Japanese could regard it as Thai cooperation with the Allies and stronger measures might be exerted upon Thailand. Pridi was also quick to point out that these concessions "wrung from Thailand, are far outweighed by other demands which she is resisting or will resist." This loan was also "necessary in order to secure payment of sums due to Thai firms."⁽⁵⁾ Pridi also asked the Financial Adviser Mr Doll to ascertain if the Allies were prepared to back him up in resisting further Japanese financial pressure. This was wise because the ball was now in the Allies' court. However, the response was bureaucratically slow. Doll agreed with Pridi that he should get full support, but could promise nothing tangible apart from referring his recommendation to London.⁽⁶⁾

The importance of this first economic pressure could be seen in the fact that the head of the Japanese negotiating team was Mr Ono, the Financial Adviser to the Japanese Government and ex-deputy Minister of Finance. When Pridi twice refused to see him, Mr Ono endeavoured to force an interview with him again by appealing to Pibul who declined to intervene.⁽⁷⁾ Thailand had thus won the first round, psychologically.

By mid-August, the ten million ticals credit had been used up. Pridi again declined to grant Mr Ono an interview on the advantages Thailand would get by joining the Japanese investment system. Another protest to Pibul was made, but to no avail. A few days later, Crosby reported Ono's request for "far-reaching facilities to finance purchases in Thailand of very large quantities of rice, rubber and tin and he foreshadows other 'fundamental' demands as well." This would simply force the entry of Thailand into the "new order" and into the so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Crosby's view was that Japan would go all out to achieve this end, and that "economic demands will be followed in due course by military ones."⁽⁸⁾

The Japanese request was made in another demand of 25 million ticals loan. Gold for this, the Japanese stipulated, was to be earmarked in

the National Bank of Japan, to be exported to Thailand only in case of urgent need and then only in amounts sufficient to satisfy that urgent need. Pridi, through the consortium, resisted tenaciously. He argued on the ground that there were other foreign trade balances to consider as well, and that the Thais must be in a position to sell gold to counteract the effects of an over inflation of credit caused by such a huge addition to the note circulation without any real accretion of national wealth. To this, he demanded that never more than ten million ticals worth of gold should remain earmarked in Japan. Mr Ono furiously refused and, within 90 minutes, launched an official complaint to Pibul describing Pridi as a “cantankerous obstructionist”.⁽⁹⁾ But Pibul entirely endorsed Pridi’s line of action, with his last words “quite right! No gold, no ticals.”⁽¹⁰⁾ Thus Mr Ono had failed in his mission to force Thailand into the yen bloc. The Japanese remarked ruefully that the Thais had looked down upon Japan, and preferred to trust the British and the Americans by depositing gold reserves in these countries. Finally, the Japanese agreed to the terms set by Pridi.⁽¹¹⁾

Apart from tin and rubber, another commodity which affected Thailand was the import of oil in various forms. As seen earlier, Thailand had, by the end of 1940, come to rely on the Japanese for oil. Early in 1941, the Japanese supplied oil to Thailand only on condition that their demands for tin and rubber were satisfied. Hence the Japanese did not supply sufficient amounts when Thai tin and rubber were put on the open market. To succeed in evading Japanese control of oil, the Thais looked for support elsewhere. The American Minister Mr Grant was unsympathetic but, fortunately, Crosby was more realistic. He saw that without help in essential supplies Thailand could only go into the Japanese camp, while the Americans believed Thailand had already done so. Crosby advocated immediate help and oil was promised.⁽¹²⁾ In October 1941, a small amount of aviation spirit for the Thai Air Force was sold to Thailand.⁽¹³⁾

The economic battle to win Thailand’s goodwill did not stop there, and the Thais did their best to capitalise on it whenever they could. A good example was the supply of aircraft. Both the Japanese and the Allies tried not to supply any at first but when the Japanese were prepared to, the Allies followed suit.⁽¹⁴⁾ Similar competition could be seen in the case of supply of gunny bags for the export of rice,⁽¹⁵⁾ and the

Japanese attempt to break the British monopoly in tin mining.⁽¹⁶⁾ On the whole, economic pressure as well as assistance were applied by both the Allies and the Japanese with the aim of preventing Thailand from joining the other side.

MILITARY PRESSURE

In April 1941, Japan negotiated a Neutrality Pact with Russia. This was seen as a preparation to wage war in the southward direction without having to worry too much about the rear. That Germany attacked Russia on June 22, 1941, also lessened the Japanese fear on the Russian front considerably. Towards the end of July, Japan forced Indo-China to allow her to establish bases in southern Indo-China.⁽¹⁷⁾ This gave the Japanese the capability to strike at Malaya by air and sea from Camranh Baynot.

The Allies' response was immediate but not really strong. The Americans reacted first by freezing Japanese assets and imposing a total embargo on trade between the two countries. The British did likewise.⁽¹⁸⁾ This further forced Japan to search for control of an oil supply. Thailand also became the Japanese next strategic target. Crosby agreed with Direk that

“Nothing less would suffice than a public warning to Japan that any attempt by her to violate the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Thailand would involve her in war with Britain and the USA. This should be done at once since the Thai people were growing deeply discouraged and felt that, despite all our verbal protests to Japan, we were abandoning them to their fate...”⁽¹⁹⁾

But without the Americans, the British were in no position to help Thailand as recognised by the Commander-in-Chief of Far East and China (CIC, FE) who believed that at the time the British could not give the Thais “a guarantee of military assistance”. This view was also endorsed by Foreign Secretary Eden.⁽²⁰⁾

Once in southern Indo-China, the Japanese government presented Pibul with a secret letter requesting that discussions should be initiated on military questions.⁽²¹⁾ Pibul lost no time in imparting this

burden to Crosby to ascertain the attitude of the British Government if Thailand refused the Japanese demand and her neutrality was consequently violated. Need for urgent help was stressed but once again help depended largely, if not entirely, on the Americans.⁽²²⁾

Meanwhile, a Thai military mission visited Singapore and tried to bring home the fact that without prior help Thailand was unable to resist Japanese force and that the defence of Thailand was a forward defence line of Malaya too. The mission also stated what the immediate requirements of Thailand's armoury were.⁽²³⁾

Even when the British could, later, spare some planes and field guns, there was a cleavage between the military and the FO. The former did not want any armaments to fall into the Japanese hands for fear of their prototype being discovered. The FO and other field officers including the CIC FE, on the other hand, believed that though the problem was fundamentally military, any help would put heart and energy into the Thais who would otherwise go over completely to the Japanese camp. Thus, military aids were also political weapons, and the Thais' attitude had to be determined by the degree of assistance which they thought they could get from the British or the extent to which they feared military counteraction on the British part.⁽²⁴⁾

Militarily, the British objective was to avoid war with Japan as long as possible in order to concentrate on defeating Germany. Japan's increased striking capability from bases in southern Indo-china was recognised. The danger of Japanese penetration into Thailand to secure bases for shore-based aircraft and to launch a land attack on Malaya and Burma were appreciated. It was realised that

"Defence of Malaya best achieved by advance into Kra Isthmus to deny to enemy air bases within normal bombing range of Singapore, to increase depth in defence and to shorten land frontier. Plans for this are under consideration."⁽²⁵⁾

This would be as much as the British could do in the way of active countermeasures. Direct guarantee to assist Thailand was not possible. It was viewed that a Japanese move into Siam would "certainly be a threat to our interests, but would not necessarily be a precursor of an immediate attack."⁽²⁶⁾ This was, of course, based on the hypothesis that the Americans would not help.

However, this attitude was not spelled out to the Thais for fear of its leakage to the Japanese. Thus, throughout this period the Thais always appealed for material support before being attacked and reiterated the request for a firm declaration of help if attacked, but again, to no avail. The only feasible help at the time was limited economic assistance. It was not till November 20, that Crosby was allowed to tell Pibul that the British were prepared to supply Thailand with some field guns, howitzers and ammunition from Singapore.⁽²⁷⁾

Meanwhile, the British were cooking up operation "Matador" to establish themselves in the Kra Isthmus and thus to deny the same to Japan.⁽²⁸⁾ The date for this was not specified. But when Crosby heard of this preemptive plan, he realistically pleaded against it, for political reasons.⁽²⁹⁾

In mid-November, Crosby was advised by an "exceptionally well informed, close to Government circles, Asiatic friend" of his that it was essential for Britain to come to some secret military understanding with Pibul quickly before he veered to the side of Japan again. His reason was that Vanich had proposed that Japan should be pacified by the admission to Thailand of four thousand Japanese immigrants. Pibul was inclined to agree but was dissuaded by Direk and Adul. On the plus side, this informant confirmed Pibul's intention of moving the capital to a defensible town in the north.⁽³⁰⁾ In answer to this suggestion, the next day the FO sent a telegram saying "it is not clear what basis exists at present for 'definite understanding'."⁽³¹⁾ So it seemed that the British would undertake nothing to encourage the Thais militarily, apart from supplying some field guns, and occupying the Isthmus of Kra if the Japanese invasion was certain.

Throughout this period, though the British and the Thais had frequently appealed to them, the Americans played a passive role, at least in terms of military help or a guarantee for Thailand. On the other hand, the Japanese military penetration into Indo-China proved to be only the beginning of her southward expansion. Another step in her offensive was marked by the appointment, at the end of October, of Mr Ototsugu Saito, Director of South Seas Bureau of the Japanese FO, as Counsellor at the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok. Saito was described by Sir R. Craigie, the British Ambassador to Tokyo, as having generally been associated with the southward expansion party in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁽³²⁾

So the trend was not difficult to detect.

Early in November, the military-civilian coordinating committee in Tokyo decided that if the talks with the US in Washington failed, Japan would go to war. On November 6, the Japanese COS ordered General Terauchi, the commander of the new Nanpo Army, to be ready by the end of the month, to undertake the task of attacking the Philippines, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and Burma. Thailand would be asked to make a military agreement. But if the Thai forces resisted, Japan would occupy the country. Thailand, otherwise, would be used as transit for transport, facilities and certain supplies.⁽³³⁾

Thailand thus figured prominently in the Japanese military southward expansion plan. Meanwhile, she also figured in the British plan for the defence of Malaya, by occupying Kra Isthmus, if the military could overrule the Foreign Office which should not be that difficult in time of war. It seemed that, militarily, the Thais could not look for any help, she was stranded between the devil and the deep blue sea.

POLITICAL/DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE

The political structure of the Japanese advance in Asia was the so-called “New Order in Greater East Asia” as declared by Prince Konoye’s government in August 1940. This “new order” was based on the policy declared in November 1938 in which the political, military, economic and cultural cooperation and coordination between Japan, China and Manchukuo set up a “stability sphere” in East Asia. As the world situation had changed somewhat by 1940, the “new order” now included the South Seas as well. Thailand was judged to lie within this sphere too.⁽³⁴⁾

Since their capitulation in June 1940, the French were hardly able to resist any demand made by the Japanese on French Indo-China. Meanwhile the only real American concern, apart from material help for the Chinese in their war against the Japanese, was the Philippines. The Dutch were too weak to resist any Japanese advance on their East Indies colonies. The British, with their vast colonial interests in Southeast Asia, posed as the only force capable of resisting the Japanese. But as Britain was engaged in the war in Europe, her major objectives in the Far

East “were to maintain Japanese neutrality and complete the economic blockade of Germany by persuading or preventing Japan from acting as an agent for Germany.”⁽³⁵⁾ Thus it was not surprising to see the Japanese on the offensive politically and diplomatically in parallel to their economic and military offensive.

Following up a hint made at the end of 1940, in July 1941, the Japanese Legation formally asked the Thai government to upgrade their respective diplomatic representation to ambassadorial status. The Thai cabinet agreed. On August 2, the British and American ministers were asked by Direk if their governments would do likewise. The Americans refused mainly on the ground that a number of small countries had made similar requests, and this might open the flood gates. British firm rejection was based on the contention that Britain had made it a rule not to create an Embassy during war.⁽³⁶⁾

The exchange of Thai and Japanese ambassadors was made in October 1941. Ambassador Tsubokami thus became the dean of the diplomatic corps in Bangkok, replacing Sir Josiah Crosby who was still a doyen Minister. Apart from showing the Thais that they were, in the Japanese opinion, at least as equally important as any other Power, the embassy needed more new staff to run it. This gave good cover for more extensive intelligence work. Furthermore, this move pointed out the hard fact that the West never intended to treat the Thais as an equal while the Japanese did. All these factors fitted in well with the theme “Asia for the Asiatics” and the “new order” policy. The Japanese certainly had chalked up a diplomatic victory over the Allies.

At the same time, the Japanese never stopped putting pressure on the Thai government. Although it was not clear what the Japanese demands actually were, by the end of July 1941, it was believed that, coupled with the demand for a loan from Thailand, Japan had asked Thailand to recognise Manchukuo and the Nanking government. It was also expected that a demand for bases would follow.⁽³⁷⁾ A few days later, Direk confirmed this and added that there had been a demand for more rubber and tin as well. Direk appealed to the British and American governments that the Thai cabinet’s decision to resist the Japanese could only be brief unless material aid was forthcoming. Pibul asked for a public statement by London and Washington that they would not allow the sovereignty and neutrality of Thailand to be impaired. Pibul repre-

sented that “if Thailand is forced to yield through lack of such support no one can blame her.”⁽³⁸⁾ Then, to alleviate the tension, the Thai government yielded to the demand for the recognition of Manchukuo but definitely refused to recognise Nanking. The Foreign Office in London welcomed the assurance of the latter while expressing a regret on the former that it gave an impression of Thai approval to the first of Japan’s major acts of aggression.⁽³⁹⁾ So it seemed that the Japanese had won another diplomatic bout, over Thailand, while the Allies were unable to assist the Thais.

To counter this, Crosby immediately urged the British to supply twelve fighter aircraft to Thailand. Crosby saw this to be useful from a moral rather than a purely military point of view. But the FO felt that this might stir the Japanese to act violently and open war, and that the Thais might take this supply as a forerunner for further supplies. This, the FO feared, might lead the British into a position of having let the Thais down. Coupled with the negative view of the military establishment, the whole idea was scrapped.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Understandably, London had other branches of government to consider while it seemed that field officers only had the “on the spot” picture to judge the position and recommendation. Thus it was not surprising to see cleavages in their opinions from time to time, when the means, to the same end, were viewed differently from different angles. But the episode only served to show Crosby’s increasing frustration over the insurmountable task he was facing in the diplomatic and political race against the Japanese.⁽⁴¹⁾

Furthermore, just as Crosby was unable to convince Grant, the US Minister, so the British FO also failed to convince the State Department (SD) that it was not too late to help Thailand.⁽⁴²⁾ Minister Grant frequently recommended no help as he thought Thailand had already gone over to the Japanese camp. To help the Thais would simply mean the acceptance of the new *status quo* in Indo-China which he had persistently opposed.⁽⁴³⁾ But in May, as the US began to review their attitude towards Thailand, they decided to replace Hugh Grant, who had become identified with the earlier American policy of frowning upon the Thai disturbance of the *status quo*, with a career diplomat, Willys R. Peck, to ensure the closest possible rapport with Bangkok.⁽⁴⁴⁾

On August 6 and 7, Anthony Eden and Cordell Hull announced, in the House of Commons and at a press conference respectively, to the

effect that a Japanese move into Thailand would be considered a step menacing the interest and security of Britain and the US, and that they would oppose any moves of conquest in the Pacific, including Thailand.⁽⁴⁵⁾ This was the first official statement issued by the Allies in support of Thailand after the Indo-China incident. It followed the President's abortive suggestion to the Japanese government to neutralise Indo-China and Thailand. However, when the Thai Minister called on the SD to ascertain the help the US was prepared to give to Thailand, Hull told him that if it was attacked and resisted, Thailand could expect the same category of aid the US had been giving China to fight against the aggression of Japan.⁽⁴⁶⁾ This implied no prior aid at the time unless and until resistance was proven which was very different from Crosby's attitude. Crosby and the Thais maintained that without prior help Thailand could not resist the Japanese without unacceptable loss. Thus if the Thais were to resist the Japanese, help had to come before, and not after, the invasion. Hence, although the announcement put heart into the Thais, it was only an untangible promise.

In mid-August, Crosby realistically summed up the situation and reported that even the pro-Ally Thai patriots complained of the Allies' failure to furnish Thailand with material support.⁽⁴⁷⁾ From then on, it seems that the British policy towards Thailand began to follow Crosby's recommendation.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Meanwhile, the American Minister, Grant, believed that Pibul had a very good understanding with the Japanese and was going along with them independently, believing that this was the best method of keeping himself in power. Rather than losing control, Pibul would accept Japanese dictatorship behind the scenes. Grant's reasoning was spelled out as early as May 12, 1941. Following a telegram reporting a rumour of a coup in Bangkok, he commented that it was not the first time the Thais leaked this out so that the Allies had been importuned to assist the present Government to retain control of affairs. There appeared to be a subtle campaign going on to create the impression that the present Government was very much opposed to the Japanese and that therefore the two great democracies should lend their active assistance to this Government.⁽⁴⁹⁾

Grant's assessment about a Japanese-instigated coup might be correct but, unbeknown to him and the Thais, the British officers in the Far East Command were contemplating its possibility too.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Crosby

thought it was feasible but to obtain a completely satisfactory government, an assurance of military support would still be essential and the British were not in a position to do so. The FO added that the Japanese were not very satisfied with the current Thai government either and remarked that it contained various elements favourable to Britain.⁽⁵¹⁾ Since then, there had been no more documents to that effect.

Towards the end of August, Pibul promoted the pro-Axis Ministers, Prayoon and Vichitr, to act for the Minister of Foreign Affairs. After a protest and suggestion by Crosby, Pibul countered this by elevating Direk to the post of Foreign Minister. Subsequently, on October 31, Vichitr was appointed deputy Foreign Minister.⁽⁵²⁾ In effect, this did not change much of the existing pattern of Thai foreign policy. Direk still dealt with all Powers but Japan.

On September 12, Peck arrived to become the American Minister in Bangkok. The marked change in the American attitude towards Thailand could be detected even in his first report to the State Department. Having described the Thai situation more or less in the same vein as Crosby's, Peck recommended economic help plus the sale of military planes and equipment. To encourage the Thais to resist Japanese aggression, Peck believed that

"It would be preferable to support the Government's official policy of international impartiality and make this policy continuously advantageous to Thailand. The result would be tantamount to 'neutralising' the country without the necessity of obtaining Japan's assent."⁽⁵³⁾

Direk asked both Crosby and Peck to urge their governments to urgently supply military planes to Bangkok. The British felt this supply should come from China's quota and not Singapore's, and in the end none was forthcoming from anywhere. Pibul also asked Crosby what the British would do if Thailand was attacked, and more importantly what measures Thailand should be advised to take for her own protection in concert with the British.⁽⁵⁴⁾ This latest plea came as a result of the reported increase of Japanese force in Indo-China.

As with the British, the Americans now showed some schism between field officers and ivory-tower experts in the capital. Peck advised that Singapore should supply the desired 24 fighter planes to Thailand as this would strengthen Thai determination to resist all

Japanese demands. He stressed that this measure, in conjunction with the American release of commodities, would considerably counteract the effect of the Japanese military threat and Axis propaganda that the US was doomed to be on the losing side because of internal strife and strikes.⁽⁵⁵⁾ But, Mr Stanley K. Hornbeck, the Adviser on Political Relations to the State Department, thought that Pibul and Crosby manifested undue alarm as regards the imminence of Japanese invasion. Although he agreed to supplying the Thais with commodities, he firmly expressed his opinion that weapons and munitions should not be given to the Thais. His general idea was that they would be lying in immobilised and inactive hands. The opportunity cost of the amount taken from the hands of people who actually were resisting the Axis, the British and the Chinese, would be too high. Hornbeck would rather have the Allies, with all available weapons in their hands, tell the Japanese that to violate Thai neutrality would mean war with the Allies. He professed that this would mean more than the Thais, with more weapons, telling the Japanese not to invade.⁽⁵⁶⁾

As usual, Hornbeck's view prevailed in Washington, no matter how strongly Peck had appealed. This culminated in a telegram from Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Peck, reiterating the attitude that militarily the Americans would place Thailand in the same category as China if she were attacked and endeavoured in good faith to defend herself.⁽⁵⁷⁾ The Allies could offer only 12 field guns, 24 howitzers and some ammunition to the Thais, to the dismay of Pibul. The Thais felt that they would try to avoid the war and would only fight if they had to and, worst of all, that the Allies would leave Thailand to fight alone.⁽⁵⁸⁾

Having received only meagre material support, early in December, the Thai government asked the British and the Americans to issue another public statement to the effect that Japan by invading Thailand would incur the enmity and armed resistance of those two countries in addition to Thailand's, thus it was stronger in content than the previous one in August.⁽⁵⁹⁾ Direk's contention was that, though this might not keep Japan from invading Thailand, it would put heart and energy into the Thais, especially the faction which was wavering because of disbelief of actual aid from the Allies when called upon to resist aggression. At least this would save the British and American reputation in Thailand. Direk also asked for an extension of a credit to Thailand for current needs

of commodities. This was agreed to in principle.⁽⁶⁰⁾

As for public declarations, both the British and the Americans were favourable. The British found it necessary to obtain American approval. Thus, on December 6, the FO sent a telegram to Lord Halifax, asking if President Roosevelt would object to Mr Churchill's intended message to Pibul which said:

"There is possibility of imminent Japanese invasion of your country. If you are attacked defend yourself. We shall come to your aid to the utmost of our power and will safeguard independence of your country."⁽⁶¹⁾

The President welcomed Churchill's proposal to send a message to Pibul. He was also sending a message to Pibul on the following lines:

"(a) that the US will regard it as a hostile act if the Japanese invade Thailand, Malaya, Burma or the Netherlands East Indies.

(b) that when peace comes, no matter what happens meanwhile, unless Thais aid the Japanese, the US and GB would work for complete restoration of Thailand's independent sovereignty."⁽⁶²⁾

As can be seen, the President's message offered a commitment of war if Thailand was invaded, while the British message was only a promise of help. As the President merely welcomed the British "proposal to send the message", it could be deduced that he also told the British to be more forthright. In any case, since the Americans had committed themselves, the British were thus assured of full American support against the Japanese. This was reflected in a change of tone when the FO asked Crosby to deliver this message from Churchill to Pibul:

"There is possibility of imminent Japanese invasion of your country. If you are attacked defend yourself. The preservation of the full independence and sovereignty of Thailand is a British interest and we shall regard an attack on you as an attack upon ourselves."⁽⁶³⁾

At last the ultimate assurance was despatched.

INTELLIGENCE AND PROPAGANDA

With the Far Eastern war on the horizon, it was not surprising to see the infiltration and propaganda war between Japan and the Allies in Thailand. Although this had been going on throughout the 1930s, by mid-1941 it had increased greatly in intensity and sensitivity. The object was always the same — to win over the Thais to their camp, or, at least, not to let the Thais join the other camp.

By mid-1941, the FO in London had recognised the value of this infiltration in terms of military, political, commercial and subversive aspects. It was reported that the actual infiltration of plain-clothes military officers was already in progress. If war broke out, the already arranged pattern set of consular and diplomatic staff would proceed to Singapore to form the best political staff that it could be possible to obtain.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Thus, apart from acquiring information and supporting projected military operations, this infiltration also aimed at preparing political staff if and when war began. Surprisingly, the FO went a step further by suggesting the use of the Chinese population in Thailand to spy and counter-spy against the Japanese and to create difficulties in the event of Thailand becoming a Japanese puppet. The FO would also like to initiate some form of collaboration between the Chinese and the Thais in the common cause of resisting Japanese aggression.⁽⁶⁵⁾ British infiltration at this time seemed to be in full swing.

In various despatches to the FO, Crosby reported Japanese infiltration. An obvious one was in July when a Japanese Camera Department came and sent out teams of photographers to record the “cultural entente” between Thailand and Japan. A secret source imparted that a complete list of films already produced included highways, anti-aircraft facilities in Thailand, aeroplanes, the salt industry, British firms in Thailand and various government workshops. Crosby commented that the Thai government probably knew but dared not oppose it. Then came the increase in Japanese tourists to Thailand, especially in the south, in October 1941. Finally, towards the end of November, three new sections were created within the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok allegedly to cope with the increasingly delicate situation in Thailand. They were the Political Affairs Section, the Economic Section and the Intelligence Section.⁽⁶⁶⁾

Both sides might not like each other's moves but they were

legitimate and only personal or semi-official complaints could be lodged with the Thai authorities. For instance, Crosby frankly told Direk early in July that the policy of the Thai government was one of regrettable subservience to Tokyo; flattering allusions to Japan were shouted through a megaphone whereas amiable things about the Allies were whispered in private ears. He expressed concern over Pibul's exaggerated anxiety to avoid anything the least likely to offend Japan. Finally, he talked about how the British could be expected to trust a Government "whose open acts were so much at variance with the private assurances" given to Britain.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Strong though these warnings might be, this seemed to be the most the British could do, in the face of Japanese courting of the Thais, lest the British might lose control of the situation altogether. It was also noticeable that Crosby could convince Direk and other liberals but neither the Pro-Japanese clique in the government nor, most significant of all, Pibul himself.

This could be contrasted with the high-handed manner the Japanese used with the Thais in reproaching the Thai government about inviting Britain and the US to establish embassies in parallel to the Japanese move. Pibul had to beg that the *démarche* made by the Thai ministers in London and Washington upon this subject be kept strictly secret.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Had the Japanese made such an approach to Direk, he could easily have replied fearlessly that it was only fair to do so in pursuance of the Thai declared policy of neutrality. But not the nervous, dictatorship-leaning Pibul.

On many occasions the rumours of a coup against Pibul were played up by both sides, some without any foundation at all. To add to the complication, sometimes the Thais employed these rumours as tactical bargaining ploys to get sympathy and urgent help.

The course of the War in Europe seemed to have a direct effect upon the mentality of a small nation like Thailand, especially upon those Thais who had hitherto been sitting on the fence. The Japanese were not slow to point out the victories of the Axis and the losses of the Allies. When the Allies failed to supply the Thais with sufficient military equipment and other effective aid, the Japanese were reported to have warned the Thais that this aid would be only "lip service".⁽⁶⁹⁾ As supplies were actually shorter than demands, the Allies had no answer to this accusation, but promises. A countermeasure the Allies could give

would be that the result of these promises would be seen when the war was over. Another Allies' publicity would be the comparison of conditions and fate of the inhabitants in small countries who resisted and those who did not resist the Axis aggression.⁽⁷⁰⁾ In times of crisis the promised land seemed to be eluded by the actual might of the day, and in this sense the Allies could hardly impress the vulnerable Pibul.

In terms of mass media propaganda, both sides seriously tried their best to outdo the other. On April 27, 1941, after long deliberation, BBC broadcasts in Thai were inaugurated. Pibul immediately expressed to Crosby "his warm appreciation of the honour done to Thailand" through this. He even allowed Thai Government students to broadcast anonymously.⁽⁷¹⁾ The Thais' response was encouraging as shown in a minute by Mr Gage.

"Thais are not impressed by the present broadcasts which deal mainly with spring and cuckoos (the birds!) in this country. They want political broadcasts..."⁽⁷²⁾

After consulting the FO, the BBC duly complied. At the same time, steps were taken to influence the local press through private assistance and subsidy.⁽⁷³⁾

On July 25, 1941, the official *Japan Times and Advertiser* accused Great Britain of attempting to "disrupt the good relationship that has developed between Thailand and Japan".⁽⁷⁴⁾ When Mr Eden made a speech concerning Thailand in the House of Commons on August 6, the *Nichi Nichi* editorial reproduced essential passages from the speech substituting Japan for Britain. In this, Japan would repel by force any action violating Thai independence which was vital for Thai people, for peace in East Asia, for the establishment of a co-prosperity sphere, and for Japan whose national policy inseparably connected with above aims.⁽⁷⁵⁾ This imitation, among other things, showed how important Eden's speech was, in the eyes of the Japanese.

When the Japanese occupied southern Indo-China and pressed various demands on Thailand, Pibul turned to the British. Around mid-August, Pibul secretly asked Britain to broadcast in Thai from Penang, Rangoon and Manila. He wished particularly to bring out the duplicity of the Japanese in themselves occupying, and in garrisoning with Japanese troops, territories in Indo-China which they had only previously denied to Thailand on the grounds that such territories had, in justice, to be retained

by France. He also asked this to be given to Reuters News Service too, strictly in secret, of course. The British Legation was only too pleased to oblige. The Legation News Bureau also saw to it that the Thai version was issued to the vernacular papers. The result, according to Crosby, had been a wide measure of publicity which had made the broadcast "the talk of the town".⁽⁷⁶⁾ On August 20, 1941, the *Bangkok Times* published an article "Penang Broadcast to Thailand" quoting the myth of racial unity, the Thais' love of freedom, Thailand being induced to make concessions, and the plain designs of the Japanese.

After a short lull, by mid-October there was a truculent Japanese press campaign charging the British with anti-Japanese activities in Bangkok, and Thailand with being pro-Allies. The Japanese press stigmatised the Thai government as a creature of the FO which had traditionally been British in complexion.⁽⁷⁷⁾ Then, towards the end of the month, the British made a propaganda blunder by distributing an anti-Japanese pamphlet in the Thai language purporting to have been issued by the Association for the Protection of the Independence of Thailand. It was denounced by an official Thai broadcast. As its origin was likely to be some British quarter in Singapore, Crosby immediately cabled the FO begging earnestly for a ruling that all anti-Axis propaganda inside Thailand be approved by him. Apparently Eden endorsed this ruling as he had not been informed of it either.⁽⁷⁸⁾ As its origin was only a speculation and the ruling was allowed, no further incidents of this kind appeared again.

As signs of Japanese preparations for an offensive action multiplied, the Thai government felt increasing anxiety over the part it had to play. The government continued to exhort the people to avoid offence to any nation. When the Thais urged the Allies to strengthen their assurance of Thai neutrality the Japanese branded the Thais as being ungrateful to her help pertaining to Indo-China.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Again, in November, a Japanese news article asserted that Thailand was pro-British and ungrateful to Japan. Pibul had to publish a denial⁽⁸⁰⁾ which showed his increasing fear of the Japanese.

Finally, even within the Allied camp, competition existed. In September, Peck volunteered to arrange for the delivery of some American aircraft to Thailand. On his arrival, the Americans were suggested not to rob the British of all credits with the Thais; the Thais should be told

that these aircraft, if supplied, would mean a corresponding reduction in the British allocation from the US, and would therefore represent a sacrifice on the British part.⁽⁸¹⁾ Crosby duly informed Peck of the issue. Had it been ex-Minister Grant instead of Peck, he might have fussed over such an issue. Luckily, the planes were not forthcoming and all could be forgotten. Luckily too, the Japanese got no wind of this and the matter passed quietly.

THAI FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKERS

Up until December 1941, setting aside Pibul's commitment to Torigoe which no one outside his closest clique knew, the Thais had long conducted their foreign affairs according to the declared policy of neutrality. In effect, they tried to adhere to the balance of power theory, but being a small Power, they could hardly influence the balance. Hence, when imbalance occurred the Thais were compelled to adapt themselves which, at times, meant accommodation and concession, in order to preserve the overriding national interest — the survival of independence and sovereignty. By May 1941, Mr B.E.F. Gage of the FO correctly summed up the Thai position in his minute in this manner:

“The Thais are out for themselves only. Naturally they would prefer a balance of power between the Japanese and ourselves, but failing that they will keep in with the strongest, whom they shrewdly suspect to be the Japanese...”⁽⁸²⁾

Although the Thais waged an armed conflict with French Indo-China, Pibul had, more than once, tried to convince the British and the Americans that Thailand still adhered to her neutrality. Reiteration of this policy became frequent when the tension in the region rose and also when Pibul would like to get supplies from the Allies. Towards the end of July, Pibul pointed out that the Thais' duty was to do all they could for peace within the framework of their own abilities which was to say by natural reconstruction, so that progress attained might make Thailand a real haven of peace on the Asiatic Continent.⁽⁸³⁾ This speech was also a warning to the Japanese, who were showing an aggressive mood, that Thailand would fight any invader. Following the complete occupation

of South Indo-China, on July 29, the Thai Publicity Department issued a communique confirming the policy of equal friendship with all countries for the peace of humanity.⁽⁸⁴⁾

In September, Pibul launched an appeal for peace to the belligerents and to all the countries in the world. It was transmitted to the press and communicated officially to foreign representatives in Bangkok.⁽⁸⁵⁾ Pibul's real motives were not known. It might have been that he wanted to show Thai neutrality. Alternatively, it could be construed as his naivety, or even his desire to aggrandise himself in the eyes of the world. As history has shown, his scheme was hardly heard of or recognised by any party, even in his own country.

As the Japanese demands increased, and the Thais had to yield to some, they again turned to the Allies for help. This could come only if the Allies were convinced of Thailand's resolution to resist the Japanese. To this, the Thais answered by passing the Duty of the Thai People During the War Act on September 8, 1941.⁽⁸⁶⁾ A 'scorched earth' policy was declared. It was decreed that if Thailand was invaded by an enemy, her people should wage a total war against the aggressor. Crosby, however, commented that the Act was "well intended, but immature and highly dangerous".⁽⁸⁷⁾ This epitomised the exceptionally sensitive situation Thailand was in. Had she not declared the policy publicly, she would have been pressurised to do so. When she did, observers cast their doubt as to its feasibility.

Worse still, the Thai cabinet was clearly divided into several groups.⁽⁸⁸⁾ The pro-Japanese section included Vichitr, Sinthu, Prayoon, Vanich and Phra Boriphan. The liberals included Pridi, Adul, Direk and Vilas. There was also the indifferent faction. And there were "good" bureaucrats, like Prince Varn who did his best to implement any policy or job set by the Government, or the Prime Minister. Certainly some interviews and activities of individual cabinet members could not be construed as representing the government's policy. One has to assess each incident within the light of the actor's conviction. At times, this led many foreign observers to doubt, justifiably, the sincerity of the Thai government and its policy. Pibul, himself, did not help the matter by changing his mind quite often and, as we have seen, sometimes hid things from his colleagues.

The liberal view was expressed in an article by Dr Carlos P.

Romulo, the editor and publisher of the Manila *DMHM Newspapers*, who had an authorised interview with Direk and Prince Varn. His article, written on September 27, and published in 122 syndicated newspapers of both North and South America, was a good advertisement for Thai neutrality. Direk was quoted as saying "We are pro-Thailand and pro nothing else". Prince Varn illuminated the policy in a terse statement as follows:

"Our strongest armament as a small nation is our uncompromising adherence to moral principles and nothing can sway us away from our neutral position which we believe is the one and only righteous course we as a people can now pursue."⁽⁸⁹⁾

Had the liberals been in actual control of Thai foreign policy, the real gainer would, no doubt, have been Thailand. For instance, Direk was able to plead successfully with Peck for the Americans to supply Thailand with planes. Peck asked whether the Japanese would not protest and Direk answered in this manner:

"The Government had prepared a reply in advance, that is, that Thailand had already purchased some Japanese planes and wished to acquire more but that Japan had refused to sell them."⁽⁹⁰⁾

As it was, the Thais could happily play the Japanese against the Allies to the benefit of the Thai national interest. But, at times, the liberals found it expedient to bend a little to avoid the full effects of the big storm. For instance, Pridi had to agree to lend Japan some money and credit to buy commodities from Thailand.

As the totalitarian stars were outshining the democratic ones, this dominance was, unfortunately, reflected in the Thai ruling circles too. The pro-Axis gained gradual dominance within the cabinet itself and the liberals were easily overwhelmed on most matters where the national fate was at issue. After the Indo-China War, the Siamese government became convinced that there was nothing to be gained from working with the West.⁽⁹¹⁾ Furthermore, the dominating pro-Axis faction believed that there was a lot to gain by siding unequivocally with the Japanese.

The apostle of this policy was none other than Luang Vichitr Vadhakarn. As early as May 1940, a special issue of a report on an official collection of war documents was published. In it, Vichitr wrote a memo-

random on the status of Thailand in the War. In the introduction, he noted that “this memorandum is regarded as an official secret document.” Having briefly surveyed the state of the world, Vichitr concluded that Thailand should set a firm foreign policy and be prepared accordingly. This firm policy was that the Thais had to choose and specify enemies and friends. If enemies entered the country, the Thais should fight, allegedly for neutrality. But if friends entered Thai territory, the Thais should cooperate. Thus, Thai honour would be intact.⁽⁹²⁾ According to Vichitr, strict neutrality was, more or less, impossible.

Vichitr went on to elaborate that cooperation had to be prepared and agreed upon in advance, and not just ‘follow suit’. He pointed out that losses must be weighed against gains, protection from danger against benefit expectation. He cleared the deck by saying that whatever he proposed was not out of personal liking but out of the prevailing situation. He then suggested that if Thailand could avoid the Japanese might, it should do so. If not, the only alternative he could see was to befriend the Japanese. He believed that by doing so, the Thais might be able to see some of the important cards in the Japanese hand.⁽⁹³⁾

Vichitr’s argument sounds logical and convincing, and must have attracted many followers. However, if one reads it critically there seem to be some questionable points in its assumptions and consistency. By suggesting that the only alternative he could see was having a go at befriending the Japanese, he argued on the premise that Thailand was only friendly with the Western nations and not the Japanese. This dubious assumption undermined his previous assertion that “strict neutrality was difficult to maintain”,⁽⁹⁴⁾ because there would have been no “strict neutrality” in the first place. This would, of course, have been contradictory to the 1937 Treaty of Friendship and Navigation and Commerce between Thailand and Japan, which was ratified by the Assembly and had become the law of the land.

In finalising his political cost-benefit analysis of cooperating with the Japanese, Vichitr envisaged that if absolutely unavoidable, Japanese troops had to be allowed into Thailand (to use the Thai air bases at least), then an agreement had to be made to specify the areas that would be made available for use by the Japanese. What benefits the Thais would get in return and, most important, that “there should be a firm assurance that ultimately Thai independence would be intact.”⁽⁹⁵⁾ But earlier in the

work, Vichitr wrote that if Japan stirred something up in Indo-China, Malaya or Java, the British and the French might send troops into Thailand to “ensure Thai independence”. By discrediting guarantees of Thailand’s independence by one side and not the other, Vichitr’s argument lacked balance and was not logical enough to pin the fate of the country on. As events later confirmed, it was unfortunate that this view, rather than that of the liberals, became the prevailing force within the Thai decision-making circles.

Vichitr’s thinking was likely to be Pibul’s philosophy too, while the Japanese star was still rising. But as Prime Minister, he could not very well show his true feeling for fear of reprisals by the West & the Thai liberals. Had Pibul pronounced publicly his real belief, the mere fact that such an argument could be defeated would surely undermine his own position. Therefore, Pibul had to ride on the tiger’s back by paying lip service to the liberals and the Western community on neutrality and secretly “playing along” with the Japanese. Pibul was in a tight situation which he led himself into. He thus became nervous, indecisive and fearful of the Japanese tiger who could overwhelm him at any time. The more undemocratic and dictatorial he became, the more responsibility he had to take upon himself as he could not find a popular base for his clique’s decisions, and the more nervous he became.

Pibul’s frequent reiteration to Crosby of Thai neutrality and other open activities by the Thai government to show neutrality led Crosby to believe that the Allies still had a chance with the Thais and thus he urged for help. Although Grant did not buy this, his successor Peck did follow Crosby. In the long run this cultivation of friendship proved worthwhile when the liberals gained dominance in Thailand after the War. But in the short run, while the pro-Axis group were ruling, Crosby and Peck were well deceived.

Having gotten Pibul’s verbal commitment, the Japanese were then able to exert gradual pressure upon the Thai government through Pibul and his clique. The recognition of Manchukuo but not Nanking, on the face of it, looked harmless enough. Though Pibul maintained that Thailand had little to do with Manchukuo and lost nothing in recognising it, that Thailand had to yield to any political pressure at all seems to have constituted a loss. Conversely, it could be argued too that because Thailand had little to do with Manchukuo it was not expedient to recog-

nise or to have anything to do with it at all, at least at this tense moment. Diplomatically, this move accepted the right of Japan to instal a puppet government in another country which was quite different from the 1933 vote of abstention in the League of Nations.

It has to be noted too that the Japanese played their negotiating cards very well. Apart from applying pressure through favourable channels, making big demands all at once forced the Thai cabinet to feel obliged to accommodate or to try to reach a compromise instead of being able to reject the unreasonable demands point by point. That Thailand would not and could not accept Nanking nor Chungking for internal reasons was well known. That Thailand could not allow the use of bases to foreign troops, if neutrality was to be adhered to, was also known. But by putting them in the same package deal with a financial loan and recognition of Manchukuo, it gave room for the Thais to manouvre and reject only the absolutely unacceptable demands.

Having credited the Japanese with their tactics, it is also undeniable that the deciding factor was the pro-Japanese elements within the Thai decision-making circles. If the Thai government was really pro-Thai and pursuing strict neutrality, all demands could be rejected with neutrality as the supreme reason. But a financial loan might be afforded because it was of vital interest as Thai exports could not be paid for otherwise. This would not impair Thai neutrality at all when the terms of the loan were exacted in the manner they were.

Although on August 22, 1941, Direk was elevated to the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs to counterbalance the pro-Axis Vichitr and Prayoon, the fact that Pibul had appointed the latter two to act for the Minister of Foreign Affairs at all showed the direction to which Thai foreign policy was moving. With Vichitr's thinking illustrated in his secret memorandum, why Pibul favoured the Japanese could not be better demonstrated.

Meanwhile, in America, the Thai Minister, M.R. Seni Pramoj, made frequent visits to the State Department to present the Thai case. When the US promised help in the same manner as they did to the Chinese, Seni represented that the situation in Thailand was different. China was large, and the Chinese could withdraw far into the interior in the face of a Japanese attack whereas the Thais could not.⁽⁹⁶⁾ This argument met with little sympathy in the SD, and as early as August

1941 Seni wrote many personal letters to Pibul asking him to resist the Japanese, if attacked. Then Seni would set about paving way in Washington for help. But none of these letters were answered.⁽⁹⁷⁾

Officially, Seni wrote in an article that the Thai government had previously instructed its legations in democratic countries to find out what aid could be expected from these countries.⁽⁹⁸⁾ Seni himself had made numerous reports urging the government to resist the Japanese as far as possible. He sent them to his superior in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the cabinet must have seen them too.⁽⁹⁹⁾ Whatever the merit of Seni's letters, they were not heeded, probably because they were pro-Allies. They were not even referred to in any published arguments.

As the prospect of a further Japanese southward move became more likely, the position of Thailand was discussed within the cabinet, with increasing concern. As early as February 1941, Pibul told a cabinet meeting, with a strong reminiscence of Vichitr's memorandum, that Thailand could not remain neutral, and had to side with one or another belligerent. He himself favoured the Japanese because Thailand got nothing from other countries but Japan.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ This had always been resisted successfully by the liberal faction. When the Japanese began to show their superiority-complex while in Thailand, the general Thai people began to despise them too. Pibul realised this and said in a cabinet meeting that ways had to be found to change this feeling in the people's minds.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Again on December 3, Pibul said to his cabinet that the Japanese had told him that if Thailand joined Japan and won the war, old territories would be returned to Thailand. If it were a battlefield, Thailand would surely be destroyed unless it joined Japan. He expected the war to break out within two weeks.⁽¹⁰²⁾ Thus, Pibul had spelled out his attitude quite clearly within the cabinet.

THE WAR CAME TO THAILAND

At 2.00 a.m. local time on December 8, 1941, the Japanese troops entered Thailand on the land and sea frontiers. There was resistance at every point of entry. The Thai government, however, ordered a cease-fire at 7.30 a.m. Japanese troops were then allowed to pass through Thailand.⁽¹⁰³⁾ In this section, I shall only relate the salient features of this

fateful incident which had a major bearing on Thai foreign policy during and after the war.

It can be established that at about 10.30 p.m. of December 7, the Japanese Ambassador Tsubokami called Pibul but the latter was away inspecting troops on the eastern border. Adul, the deputy PM, took charge in Pibul's absence, and Direk, in his capacity as Foreign Minister, was sent instead to meet the Japanese, who had Vanich in their company. The Japanese asked the Thais to allow Japanese troops to pass through Thailand to attack British territories now that the Japanese were about to declare war on the Allies. Direk maintained that no order could be made by him or anyone else in Bangkok without Pibul who was the PM as well as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and that Pibul had given a standing order to resist any aggression. An urgent cabinet meeting was then convened but they could decide nothing without Pibul. Meanwhile an urgent message asking Pibul to return to Bangkok was sent.

Pibul arrived at around 7.00 a.m. Direk gave a brief account of the situation. Pibul asked for a decision. Pridi suggested that a discussion about this should be held first but Pibul cut short the discussion and asked for decision alone. Everyone seemed to be of the opinion that Thailand could not really fight the Japanese forces. Pibul left the meeting to talk to the Japanese delegates. Half an hour later he returned with Vanich who explained the three Japanese requests. The first was to pass through Thailand. The second was for an Alliance Treaty to defend Thailand, and the third was for Thailand to join in an offensive and defensive alliance against Britain and the USA. If Thailand agreed to the third request, the Japanese would return to Thailand all her lost territories. For a change, the liberal view prevailed and only the first proposal was accepted. Within an hour, Direk signed a treaty to that effect with the Japanese. At noon of that day the Thai government issued a communiqué relating the situation to the Thai people.

When the ceasefire was ordered at about 7.30 a.m., a Thai delegation composed of Prince Varn, Direk and Vanich went to have talks with the Japanese. They reported back to the cabinet at 10.10 a.m. that there would be further agreements on economic and financial matters, but these should not be included in the military agreement to be signed later. Pridi pointed out that Japan had to respect Thai independence and sovereignty in the very strict sense of the word. The agreement to be

made was exclusively on military matters, excluding economic and financial matters. This was to be made clear to the Japanese. The cabinet agreed to this. The same delegation came to a further understanding with the Japanese on four points of negotiation:

1. Japanese passage through Thailand was agreed but Thai forces must not be disarmed;
2. Japanese troops could pass through Thailand, but without stopping at Bangkok;
3. The agreement was limited to a military agreement; and
4. The agreement was to be final, without any later additions.⁽¹⁰³⁾

These four principles became the basis of the eventual three articles of agreement signed by Direk and Tsubokami. The first article stipulated arrangements for the passage and facilities for Japanese troops transiting through Thailand to avoid collision between the two forces. Secondly, the details to implement this were to be agreed upon by military officials of both countries. Lastly, Japan gave an assurance that Thai independence, sovereignty and honour would be respected.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Effectively, Thailand had capitulated and made a passive acceptance of Japanese might.

Amongst the Allies, only the British bemoaned this early capitulation because it would suffer in Malaya, Burma and Singapore as a direct result of Japanese quick passage through Thailand. The Thai capitulation gave the Japanese facilities and a network of communications, all undamaged, reaching right to the frontiers of Burma and Malaya, which was contrary to their declared 'scorched earth' policy. But the fact that Thailand did resist for more than five hours should not be forgotten. Pibul immediately claimed that the agreement allowing this passage was done "under duress". To this Mr Sterndale Bennett in the FO commented that "Using the word in its widest sense, this no doubt correctly describes the position." He also noted that in the last few weeks before the attack, there had been indication that Pibul had been inclined to play with the Japanese more than he had admitted to the British even though Pibul gave an oral assurance to Crosby that if the British resisted the Japanese on Thai territory, Thai forces would not oppose it. Mr Sterndale Bennett concluded that Pibul probably hoped to get the best of both worlds.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾

That the ceasefire was ordered at 7.30 a.m. should be viewed in

the light of the cabinet's decision. The Thai cabinet certainly had to be, above all else, pro-Thai. The safety and survival of the Thai people was of paramount concern. Faced with the imminent destruction of Thailand, responsible quarters had little choice but to accept the most lenient infringement, the passage. It was not the reception of the British message to the general effect: "Fend for yourselves. Sorry we can't help you,"⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ which finally persuaded the Cabinet to accede to Japan's demand. The Cabinet had agreed to the ceasefire without any reference to this message.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ In any case, the message read "Defend yourself," and gave no indication of any inability to help. As a matter of record, Crosby reported by telegram via Washington that

"I have delivered Mr Churchill's message to the Prime Minister but this was not possible till after the ceasefire had been ordered."⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

As it looked at the time, the Thai action was parallel to that of Denmark in Europe with the exception that Denmark had not been accused of being pro-Nazi before the Germans occupied Copenhagen.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Again, this comment seems in some ways fair but at the same time it was rather unfair. Being accused of something could not be equated with being it. At the time, there was no absolute proof of Thailand being pro anyone. It was true that Pibul and his clique were pro-Japanese but Pridi and the liberals were pro-Thai, if not pro-Allies, and the Japanese had more than once accused the Thais of being pro-British.

The point at issue here should be the hypothetical question that if Thailand had been able to keep strict neutrality, would there have been any better alternative for the Thai government to follow when the Japanese did invade the country? It has to be borne in mind, above all, where the responsibility of the Thai government laid. The adoption of the least harmful of the inevitable evils was for them the proper course of action. In this light, it seems that the ceasefire and the eventual terms of agreement were most appropriate considering the circumstances.

That Pibul had made an oral commitment to the Japanese was not publicly known until the publication of E.T. Flood's thesis in 1967.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Therefore this neither represented an issue of contention concerning the Thai status during and immediately after the War, nor in the eventual negotiations between Thailand and the British or anyone else. Thus this would be argued only in terms of Pibul's perception of the world, and

would not have any legality on its own. Only actual activities can be considered as materials to decide the rights and wrongs of each foreign policy pursued.

At 4.15 a.m. on December 7, 1941, Crosby despatched an immediate telegram to the FO with a very interesting fact:

“...The Thai Prime Minister has positive information that a Japanese attack on Thailand was planned for December 3rd. It was postponed at the last moment, but it is to take place in the immediate future...”⁽¹¹¹⁾

It was a moot point whether Pibul knew of the Japanese actual attack in advance, and if he did whether his action, by being absent from Bangkok at such a crucial time, had aided the Japanese takeover in any way. Those who believed Pibul had foreknowledge of the timing accused him of making scapegoats of the rest of the cabinet in deciding what to do when the Japanese advanced. Others believed that Pibul was panic-stricken and was not sure what course to follow.⁽¹¹²⁾ Pibul himself claimed in later days that he had not been forewarned of the timing.⁽¹¹³⁾

In the cabinet, soon after the ceasefire was decided, Pibul said that he had been in touch with the Japanese for a long time. Negotiations had long been underway whether to join them, if not fight them, or to stay indifferent.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Pibul had previously, more than once, tried to convince the cabinet to side Thailand with Japan. It was thus very plausible that Pibul knew roughly when the attack was to start. In fairness to Pibul, Crosby wrote after the event that he thought it “unlikely that the Japanese would have been so imprudent as to reveal in advance, even to Luang Pibul, anything like an exact knowledge of their intentions, unless it were at the moment when they were on the very point of carrying them out and when it was so late that a breach of confidence on his part could not have imperilled their successful execution.” Crosby also described the surprise of some officers of the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok, to support this.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Given the benefit of the doubt, Pibul probably knew of the nature of the impending attack but not its exact timing.

In his prepared defence note, Pibul tried to absolve himself of any blame by claiming that before leaving Bangkok to visit the eastern frontiers he had made Adul and Luang Phrom Yodhi the acting premier and the acting Supreme Commander, respectively. He also alleged that, in his absence, the cabinet should have decided what course of action to

take in the circumstance. It was no good telling the Japanese to delay for a while in such a war.⁽¹¹⁶⁾ This was a sly attempt to blame the rest of the cabinet if the course of action taken was later proven to be wrong or inappropriate.

In theory, the cabinet should have had a collective responsibility, but, at the time, Pibul was virtually a dictator, because on November 12, 1941, Pibul was made the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, with Phrom Yodhi as his deputy. Then on November 18, another proclamation defining this power was made. The Supreme Commander was to have an absolute power commanding the Commanders of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and to appoint any officials as he saw fit.⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Thus, it was inconceivable that any other person, apart from Pibul, could effectively order a ceasefire or any other course of action other than negotiating a delay with the Japanese. Pibul might have delegated his authority to Adul and Luang Phrom, but only orally. This oral order could never be obeyed by any of the armed forces at any time, considering that the country was in a crisis. Without Pibul's personal order, the Thais were governed by the Act prescribing the duty during the War which was passed only three months earlier, and thus had to resist any invasion until further notice. And this, they did.

Pibul claimed that if Adul had decided with the cabinet to maintain neutrality, and Luang Phrom had ordered extensive resistance as planned, since the night of December 7 the fight would have been well on when Pibul arrived, and hence there would not have been any agreements with the Japanese as there were.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ It can be seen that this was only an excuse to avoid any responsibility as Prime Minister as well as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Furthermore, it was a sign of the inefficiency of Pibul's intelligence network that it did not inform Pibul of the attack earlier. In the early evening of December 7, Crosby visited Direk and told him that he (Crosby) heard that British reconnaissance planes had spotted a Japanese fleet from the Vietnam peninsula approaching the Gulf of Siam.⁽¹¹⁹⁾ This kind of information, somehow, never reached Pibul until the cabinet broke the news to him, obviously hours after Crosby's knowledge. When Direk told Adul of Crosby's news, both agreed that Japan was surely entering war.

As there is no conclusive proof, the whole episode will remain controversial until and unless more relevant documents are disclosed.

However, it seems reasonable to say that Pibul had an inkling of the attack but probably not of the exact timing. Given the benefit of the doubt, namely that Pibul's intelligence and communication networks were so bad that an attack could not be detected and reported in good time, Pibul had no idea that the attack had begun until the cabinet was able to contact him. Having made himself a dictator, Pibul could not blame his cabinet for the inability to decide on any course. He should shoulder all the responsibility of any decision as no one else had the authority to order the Thai troops. Thus it was unfair of Pibul to try to make scapegoats of the rest of the cabinet.

That Pibul was absent seemed to be a blessing in disguise for Thailand. Had Pibul been in Bangkok, it was likely, from his pro-Japanese tendency, that he might have capitulated earlier, or even without a fight at all. Thus it was immaterial for the Thai status whether he had been forewarned, although it was significant in domestic politics and, later, in the context of the war criminal charge. His absence meant nearly six hours of stiff resistance which proved the Thai strict neutrality up until the ceasefire order. Without the ceasefire order, Thailand might have been destroyed. Her survival and independence would have been in question. As the Thai-Japanese agreement of December 8 stood, her independence, sovereignty and honour were respected. Thailand only gave passage through the country to and facilities for Japanese troops, which the Japanese would have taken anyway even by destroying Thailand, in no time at all.

The FO recognised this difficulty very well. In a memorandum for Churchill, the FO spelled out points for reply to the allegation that the British did nothing to prevent Siam falling into the arms of Japan. Among other things, it was noted that

“Siam, like others, clung to neutrality...what could be done by (British) diplomacy was done...But diplomacy depends ultimately on physical support. Only way in which full Siamese resistance could have been ensured was by giving a military guarantee which we were in no position to give...(Why did we not attack Japan when she entered South Indo-China at the end of July 1941?) Our policy was necessarily defensive; united front not then formed. It was incursion into Indo-China which brought

about closing of ranks with USA and the Dutch in imposition of complete embargo.”⁽¹²⁰⁾

Significantly too, it was from bases in South Indo-China that the Japanese attack of Southeast Asia was launched, not from Thailand.

Thailand had taken the best course out of all the evils she was faced with on December 8, 1941. She had resisted and, after seeing only destruction in her face, capitulated to the overwhelming invading forces, just like Denmark. At the time, that Pibul was a Quisling was only an accusation without any conclusive evidence. The Thais had survived and lived to *fight another day*, befitting an old Thai saying: “While big trees fall, small trees that bend in the direction of the angry windstorm still survive.”



CHAPTER EIGHT

DURING THE WAR

THE REMOVAL OF THE LIBERALS

Article 2 of the agreement of December 8 stipulated that the details of the passage and facilities would be agreed upon by military officials of the two countries. This was worked out to be signed on December 10. But Tsubokami preempted the signing by presenting Pibul with a draft pact of military cooperation instead.⁽¹⁾ On December 11, the cabinet was called into a special session to consider this new proposal. Pibul spoke for it, lest Thai forces might be disarmed. Pridi protested bitterly against making a treaty with the Japanese committing Thailand to become the enemy of the Allies. He suggested that although Thailand had decided not to fight the Japanese, they should do likewise with the Allies. He wanted the cabinet to find a way that would make the Japanese act according to the agreement of December 8; if not Japan would become the violator. The Thais should keep to the agreement.⁽²⁾

Other ministers who spoke, however, voiced their agreement with Pibul, probably without much thought about Pridi's suggestion. Their reasoning was that as Japanese troops were then in Bangkok, it would be suicidal to fight them. Adul too agreed. As the Chief of Police he felt that the Japanese had already violated the agreement. They had arbitrarily threatened and looked down upon Thai officials and people at large and had arbitrarily occupied certain buildings in Thailand. If this trend persisted, Thailand would soon become, more or less, a Japanese

colony. Either the Thais fought them now or gave another concession. Hence a military cooperation agreement was favoured. Adul made it clear that as regards the offensive part, if Thailand did not order troops to operate on foreign soil, this agreement would not have any real effect.⁽³⁾

Military cooperation was essential for the Japanese attacking forces as they would not have to worry about their rearguard. Thus they pressured Pibul into accepting the deal.⁽⁴⁾ Pibul's fear, aligned to his predisposition towards cooperating with the Japanese, made him speak in favour of this course. According to one account, Pibul said that he had already agreed with the Japanese and was about to sign it within an hour. This Pibul then did, without Direk, the Foreign Minister, having any knowledge of the action.⁽⁵⁾

Before the government notified the Assembly for approval, the Japanese proposed an Alliance Treaty instead. In between, on December 14, Pibul was forced to send troops to help the Japanese in their war effort. Pibul duly ordered the North-West Force to move close to the Chinese border.⁽⁶⁾ On this very day, a military defensive-offensive agreement was made, defining the theatre of each force.⁽⁷⁾ All these agreements were incorporated into the Pact of Alliance between Japan and Thailand on December 21, 1941. This pact followed the pattern of the Alliance Treaty between Japan, Italy and Germany in that both were based on three principles. Firstly, the high contracting parties would respect each other's independence and sovereignty. Secondly, each party would help and aid the other when the other was in armed conflict with another country. And thirdly, neither party would make peace during the war unless with the full agreement of the other party.⁽⁸⁾ This pact also carried with it a secret protocol (annex) which stipulated that Japan would collaborate with Thailand to realise the return of territories ceded; that Thailand would help Japan in the war at once; and that this agreement superseded the agreement of December 8.⁽⁹⁾ This agreement virtually put into effect the Alliance Treaty. As Mr Broad, an FO officer, commented,

"The wording of the treaty does not necessarily make it applicable to the present conflict, but this point is specifically covered in the secret annex. According to this, Thailand will, when signature takes place, bind herself immediately to support Japan as an ally and to give

her assistance by all political, economic and military means..."⁽¹⁰⁾

Thus the British knew of it even before the agreement was signed.

Parallel to these events, the liberals within the government began to fade from the scene. The main casualty was Pridi. Having tried unsuccessfully to persuade Pibul and the cabinet to consider the full extent of the pros and cons of not resisting the Japanese, he kept this principles intact in the matter of his direct responsibility, finance. After passage was permitted, the Japanese began to ask for further loans for their troops in Thailand. Pridi firmly resisted, as this was not covered in the December 8 agreement. If Thailand agreed, she would have to print more money which would cause inflation and would so affect the Thai economy adversely. Pridi suggested that the Japanese print their own invasion notes so that they could easily be withdrawn after the War. Pibul angrily claimed that it would imply a partial loss of Thai sovereignty. Pridi returned the fire that it had already been lost with Japanese troops in Thailand. Pridi's reasoned resistance amounted to nothing as Pibul allowed the Japanese the desired loan.⁽¹¹⁾

A few days after December 8, Adul met with Pibul and Vanich at Pibul's residence. Vanich said that the Japanese disliked Pridi and Vilas as both were pro-British and made it inconvenient for the cabinet to cooperate with the Japanese. Thus both should be dropped from the cabinet. Pridi, the Japanese suggested, should join the Council of Regency.⁽¹²⁾ After consulting his friends, Pridi accepted the appointment. On December 16, Pibul proposed this to the Assembly who duly consented. On December 23, Pridi took the oath before the House of Representatives and officially became a member of a three-man Council of Regency. On December 17, Vilas surrendered to the demand of the pro-Japanese party by resigning from his Ministry.

Direk, who maintained the policy of strict neutrality, found himself unable to serve as Minister of Foreign Affairs following the Japanese invasion and Thai deviation from that policy. He tried to resign but Pibul would not hear of it.⁽¹³⁾ However, on December 15, Pibul was made ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs and demoted Phrom and Direk to his deputies. Once Pridi left the Ministry of Finance, Adul personally suggested Direk to Pibul. Adul believed Direk could pick up where Pridi left off but Pibul replied that the Japanese would not agree as

they wished Phra Boriphan to assume the role. Adul then discussed with Pridi the possibility and advantage of Direk becoming the Ambassador to Tokyo. With Pridi's approval, Adul approached Pibul who also consented. At first, Direk refused on the ground of his family honour as well as his own integrity. Adul explained that it was necessary for the future of the Thai nation, and that even Pridi had to accept his new post. Adul himself had to remain in the cabinet to learn what was going on. That Direk went to Tokyo would contribute to the future course of Thailand.⁽¹⁴⁾

Direk later discussed his difficulties with Pridi who opined that it might be good to go as the Allies were sure to win the War. Direk should try to find ways of contacting Chiang Kai-shek to show the Allies that the Thais were trying their best to help the Allies' war effort. It was essential to take his trusted secretaries with him. From Pibul, Direk got an assurance that he would be entrusted with all negotiations with the Japanese, and a broad policy that he should do whatever was beneficial to Thailand. So Direk accepted the challenge, chose his staff and left for Tokyo on January 5, 1942.⁽¹⁵⁾ Adul later stated that Pridi told Direk to join the British and the Americans if the opportunity arose, and that Direk asked two years to be the limit of his stay as Ambassador to Tokyo.⁽¹⁶⁾

Once Pridi, Vilas and Direk left the cabinet the way was clear for full cooperation with the Japanese. On December 17, 1941, the day Vilas resigned, Vanich was appointed a Minister. Adul made his mark as a real nationalist by not agreeing to countersign this appointment alleging that the Allies might accuse the Thai cabinet of being even more pro-Japanese and that he did not think Vanich was good enough to be appointed. Pibul had to countersign it himself.⁽¹⁷⁾ From then onwards, Adul was more or less the only non pro-Japanese of any real significance within the cabinet. However, his personality was such that he took care of internal security, being the Chief of the Police, rather than interfering with foreign affairs. He kept aloof by abstaining himself from the signing ceremony of the December 21 agreement. Pibul and his pro-Japanese clique seemed to have a free hand over external matters thereafter.

DECLARATION OF WAR

The Japanese blitzkrieg on every front and early victory, especially the destruction of the American fleet at Pearl Harbour and the sinking of the “unsinkable” *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, convinced the pro-Japanese clique even further of the fate of the war. In introducing the agreement of December 21 to the Assembly, Vichitr asked the members to keep the secret protocol strictly secret because if it fell into foreigners’ hands it might jeopardise the future plans of Thailand.⁽¹⁸⁾

He seemed to refer to the ceded territories and the commitment to help the Japanese at once. One member was so glad about this expected retrocession that he asked if the government would declare war on the Allies. Pleased with the question, Vichitr replied that the Japanese military authority had left that for the Thais to discuss. They were satisfied that the Thais were fully cooperating. Vichitr went on to urge that now that the Thais had come this far, they should step further.⁽¹⁹⁾ This was not long to come as effective obstructionists no longer existed.

At noon on January 25, 1942, by royal command a declaration of war on Great Britain and the USA was made.⁽²⁰⁾ The government promptly issued a statement informing the Thai people of this declaration. It cited Allied attacks on Thai soil without any Thai provocation as the pretext for the war declaration. Furthermore on January 24, they said, British planes had bombed Bangkok. Following this declaration Thailand would retaliate for any attacks made on her. On January 29, the Assembly approved the declaration of war.

The government’s statement to the Thai people did omit some Thai military activities according to a telegram from Vichitr, the Deputy Foreign Minister to the Thai Minister in Berlin, dated January 20, 1942. In this telegram Vichitr explained the part played by Thai forces at the time. Apart from defending the frontier adjoining the British territory and affording protection to the Japanese forces during different gatherings prior to going into action, Vichitr claimed that

“The Thai Air Force has already carried out several raids on Burma. It is quite certain that next month the Thai Army will be engaged in a major operation.”⁽²¹⁾

Hence, either Vichitr was boasting (or lying) or the government was hiding this fact from the people.

This telegram pointed the way Thai foreign policy was heading. In this light, the declaration was, as Vichitr said in his radio broadcast via the Department of Publicity on January 25, only to complete the formalities. Vichitr argued that if the Thais did not initially sympathise with the Japanese, there would have been no passage allowed. No government could decide such an important issue in a few hours. The government, he declared, had made up its mind to do so long ago. He also said that it was meant to rid all the evils accrued from British and American imperialism in the region.⁽²²⁾

From various accounts, this declaration of war was rushed through the special cabinet meeting by Vichitr himself. Adul had no idea of this until he entered the meeting. Adul believed that Vichitr and Vanich had instigated the issue by proposing this to the Japanese. Incidentally, the Japanese themselves disagreed over this. Some were pleased by it and some felt that Japan would benefit more from Thailand not declaring war against the British and the Americans for the Allies would not deal severe blows on Thailand.⁽²³⁾ As the rest of the Thai cabinet had had no inkling beforehand, only a few asserted their views. The meeting which began at 10.00 a.m. was rushed so that the declaration could be made at midday. The draft declaration was prepared and countersigned straight away by Pibul. From there it was taken to the Council of Regency for royal assent which was a reverse of the proper procedure. Furthermore, the declaration was signed by only two of the Regents. Pridi, the third Regent, was at his hometown in Ayudhya.⁽²⁴⁾ However, Prince Aditya, the President of the Council of Regency, ordered Pridi's name to be included and said he would himself take all the responsibility.⁽²⁵⁾

Prince Aditya later gave as his own account that when Khun Nirundonchai (ขุนนิรันดร์ชัย), Secretary to the Monarch (ราชเลขาธิการ), brought the declaration for him to sign, Prince Aditya was told that Pridi was in Ayudhya, he had been contacted by telephone, to return and he would then be asked to sign. Prince Aditya professed that he had not had any knowledge ever since whether Pridi had signed it.⁽²⁶⁾ This contradicted Pridi's own account in which he said that there was no call for him at his residence in Ayudhya although Prince Aditya, Khun Nirundonchai and Pibul knew how to contact him during that weekend.⁽²⁷⁾

Prince Aditya gave evidence that in January 1942, Khun Nirundonchai once said in the Council of Regency that the government would

declare war on Britain and the USA within a couple of days and would bring the declaration for the Regents to sign so that it could be publicly announced. The Council was of the opinion that Thailand should follow Denmark's example in maintaining her status, but was told that Pibul feared that unless war was declared the Japanese would firstly disarm the Thai forces and then probably end its independence. The Council asked for the consideration of other alternatives but the government would not budge. Pibul, according to Khun Nirundonchai, asked all three regents to sign or else there might be misunderstanding between the Japanese and the government or between the Japanese and the Regents.⁽²⁸⁾

From the above passages, it can be seen that, having decided to go all out with the Japanese, Pibul's clique preempted any possible obstruction. They "tested the weather" by bringing it up in the Council of Regency which, obviously, showed their disapproval. Knowing that Prince Aditya was not a strong character, Pibul played on this by insisting on the government's decision when Pridi was away, in order to bypass Pridi. Whether Khun Nirundonchai knowingly misled Prince Aditya that Pridi had been contacted or whether Prince Aditya took full responsibility for permitting Pridi's name to be included is still uncertain.

It is certainly significant that according to the 1934 Act Establishing the Council of Regency at least two Regents had to sign any official document, and the majority vote was sufficient to make effective any decision.⁽²⁹⁾ Thus, Pridi's signature was legally immaterial in this sense, as Prince Aditya and Chao Phya Bichayendra Yothin (เจ้าพระยาพิชัยนทรโยธิน), the other Regent, had already signed the document. But if Pridi had refused to sign had he been present, it might have influenced the other Regents to follow his example, and at least the unanimity and sincerity of the Thai authorities in declaring war would have been doubted by every quarter. That he had not been offered the opportunity to register his objection and the manner in which such an important issue was rushed and completed within two hours illustrated Pibul's dictatorial control of Thai foreign policy. Pibul certainly could have waited another day or two if he really cared about the opinions of others and about the proper procedure for passing a document of such crucial significance. Hence, from the start there were two irregularities in this declaration. The first was the falsehood that Pridi did assent and sign his name. Secondly, procedure-wise, it was declared not by royal com-

mand but by the executive and then assented by royal command; Pibul countersigned it before it was commanded by the Council of Regency.

Pibul himself wrote in retrospect that this declaration was a trick to save the country to prepare for later uprisings.⁽³⁰⁾ Vichitr also argued vaguely after the War that the government acted under duress, which was totally untrue. Vichitr maintained that firstly, it was the only way to save the Thai armed forces; secondly, the government could not take care of 'enemy' properties otherwise; and thirdly, the government could not have controlled Allied prisoners-of-war if war was not declared.

Furthermore, to get Thai citizens back from foreign lands, repatriation was necessary.⁽³¹⁾ Although these arguments were contrary to the manner and words of Pibul's clique at the time of the declaration of war, their acts could be better judged in subsequent dealings with the Japanese.

THAI-JAPANESE CLOSER RELATIONSHIP

In February 1942, Vichitr, the deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent an official letter instructing Direk to negotiate with the Japanese government to get Thailand into the Axis Alliance. The reason was that if the Axis won the war, Thailand's voice would at least be heard at the peace conference. The letter choked Direk who had been unhappy about the Thai declaration of war when Pibul cabled the news to him on January 26. Direk and his staff were against the new instruction as they believed in the ultimate victory of the Allies. But they sounded out the Japanese authorities anyway. Foreign Minister Togo told Direk he believed it was not necessary to rely on non-Asiatic countries. Direk happily reported this to Pibul recommending no alliance with Germany or Italy. He also added that one of the reasons could be that the Japanese were afraid Thailand might tilt closer towards Hitler in the future. This would be contrary to the establishment of the co-prosperity sphere in East Asia. According to the Tripartite Agreement of September 27, 1940, Germany and Italy recognised Japan's leadership of the new order in the area.⁽³²⁾

Though Pibul agreed with Direk's reasoning, this venture certainly refuted any later claim by Pibul and his clique that they were

reluctantly forced by necessity to declare war, as it showed that they were expecting some material gains in joining the Japanese and would like to secure it further by joining the Axis. Probably as a result of this, there appeared a memorandum by a Lieutenant Chob Bunyopatham (ร.ท. ชอบ บุญอุปถัมภ์), dated June 8, 1942, that there was a rumour about the Germans urging some Thais to hate the Japanese so that they could get raw materials from Thailand. Pibul commented three days later: "We would like nothing more than seeing the Axis countries win the war. So we would like to help them to the full."⁽³³⁾ Hence Pibul's true feeling was shown.

In April 1942, two Thai missions were sent to Japan. The first was an economic mission, headed by Vanich who had, by then, become the Acting Minister of Finance. The objectives were allegedly to arrange for the imports of consumer and capital goods from Japan, in lieu of such supplies from the Allies, and to secure the best terms they could for Thai exports of rice, rubber and tin to Japan. Vanich negotiated and signed a Yen-Baht parity agreement on April 22, and pledged Thailand's formal adherence to the Yen bloc on May 2, 1942.⁽³⁴⁾

Concurrently, between April 22 and May 21, another mission headed by Phya Pahol was in Japan. This was more of a political and ceremonial nature. The choice of Pahol was understandable, as he was by then more or less a ceremonial and well-respected leader of the People's Party, without any further ambition but to serve his nation as best as he could. This Elder Statesman conveyed a royal message from the Council of Regency to the Emperor of Japan confirming Thai alliance with Japan. The mission was aptly named "Alliance Congratulation Mission". An SD officer noticed that it was strongly played up in the Bangkok press and also, presumably, in Japan as demonstrating the close bonds of friendship existing between Japan and Thailand, co-partners in the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.⁽³⁵⁾

As agreed when the idea of the mission was formed, the Japanese shortly returned the compliment in mid-July. Koki Hirota, a former Prime Minister, headed a "Grand Mission of Goodwill" which the same SD officer thought to be a "Felicitation Mission". It was merely another occasion for a deluge of official expressions of amity and cooperation. On this occasion, Pibul gave Hirota a personal letter to Prime Minister Tojo inviting him to visit Thailand.⁽³⁶⁾

Meanwhile, on March 6, 1942, the Thai cabinet resigned to effect some changes according to the new situation. Pibul was duly re-appointed as the Premier, Minister of Defence and of Foreign Affairs. In his declaration of foreign policy, he upheld the Alliance Treaty and pledged the strengthening of friendship and ideals with other Axis nations. He believed this would bring peace to the region and keep Thai independence and sovereignty intact. As the head of the administration, he also asked every Thai citizen to make greater sacrifices more than in peace time.⁽³⁷⁾ However, it was left vaguely defined as to what in particular to sacrifice. Then, on June 19, 1942, Vichitr was elevated to the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Thai collaboration with the Co-Prosperity Sphere was further extended. In early May, Japanese Foreign Minister Togo consulted Direk on the awkward situation within the sphere as members had different policies on China. In other words, Togo asked the Thai government to recognise the Wang Ching-wei regime in Nanking. This was duly agreed upon on July 7, 1942, despite Direk's request to the Thai government for a reconsideration.⁽³⁸⁾ Thus Thailand had done what she had previously tried to avoid for centuries, to the anger of the main government in China, Chiang Kai-shek's Chungking, and most liberal Thai foreign policy enthusiasts too. On August 27, a Thai Minister was accredited to Sinking in Manchukuo.

Towards the end of August, Direk was presented with a draft Cultural Agreement, without any prior knowledge of the matter. On October 20, 1942, he was instructed and empowered to sign the Agreement with the new Japanese Foreign Minister, Tani. The Agreement stated the cooperation in facilitating the exchange of cultural institutions between the two countries and in carrying out publicity by means of radio broadcasts. There would be exchanges of students, textbooks, films and promotion of language courses, to coincide with the Japanese policy of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. It was agreed that Japan would be the centre and organiser of the whole scheme while Thailand would become the centre of South Asia.⁽³⁹⁾ This Agreement was ratified on December 21, 1942, and thus became effective on that day.

On December 25, 1942, Pibul made an order on Thai jurisdiction concerning the Japanese. In all cases, if the defendants were Japanese

government agents, the Thai police could only investigate and send all the evidence to the Japanese Army to consider the cases. Thai courts could issue writs or warrants but had to report to the Minister of Justice straight away. The Minister would, in turn, report to the Joint Japanese-Thai Committee for further orders. In cases where enemies of Japan had done some wrong towards the Japanese forces in Thailand, the Joint Committee and the Thai police could only ask the Japanese to allow Thai courts to have jurisdiction.⁽⁴⁰⁾ This was sad indeed, although Pibul's clique would, no doubt, have claimed that they were inevitably the best terms available. It virtually amounted to Japanese juridical extraterritorial privilege in Thailand. Clearly, this order had undone the work painstakingly achieved through the negotiations of new equal and reciprocal series of treaties in the years leading up to 1937 and 1938.

On the military front, the President of the Council of Regency, in his speech opening a new session of the Assembly on June 24, 1942, reported with great excitement the victory of Thai troops in the Shan States.⁽⁴¹⁾ This was the result of an agreement dated May 5, 1942, between Pibul and Colonel Moriya, representative of the Japanese Army in Thailand, which defined the use of Thai forces in the Shan States. Article 8 stipulated that "this agreement is secret. Not to be disclosed even in the future."⁽⁴²⁾ However, according to an American diplomat

"there could not have been opposing forces of any consequences, because Japan had already overcome British and Chinese resistance in Burma...(The conquest) appears to have been a Japanese-inspired move to provide a quick Thai victory to bolster the morale of the Thai people and divert their thoughts from increasing economic difficulties at home."⁽⁴³⁾

Towards the end of 1942, Tojo formally created the Greater East Asia Ministry to emphasise the special relationship between Japan and the occupied regions, as well as to relegate the Foreign Ministry to a purely diplomatic role.⁽⁴⁴⁾ By the spring of 1943, the Thais began to show some discontent as the territorial agreements in the secret protocol were not fulfilled. In April 1943, Aoki, the Minister of this newly created Ministry, visited Bangkok. Shortly after his return the question of the ceded territories was raised by the Tojo administration in the Imperial Conference of May 31, 1943. Voices against the move cited economic

interests and anti-colonialism as the principles why Japan went to war. But Tojo argued that it was "in accord with the principles which governed the relationship of the nations of Greater East Asia."⁽⁴⁵⁾ Tojo, as usual, got his way. He thus announced the transfer of the four Malay and two Shan States to Thailand while he was officially visiting Thailand during July 3-5, 1943.

On August 20, 1943, Pibul and Tsubokami signed the treaty in which Japan formally transferred the administration of Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu to Thailand, and recognised the Thai annexation of Kengtung and Mongpan in the Shan States.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The Thai press and radio broadcast publicised this gain with great vigour. Pibul himself said the British took these territories from Thailand by force, the return of the territories was as if the Japanese had helped in abolishing the British disrespect and injustice towards the Thais. The Thais would long remember this Japanese help.⁽⁴⁷⁾ It was, indeed, an occasion to rejoice for any Thais who did not foresee any likelihood of an ultimate Allied victory.

During November 5-6, 1943, the Greater East Asia Ministry organised an Assembly of Greater East Asiatic Nations in Tokyo. Representatives of all allegedly "independent allies" of Japan attended. They were Wang Ching-wei of China; Dr Bamaw, the Burmese Prime Minister; President J.P. Laurel of the Philippines; PM Chang Ching-hui of Manchukuo; Prince Varn, Adviser to Thai PM Office and the FO; with Subhas Chandra Bose, the head of the provisional government of Free India as an observer.⁽⁴⁸⁾ It was merely a ceremonial conference and had no real political significance. Significant though, was the fact that Pibul was the only head of government in the circle who did not attend, which he later explained as proof of his insincerity to the whole idea of joining the Japanese. But some observers justifiably believed that Pibul was either afraid of a domestic coup in his absence or he was afraid he might not even be allowed to return home and either killed or kept as hostage in Tokyo.⁽⁴⁹⁾ This proved to be the last important Thai external display of affection to the Japanese of any consequence to the New Order in East Asia.

In September 1943, Direk returned to Thailand, allegedly for reasons of ill health. Vichitr was sent to replace him in Tokyo. Then on October 20, 1943, Direk was appointed Foreign Minister against his own will.

THE FALL OF PIBUL

Although Pibul resigned soon after the fall of Tojo (July 18, 1944), that Pibul's fall was because his fate was tied up with that of Tojo only tells a small part of the whole truth. The feeling of discontent within the country and, in no small way, from without, could be detected if one did not turn a blind eye to it. The fall of Tojo only convinced the Thais of Pibul's fallibility and thus signalled the moment to move. In this section, salient factors that contributed to Pibul's downfall will be briefly examined, namely, social and cultural drives, economic hardship, political mismanagement and, very briefly, the international issues.

A measure of Pibul's nation-building programme up to 1941 had been the issuance of the twelve "Rathaniyom" which may be defined as "Cultural Mandates of the State" or "Dictatorial Decrees". They were meant to become the principles and ideals for promoting a good spirit and morale in the new Thai way of social life. Coupled with these, the government tried to increase employment and the standard of living of the Thais.⁽⁵¹⁾ The return of the ceded territory in Indo-China in 1941 enhanced Pibul's position as an effective leader in the eyes of the public, and his dictatorial way of dealing with things was overlooked.

During the War, Pibul, through his propaganda machine, declared himself "leader" of the nation in the style of Mussolini and Napoleon.⁽⁵²⁾ All the press was controlled and had to publish a front page slogan that Pibul was the leader and was to be followed so that the nation would be able to avoid danger. By the end of 1942, a national council for culture was set up, probably in response to the Cultural Agreement with Japan. There were cultural campaigns covering fashion, dress, eating habits, language, speech, titles, housing, marriage, health, etc. Ultimately, on May 2, 1943, the office of the Prime Minister announced a 14 clause code of valour or Vira Dharma (วีรธรรม) in the manner of the Japanese Bushido.⁽⁵³⁾ This was meant to define the national character of the Thais.

After the War, Pibul argued that he had to do all this to avoid the Thais being Nipponised.⁽⁵⁴⁾ This was true to a certain extent. Some cultural dictates had good reasons attached to them, like the prevention of betel chewing and the wearing of shoes for health reasons. But the wearing of hats on all occasions was only for beauty in Pibul's eyes. The prohibition of foreign words being generally used in the Thai

language sounds reasonable, but there was no excuse for vaingloriously trying to introduce the word “Pibul-swasdi” (พิบูลส์วสดี) instead of “Swasdi” (สวัสดี or “Hello”) for the Thai greeting. Though this was not accepted, it showed Pibul’s personal aggrandisement. A professor cleverly concludes that Pibul “has stupid friends and clever enemies.” Both allowed Pibul to follow his own whim. The former for personal favours and the latter to make Pibul look like a madman.⁽⁵⁵⁾ To the man in the street too, many forced changes in his own habits led to the feeling that he had lost his liberty and self-identity. In this sense, Pibul’s popularity as the leader began to decline.

Economic hardship did not take long to affect Thailand once war began. Exactly ten years after the 1932 revolution, the economy, one of the People’s Party main concerns, was deteriorating at an alarming rate. As war was declared, sixty percent of the national reserves which were deposited in London and New York were frozen. Frequent Japanese loans dried up Thai pockets. International trade was badly disrupted. The worst single factor however was probably the 33 percent devaluation of the baht into parity with the yen, or from 1.5-1.6 yen per baht to 1:1, as a result of Vanich’s agreement in April 1942. Theoretically, Thai exports should have then expanded, but in practice, during the War the Thais could only sell raw materials and rice to the Axis countries. Therefore, it was the Japanese, especially, who got raw materials cheaply. The loans also meant more Thai notes being printed which caused inflation. Imports were disrupted and their prices soared because of both the devaluation of the currency and their scarcity. For example, during the War years the price of sugar rose by 39 times, steel by 69 times and cotton shirts by 43 times.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Imports from Europe such as medicines, chemicals, machinery, and clothes became scarce. Hoarding was common.

Some items in storage like sewing machines, candles and furniture were confiscated by Japanese soldiers and sent back to Japan. Furthermore, Japanese soldiers bought up food and consumer goods from the markets at high prices. Price discrimination became commonplace as transportation met with further difficulties. Petrol was rationed. After 1942, electricity became scarce in supply. By the end of 1942 some consumer goods were rationed and state monopolised, such as kerosene, matches and sugar.⁽⁵⁷⁾

While Japan relied heavily on the supply of rice from Thailand, the conversion of her own industries to war production meant that her exports to Thailand were few and far between. A favourable balance of trade with Japan brought no benefit to Thailand since the credits which piled up to her account in Japanese banks remained frozen for the duration of the War. Pibul realised this one-sided benefit too but there was little he could do to change the situation. However, his administration tried to find other internal measures to obtain revenues such as increasing taxes and excises, cutting government expenditure, issuing of government bonds, and the opening of casinos, etc. But the government somehow inexplicably exempted taxes on Japanese imported goods.⁽⁵⁸⁾ A writer who lived through that period remarked, "There was no doubt that economically we had become a slave of Japan."⁽⁵⁹⁾

As long as the War continued and the Japanese troops were still in the country, no Thai Government's measures could combat inflation. Economic hardship led to social deprivation in the form of black market, hoarding, speculation, and corruption. A few people became rich out of this War but for most people the War had hit them hard. Although the War would have hit Thailand's economy anyway with or without collaboration with the Japanese, it was felt that Pibul's activities escalated and precipitated this hardship. As he assumed the title of "leader", the responsibility rested fairly and squarely on him, another unpopular inevitability.

Coupled with the cultural and economic dissatisfaction was the question mark over Pibul's administration. Being more or less an absolute dictator, the seeds of dissent were to be found in the political corruption stemming from the employment of this absolute power.

The first major incident was the resignation of Thawee and Khuang from the cabinet on February 25, 1943, allegedly because they disagreed with the policy the government was pursuing. This sounds harmless enough but the real reason was startling indeed. From various firsthand documents, it transpired that on February 12, 1943, Pibul sent his resignation to the President of the Council of Regency, Prince Aditya. The reasons given were poor health and the danger his office would bring to the nation as the world situation was changing. After checking and rechecking with Thawee (the Secretary to the Cabinet), Adul and many other concerned parties, but with little help from Pibul, granted the re-

signation two days later, and a new premier was sought in the Assembly. That night, Thawee ordered the Publicity Department to announce the resignation. The next day, a non-official radio station broadcast a message that Pibul did not resign. Pibul summoned Thawee to his residence and told him that, as a friend, Thawee should not have sided with Prince Aditya in expelling him. After accepting all the responsibility, Thawee told Pibul that for the honour of his position and office he could not serve any longer, and duly resigned, despite Pibul's objection. The Minister of Commerce, Khuang Aphaiwongse, also resigned in protest.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Thus another two ministers from the liberal faction departed from the cabinet.

This proved to be the beginning of the political crisis between Pibul's clique and the rest of the Thai politicians. In June 1943, the House of Representatives elected Thawee and Khuang as Speaker and deputy Speaker of the House respectively. But Pibul told the Assembly that he could not countersign the royal declaration appointing these two persons. On June 30, as Supreme Commander, Pibul ordered the Secretary to the Assembly to be replaced and attached to the Ally Coordinating Bureau. Two days later a new Speaker was elected but Khuang was still elected deputy Speaker. On July 6, Pibul countersigned the appointment of the Speaker, but not Khuang's. On July 15, another deputy Speaker was finally elected.⁽⁶¹⁾ Pibul had thus exerted his power over the affairs of the Assembly. Though this time he won, he had to struggle and his authority was questionable. And his popularity certainly did not increase.

Pibul also tried to dominate the Council of Regency. Immediately after the February resignation episode, Pibul believed the Regents to be his rivals, so, an order was issued by the Supreme Commander calling Prince Aditya and Pridi to be attached to the Supreme Commander and to report within 24 hours. This amounted to Pibul virtually controlling every Thai institution of importance, even the monarchy. Prince Aditya responded through fear, but Pridi resisted. Later some ministers persuaded Pibul to withdraw the order, and the incident passed away.⁽⁶²⁾ Then on March 17, 1943, Pibul proposed an Act authorising the Supreme Commander to administer every ministry and department, but was vetoed by the Council of Regency. Pibul bypassed this obstacle by making it a regulation altering the definition in the Military Criminal Act

such that “military” meant any person within the war zone or within the declared martial law area and, thus, controlled by the Supreme Commander. This amounted to the same as the vetoed Act.⁽⁶³⁾

Within the cabinet, although most members supported Pibul blindly, Pibul’s dictatorial and inconsistent temper had caused many resignations. Furthermore, Pibul and his wife had intervened in various departmental administration which only heightened dissatisfaction among the subordinates. Then there were two ministers who had to resign because of criminal charges against them. One Air Vice Marshal Chiam Atukthevadej Konolmis (พล อ.ต. เจียม อธิ์กเทวเดช โกมลมิศร์) resigned on April 14, 1943. He was arrested and sentenced to imprisonment for using his office in a corrupted manner.⁽⁶⁴⁾ More significantly, on February 1, 1944, Vanich, the Acting Minister of Finance, had to resign. He was arrested and charged in connection with a gold profiteering scandal. Apparently he died in jail on November 21, 1944. Some accounts said that he had committed suicide in May.⁽⁶⁵⁾ As the stature of Vanich in connection with the Japanese was well known to all, this incident showed a sign of decline of the pro-Japanese clique. Pibul did not resign in response as he should, to which Adul retorted that he himself would resign once he had dealt with the other corrupted ministers.⁽⁶⁶⁾

On the international scene, as war lingered on, the Japanese rapid victories in 1942 were changed into a stalemate in 1943, and into a counterattack by the Allies in 1944. This was symbolised by Tojo’s resignation on July 18, 1944. Meanwhile, the British Delhi Radio regularly broadcast a poem in Thai asking why Pibul surrendered to the Japanese and that he should fight. This made the Japanese suspicious of Pibul.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Allied broadcasts from Ceylon also named names to threaten anyone with possible treatment as war criminals if they continued to support Pibul’s regime.⁽⁶⁸⁾ This fear, coupled with the increasing prospect of ultimate Allied victory, and the dissatisfaction Pibul had caused in interfering with the election of the Speaker earlier, made the Assembly question the wisdom of supporting Pibul. Although Pibul still controlled the military, the main source of power in Thailand, the civilians began to see an external force to counter this power, the Allies.

In 1944, while the Assembly was not in session, the Pibul government, for administrative purposes, issued many decrees. Two of the emergency ones provided for the reorganisation and upgrading of the

administration of Petchabun, which was to become the new capital of Thailand, and for the construction of Buddhamonthonburi or a Buddhist capital city, like the Vatican to the Catholics, at Saraburi. The idea had been cooked up by Pibul's clique several years before. When the Assembly began its regular session on June 24, 1944, the government, as required by the constitution, submitted bills requesting the acceptance of these decrees. By secret ballot, these two bills were closely defeated on July 20 and 22. Other minor reasons for such defeats, apart from the above-mentioned dissatisfaction, are not our concern here and can be seen in many other writings.⁽⁶⁹⁾

On July 24, Pibul submitted his resignation because the Assembly had shown that it no longer trusted the government by rejecting two major bills.⁽⁷⁰⁾ A political crisis followed. Pahol refused the premiership and Khuang was nominated. Pibul himself would not relinquish the office without a fight and he maintained the position of Supreme Commander. Prince Aditya "was in the awkward position of being closely identified with Pibul both personally and in policies, and also having incurred Pibul's displeasure on several occasions in the past."⁽⁷¹⁾ His fear and Pibul's threat of the use of force if "mad" Khuang was appointed led to Prince Aditya's resignation from the Council of Regency on July 31.⁽⁷²⁾ On the next day, the Assembly appointed Pridi the sole Regent as Chao Phya Bichayendra, the other Regent, had died on July 21, 1943. On that very day, by royal command, Khuang was appointed the Prime Minister, with Pahol persuaded to become a Minister without portfolio. To neutralise Pibul's military command, on August 24, Pibul was appointed an Adviser of the State, and the Supreme Commandership was abolished. In its place, Pahol was appointed Commander-in-Chief, replacing all Pibul's previous military authority.⁽⁷³⁾ The crisis thus died down, with the liberals now in the driving seat.

Khuang declared that he was merely Prime Minister and not "leader" and began to dismantle many of Pibul's cultural projects to alleviate dissatisfaction.⁽⁷⁴⁾ Khuang, at that time, was known as a junior liberal with principles and persuasive ability. He appointed the aging Phya Srisena as his Foreign Minister. The declared foreign policy was to cooperate closely with the Japanese in accordance with the existing treaties. With other countries, friendship would be promoted according to existing treaties as well.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Although the last sentence showed his

really liberal outlook, he found that cooperation with the Japanese, at least, superficially, was needed if Thailand was not yet ready to break openly against them.⁽⁷⁶⁾ Khuang remained in office until the end of the War.

The appointment of Khuang in place of Pibul caused some concern among the Japanese. The Japanese army and naval attaches promptly visited Pridi at his official residence but with full respect as Pridi represented the Thai monarchy and the Japanese had high regard towards theirs. Pridi calmly told them the appointment should go according to the Thai constitution. This was accepted by the Japanese probably because an interference in Thai domestic politics would spoil the Japanese image in the face of the war for independence of Asian nations.⁽⁷⁷⁾

Pibul's rise to dictatorship coincided with the rising star of Japanese militarism and it would be inappropriate not to relate Pibul's fall to Tojo's, after many setbacks in the Japanese war effort. Although the international situation enabled the ousting of Pibul, the internal dissatisfaction could not be overlooked. As Pibul's policy of gaining mass support was "to awaken, focus and mobilise a specifically national consciousness",⁽⁷⁸⁾ once this was achieved during the Indo-China War it could be maintained only through ruthless measures in internal policies. The common interest of anti-Western sentiments among the Thais and the Japanese drew the two nations closer and closer. According to Pibul, the Thais relied on the Japanese for external policy. This kept Pibul at the helm, but this lasted only as long as the world situation had not changed. As the internal and external policies were closely linked, the fall of Tojo and the gradual but emphatic series of Allied victories provided an external factor strong enough to discredit any pro-Japanese foreign policy and thus any pro-Japanese government. Thus, Pibul's fall was caused by a combination of dissatisfied internal politics within the international setting which was conducive to such a change.

STATUS DURING THE WAR

When Thailand declared war on Great Britain and the USA, the British promptly answered in kind while the Americans ignored it. The

Thais did not declare war on the Dutch nor the Chinese. The Dutch, in any case, were incapable of holding on to their own country not to say of making war against the Thais. So the state of war between the Dutch and the Thais could be ignored for practical purposes. As for the Chinese who were resisting the Japanese the situation was rather complicated as they certainly had particular interests in this area of the world. Thus, against the ABC line of defence, Thailand had created three different situations which will be described below. This will be followed by the activities of the Siamese Resistance Movement which attempted to solve and salvage something out of these complex conditions into which Pibul had led Thailand.

GREAT BRITAIN

On December 8, 1941, Japanese Domei news reported a Japanese Embassy in Bangkok announcement at 4 a.m. that Japanese forces were engaged in sweeping out of Thailand the British forces which had crossed the Malayan border into Thailand early that morning. The FO promptly issued a statement for the press denying this pretext.⁽⁷⁹⁾ The Domei news referred to “conclusive” evidence of British invasion and the previous plans which were possibly “Operation Matador”. Since then the acts of war had begun. By mid-December, the government of Burma reported that their patrols had brushes with Thai gendarmerie resulting in two deaths and four missing. The telegram ended “I am treating Thais as enemy.”⁽⁸⁰⁾ Soon, the Admiralty ordered the confiscation of Thai vessels. Thai assets were frozen as those of an enemy. Thai cypher and bag facilities were suspended. The Swiss government was asked to look after British subjects in Thailand.⁽⁸¹⁾

But even after the December 21 agreement, the British refrained from declaring war because they were convinced that the majority of the Thais were anti-Japanese, if not pro-Allies, that action might only serve to unite the Thai people against the British and bind them more firmly to the Japanese. It seemed wiser, while expressing sympathy for the Thai people to endeavour to discredit the Thai government and more particularly the Thai Prime Minister, “who has played a doubtful game throughout...”⁽⁸²⁾ Although the state of war thus did not exist, the British

intended to attack Japanese forces wherever they could find them. Since these forces were in Thailand as well, British forces would operate in or over Thailand and its territorial waters if it seemed desirable for military reasons to do so. However, British forces would take no unprovoked action against the Thais.⁽⁸³⁾ This may be regarded as the British attitude towards the Thais in the early stages of the War.

Early in 1942, the British declared that the conclusion of the alliance with Japan had not represented the feelings of the Thai nation. Britain was in consultation with the other Powers concerning the policy to be followed. Meanwhile "Thailand is being treated as enemy-occupied territory..."⁽⁸⁴⁾ This state of affairs remained until January 25, when HMG and the Dominions, except Canada, passively declared war on Thailand by placing an announcement in the Gazette,⁽⁸⁵⁾ although there had been some exchanges of gun fire and bombs before that date. After that full war status existed between the two countries.

THE UNITED STATES

In Washington, the situation was unlike that in London in that the Thai officials there had struggled hard to get themselves heard and to influence American policy towards Thailand somewhat. Being an anti-Japanese patriot as described earlier, the energetic Thai Minister, M.R. Seni Pramoj, was anxious to know the fate that would befall Thailand. In the morning of December 8, he visited Cordell Hull and asked for any information Hull might have received from Peck, as he had been unable to hear from the Thai government during recent days. When told of the attack and ceasefire, Seni reiterated his belief that whatever Pibul's government had done, the Thai people were not pro-Japanese. Seni said he and the Thai people "would watch every chance to be cooperative" with the US.⁽⁸⁶⁾ That same afternoon, Seni revisited Hull. He insisted that he and his staff had decided to offer their services to the US to aid in the general cause in any way possible. He thought they might organise and preserve a government of truly patriotic and liberty-loving Thais while the present government was in the clutches of Japan. He even offered to turn over all the money and effects he had to the US for the prosecution of the War. Hull suggested the continuation of recognition of

Seni's ministership as he did with that of the Czech representative. Seni insisted on his voluntary service to the US. Finally Hull asked Seni and his associates to await further reports on the Thai situation.⁽⁸⁷⁾

On December 11, 1941, Seni courageously sent a telegram to the Thai FO:

"I announced at press conference 4:50 p.m. today my intention to work for re-establishment of independent Thailand. I shall henceforth carry out only orders which in my opinion are of His Majesty's Government's free will."⁽⁸⁸⁾

The next day he learnt of the offensive and defensive alliance agreement, so he immediately informed the Department of State that he had repudiated this alliance as not representing the true will of the Thai people.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Seni also hinted at the establishment of a "Free Thai" Movement when he informed the State Department that, given US support, he believed he could establish a rallying point for large groups of Thai people, in the Philippines, Malay peninsula and elsewhere, who were chagrined and humiliated by the action of the Thai government.⁽⁹⁰⁾

At this juncture, the Americans paused to consult the British government. Meanwhile, the fact that the Thais had gone into alliance with the Allies' enemy was treated not as an act of war but only as an "unfriendly" act and the American Minister was withdrawn. However, the US government expressed its intention to deal with the Thai minister "as the representative in the US of the free people of Thailand." Again, British views were sought. After consultation, the US declared that Seni would be recognised as "Minister of Thailand" only.⁽⁹¹⁾

When the December 21 Treaty was signed, Seni sent the State Department a memorandum dissociating himself entirely from the Thai administration. He referred to the significant changes in the Thai cabinet that had created his loss of confidence that the cabinet would remain true to the Thai people.⁽⁹²⁾ When the Thais declared war, the US announced their intention "to treat Thailand for economic warfare and other purposes as enemy-occupied territory".⁽⁹³⁾ This was the American attitude throughout the war. The only hitch in Thai-American relations at the beginning of 1942 involved only the treatment of diplomats and their repatriation. The Americans were aggrieved that their subjects were detained or interned whereas they did not do likewise to Thai nationals in the US. This, the American government chose to ignore.

CHINA

Chiang Kai-shek's Chungking government had always been one of the Allies, and had been at war with the Japanese long before the Pacific War broke out. Hence, in this thesis, this government represents the legal authority whenever China is referred to, unless other qualifications are added.

By the end of 1941, nearly one-fifth of the total population of Thailand were of Chinese origin. They, more or less, controlled the economic base of Thailand. Some legal conflicts occurred as the Thais adhered to the *jus loci* principle of nationality while the Chinese to that of *jus sanguinis*. The prospect of an *imperium in imperio* had forced the Thais to avoid any diplomatic relation with the Chinese. The first few years of the Pibul administration produced much nationalistic legislation in the field of immigration, industrial organisation and education, aiming to dislodge foreigners' predominant positions in Thai industry and commerce. The Chinese were hit hard by these. This uneasy situation persisted up to the Pacific War.

The Thai recognition of Manchukuo as a separate political entity certainly displeased Chiang Kai-shek but he was probably too busy fighting the Japanese to do anything about it. But during December 25-31, 1941, the Thai radio repeatedly broadcast Pibul's message praising Japan and advising Chiang to bow to Japanese might. This, the Chinese felt as being a libel on Chinese integrity and displeased Chiang immensely.⁽⁹⁴⁾

The Thai omission to declare war on China probably derived merely from the non-recognition by Japan of the legality of the Chungking government. Although Pibul declared war on Britain and the US, the main Allied partners, the Chinese thought it inappropriate to be at war with the Thais. Their reasoning was that if the Thai people did not back Pibul's declaration, their decision not to declare war against the Thais could usefully create difficulty for the Japanese and might be beneficial when the Allies invaded Thailand in the future. Furthermore, the Thai army and people might be induced to understand that the Allies were actually in sympathy with them in the face of their country's involvement in the war under duress by Japan. This would counteract the effect of propaganda on the part of the enemy.⁽⁹⁵⁾ This move of expediency in

treating Thailand as enemy-occupied territory became the basis of the Chinese attitude towards Thailand throughout the War.

ALLIED STATUS TOWARDS THAILAND

From the beginning of the War, the Allies were not unanimous in their dealing with the Thais. The only united cause was to drive the Japanese out of Thailand, as well as other places. This difference posed troubles among the Allies throughout and even after the War.

It was not long before this difference manifested itself in reality, and not only in form. In April 1942, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek proposed to issue a declaration on China's attitude towards Thailand, emphasising the belief of the Allied nations that Thailand was coerced by the Japanese into declaring war, that the Allies had no territorial design in Thailand nor cherished any desire that might impair Thai independence, and that the Thai people would not be the tools of Japan as nothing but Allied victory would ensure sovereignty and territorial integrity of Thailand.⁽⁹⁶⁾ The Americans were prepared to issue a note in concurrence after a little alteration.⁽⁹⁷⁾ At first the FO was prepared to follow suit, but Churchill drew FO attention that "it might be found necessary after the war to consider some sort of Protectorate over the Kra Peninsula area, including Singgora, in the interests of the future security of Singapore."⁽⁹⁸⁾ This overruled the FO's previous intention straight away.

It was not clear why the Chinese delayed the broadcast. One plausible explanation might be the Thai recognition of the Wang Ching-wei's Nanking government in July 1942. However, on February 26, 1943, the Generalissimo broadcast a message to the above effect.⁽⁹⁹⁾ On March 12, 1943, President Roosevelt made a public statement at a press conference referring with approval to Chiang's broadcast. He stressed the pledge which it contained that the Allies had neither territorial design on Siam nor intention of violating her sovereignty and independence.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ These declarations were not endorsed by the British probably as it might limit their liberty of action in regard to the future of the Kra Isthmus, as foreseen by Churchill.

Towards the end of 1943, the prospect of setting up a "Free

Siamese Committee” raised some concern about possible friction between Britain and the US. Anxious that they be consulted, the British proposed to make a declaration in Parliament. The gist of the text which was transmitted to the State Department on February 26, 1944, was that since Thailand had “betrayed” its friendship with Britain, had collaborated with the Japanese, and had declared war the Thai people would have to “work their passage home.” Only then could Britain support “the emergence of a free and independent Siam after the war is over.”⁽¹⁰¹⁾ As the British did not declare “no territorial ambitions” the US was afraid this might be exploited by the Japanese to the disadvantage of the Allies as a whole and thus it was better not to make a declaration at all rather than make the proposed one.⁽¹⁰²⁾

The British maintained that the deliberate omission of any reference to the territorial integrity of Siam was because they did not want to jeopardise any postwar settlements. They did not recognise any territorial transfers to Siam by Japan since 1941. They also maintained that their general attitude of no imperialistic desire was already made clear in the Cairo Communiqué of December 1, 1943.⁽¹⁰³⁾ To bypass this, the State Department made an oral suggestion to Lord Halifax on June 3, that it would be sufficient if the British would make a statement to the State Department which then would discreetly convey to Siam for the purpose of encouraging the Siamese people. To the US, territorial integrity meant prewar frontiers and no less.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ In July, on the assumption that a declaration was still desirable for operational reasons, the FO produced a new draft with cosmetic changes, but by then the War Cabinet had decided against it and opposed communication to the Siamese at that juncture even by so indirect a channel as suggested by the Americans.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Up to the Japanese surrender, no such declaration by the British was ever made. This became the basis of British negotiation after the War, but it also caused difficulties in operational terms as well as suspicion as to the British motive towards Thailand.

THE SIAMESE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

The courageous account of the Siamese Resistance Movement, which was composed of the Free Thai Movement (FTM) and Free

Siamese Movement (FSM), has been recorded in many writings.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ It will be sufficient here, therefore, to narrate briefly its inception and activities which had significant bearing on the status of the country during and after the War. It will be divided into the parts played from inside the country and outside, and the joint effort once it could be made. It will end with some tentative evaluation of the movement.

Late in the afternoon of December 8, 1941, many people visited Pridi at his house after the cabinet meeting. They included Assembly members, civil servants, lecturers and private citizens. They all had one aim in mind, to discuss the unacceptable situation Pibul had led Thailand into. This could be seen as the actual inception of the Resistance Movement.

The first idea was to set up a fighting base in the country. The north was considered as routes existed there connecting the area to British Burma to the west and China to the north. But before the plan could be settled, the Japanese moved into the designated area and the scheme had to be cancelled. As time passed, Pridi became Regent and he exploited this position to the advantage of the movement by consulting on any political matters with politicians without the Japanese being able to accuse him of hatching a plot against them. As his revered position was highly respected by and, consequently, politically immune from the Japanese troops, Pridi was able to summon his experience, gained during the 1932 Revolution, to set up successfully an underground resistance movement under the Japanese noses. Membership grew rapidly but confidentially. There were many who came to him and simply offered their services to do anything that Pridi saw fit. As for organisational structure, Pridi controlled the whole system himself and delegated certain responsibility to certain members of the commanding corps without anyone knowing each other's work. The leaders operated and reported directly to Pridi. Pridi found that it was extremely beneficial to have Assembly members as sub-leaders as they had influence in their constituencies and could, thus, easily set up sub-underground movements in various localities. Fortunately, many Assembly members proved to be his trusted followers, especially those from the north and northeast. The idea was that once a substantial underground movement was set up, attempts would be made to contact the Allies.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

Up to January 25, 1942, the main objective of the Resistance

Movement was only to fight the Japanese invaders. But after the declaration of war it became necessary to convince the Allies not to recognise Thailand as their enemy, and to nullify any war status between Thailand and any member of the Allies.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Thus the task of the Resistance Movement had developed from an armed uprising to drive the Japanese off Thai soil to political negotiations aiming at securing Thai independence and sovereignty when the War ended or at least to mitigate the wrong done by Pibul so that the political status of Thailand would be the same as it was before the Japanese invasion.

As regards to fighting the Japanese invaders, Pridi realised that the task was impossible without the help and cooperation of the Allies. Thus the strategy was to create a Free Siamese Movement (FSM) to co-channel all Thai nationalists into one movement. The movement was to operate against the Japanese according to one strategy which would be directly in coordination with the Allies' strategy of war against Japan in this area.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Hence an FSM fighting force was created as an independent underground movement to train Thai nationals for the day when it was possible to rise against the Japanese, in conjunction with the Allies' attack.⁽¹¹⁰⁾

Even so, military issues posed other difficulties too. Before the fall of Pibul, the underground movement had to guard itself both against Japanese and Thai authorities. This made intelligence work rather difficult. This was overcome once Khuang came into power to the extent that certain Thai military personnel could be sent on secondment to the Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) at Kandy to give the Allies inside information on the Thai military strategy and on the Japanese movement in Thailand. For example, Colonel Netr Khemayothin, a Thai COS officer, became Liaison Officer at Kandy as a representative sent by the Underground FSM, with the codename "Colonel Yodhi".⁽¹¹¹⁾

The FSM worked with both Force 136 of the Special Operation Executive (SOE) of the British as well as the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The degree of cooperation and usefulness of the FSM to these two organisations were highly commended. For example, when Brigadier Jacques, codenamed "Hector", led Operation Panicle to meet Pridi, codenamed "Ruth" (by the OSS), and the FSM in Bangkok on April 30, 1945, he reported his impression to Lord Mountbatten in this manner:

“The Siamese intend to and will fight the Japanese... The plans and organisation...provide a basis for believing in the possibility of noteworthy civilian resistance action... we feel confident that the resistance leaders and their movement are determined to play their full hand against the Japanese.”⁽¹¹²⁾

As for the Americans, after the War, a famous “globe girdling” editor reported in this manner:

“Nowhere was Maj Gen Wild Bill Donovan’s Office of Strategic Services more successful, because nowhere did it get greater cooperation from officials and inhabitants of a nominal Axis country.”⁽¹¹³⁾

At least in the eyes and operations of the Allied field officers, the FSM had been leading the Siamese people into actually “working their passage home.”

Another important difficulty was politico-military in nature. As the Allies divided their theatres of war command according to operational as well as political convenience, this affected Thailand directly. By the end of 1942, one FO official told the Burma Office, among other things, that “Siam was in Chiang Kai-shek’s strategic zone”.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ This situation remained unchanged until the Cairo Meeting during November 22-26, 1943, when Britain showed its interest in transferring both Thailand and Indo-China to SEAC. Differences persisted among the Allies until July 23, 1945, when it was agreed that in Thailand and Indo-China the portion lying north of 16° north latitude would be in the China theatre, the area south of this in the SEAC.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ The prospect of Thailand being divided into two halves became apparent to the FSM. As China had always posed a threat to Thai security, Pridi tried to avoid any possibility of Chinese troops entering Thailand. Militarily, he tried to link the entire territory of Thailand to the SEAC theatre, but no proper division was set until the Japanese officially surrendered. Pridi immediately made a move. He asked an American military officer attached to the FSM Command to send an urgent telegram to the American government that there might be some unrest if Chinese troops entered the north of Thailand to disarm the Japanese.⁽¹¹⁶⁾ On September 2, President Truman issued General Order No.1 in which Japanese forces in all of Thailand were called upon to surrender to the Supreme Allied Command, South-

east Asia (SACSEA).⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Thus, in large part because of the moves by the FSM leaders, Thailand was not divided as in the case of Korea.

Military cooperation became the basis on which the FSM built up Thai political status in a positive way with the Allies. Realising the different political attitudes among the Allies, Pridi seized the opportunity of exploiting these differences to the best effect for Thailand. Sincere military cooperation had paved the way for some political talks as Allied field officers found it beneficial for operating reasons if Allied political recognition and support were given to the FSM. For example, as early as September 23, 1943, General Auchinleck sent a most secret cypher telegram from Delhi to C.O.S in London referring to the "Pridi-led FSM". He considered that SOE should contact, support and influence this movement so as to cause maximum difficulties for the Japanese. He then urged the FO to consider making some specific declaration in support of Chiang Kai-shek's message to Siam and also to see "how far it can go in giving some further expression of sympathy to Free Siamese aims."⁽¹¹⁸⁾ This forced the FO to rethink and try to draft a declaration later. Although a declaration did not materialise, that it was reconsidered at all while a state of war existed between Britain and Thailand showed the political significance of the FSM in determining the future status of Thailand. At least, its determination and cooperation had conclusively won sympathy from the fighters, if not from the ivory-tower thinkers.

From the point of view of the Resistance Movement within the country, once some form of organisation was established, contacts with Allied nations were both desired and sought. The first good news they heard was Seni's broadcast on December 13, 1941, to fellow citizens of Thailand encouraging them to resist the Japanese. other words, the Thai Legation in the US had repudiated Pibul's action and would henceforth only carry out orders which Seni thought were of the free will of the Thai people.⁽¹¹⁹⁾ From then on, the idea of setting up a Resistance Government in the country was shelved, the idea of a government in exile became its replacement. That Direk and his selected staff were sent to Tokyo was apparently Pridi's attempt to set up a channel so that they could contact Seni or escape into Allied territories and set up a government in cooperation with Seni and his staff. Unfortunately, the Japanese intelligence officers made this plan impossible.⁽¹²⁰⁾

The second real opportunity arose when the repatriation of Allied

civilians and Thai citizens abroad was carried out in August 1942. Pridi asked Luang Prachert Aksornlaksana (หลวงประเจิดอักษรลักษณ์), a Thai manager of the Asia Bank, to approach Crosby and a Mr Fitzgerald, the manager of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, before they were repatriated. They were entrusted with Pridi's position and the secret that if and when someone could be sent to contact the Allies, "XO Group" would be used as the password. They were also asked to pass the message to Seni.⁽¹²¹⁾ Whether this was done is not known. At the same time, it was hoped that Seni might risk repatriating one of his men back to Bangkok to make some contact, but it was in vain. Pridi himself asked Mr Doll, the ex-Financial Adviser, to remind the FO that he had always resisted Japanese demands as best he could. This, Doll did, accompanied by his own glowing account of Pridi's virtues.⁽¹²²⁾ This was the direct result of the talks on political opinion and world situation that Pridi held with Doll almost everyday at the Ministry of Finance in the prewar days.⁽¹²³⁾ It certainly enhanced Pridi's status in no small way in the FO eyes.

Meanwhile, some of Pridi's lieutenants were assigned the task of searching for a way to send missions into Allied territories. A few groups of men disappeared without trace on their pioneering treks to Chungking, probably beaten by the difficult mountainous jungle area full of fever and dangerous animals and also by the suspicion of local village people along the route. Concurrently, some other lieutenants undertook to find a remote place in the south where sea planes or submarines could pick up any mission from the FSM if contact could be made with the Allies. This was secretly done by February 1943.⁽¹²⁴⁾

Now that the movement had grown in number and a sound structure was achieved, it became a priority to send a mission to contact the Allies and Seni to coordinate the resistance. It was necessary to explain the domestic Thai position as soon as possible for political purposes. At the end of February 1943, Chamkad Balankura (จำกั๊ดพลางกูร), an Oxford graduate who had pledged his sacrifice to Pridi as soon as the Japanese entered Thailand, left Bangkok for Chungking. The last few words Pridi said to Chamkad were "for country and for humanity."⁽¹²⁵⁾ This proved to be the beginning of a politically important mission to contact the Allies.

Louis Banomyong, Pridi's brother, who was a well-known

person in the Chinese business community, took charge of the travelling arrangements which were allegedly to observe education and trade in Japan. A Chinese called Li Hui-sheng accompanied Chamkad as an interpreter. They travelled across the Mekong River into Indo-China and then trekked north into China within three weeks.⁽¹²⁶⁾

Chamkad's mission was as follows: once in Chungking he was to ask the American Embassy to send a code telegram to Seni through the State Department asking Seni, Peck and Dolbeare, the ex-Adviser to Thai MFA, to meet Chamkad in London. Another telegram should be sent to the FO asking Crosby and Doll to join the meeting. Once the assembly was made, Chamkad as a representative of the Thai people, with full authority, should state four things. Firstly, the declaration of war on January 25, 1942, was null and void as Pridi was absent but his name was declared. Secondly, as such the treaties existing before December 8, 1941, were still in operation. A Thai government should be set up in India so that diplomats from and to this government could be exchanged. Pridi as Regent would come out of the country for this purpose, with at least one Minister, many Assembly members, civilian and military officers to legalise such a government in exile. It was hoped that the British and the Americans would recognise this government. Thirdly, the British government was asked to honour Thai government in exile as it did those of Norway and Holland. Lastly, the British and the Americans were asked to unfreeze Thai assets so that they could be used to fight the Japanese.⁽¹²⁷⁾ If this was agreed Pridi and his associates would be smuggled out of the country from the prepared spot in the south.

According to Pridi, the password "XO Group" was to be a cover up for convenience and safety sake but Chamkad was to tell all when he was able to meet trusted Allied senior officers. But the Allies were justifiably sceptical and asked Chamkad to prove his *bona fides*. The prospect was daunting when Crosby declared knowledge neither of Chamkad nor of the "XO Group".⁽¹²⁸⁾ This caused many delays in communication to Seni and the British. At the same time the Chinese were suspected of trying to keep him and his followers in their hands to set up a Free Thai Committee in China instead, so as to exert firm influence on Thailand.⁽¹²⁹⁾ At the end of June, Chamkad briefly met Chiang Kai-shek and in August he met Prince Svasti (see later) in Chungking, and the FSM inside and outside the country met for the first

time. Chamkad had not been able to meet Seni for some unknown reasons. He died a lonely man allegedly of cancer on October 7, 1943. His last words were “for country...for humanity.”⁽¹³⁰⁾ His mission was followed by many other more successful ones, once the contact was made.

In Washington, Seni, the Thai minister, had made lip service to State Department on December 8, 1941, that he disagreed with Pibul’s decision. Three days later, he publicly declared that he would work for the reestablishment of an independent Thailand.⁽¹³¹⁾ This became the starting point of the Free Thai Movement (FTM) abroad, and Seni followed up by denouncing any alliance with Japan that Pibul made as it did not represent the free will of the Thai people. The effect was profound. The State Department immediately continued to recognise him as the Thai minister. The British, when consulted, were cautious because Seni was a Royalist by birth and only non-realists would believe that it would have no bearing on Thai internal politics. This attitude was proved correct when a Prince Chirasakti visited the FO on June 8, 1942, and enquired about the FTM and made his hope evidently clear that the British might be prepared to endorse his “claim” to the throne.⁽¹³²⁾ So from the start, the British did not accept Seni’s leadership without any suspicion.

When on January 1, 1942, the 26 nations at war with the Axis powers pledged themselves to united action, making the Atlantic Charter their manifesto and calling themselves the UN, Seni filed a declaration of adherence on behalf of all Thais four days later but asked this not to be made public until US diplomats in Thailand were able to depart safely.⁽¹³³⁾ Seni also pledged that the Thais would do their best for the common cause of the War.

There is a myth that Seni, when Pibul declared war, refused to deliver the declaration to Mr Hull.⁽¹³⁴⁾ Some have so far as to say that Seni had the declaration in his pocket but refused to hand it to Mr Hull. This seems illogical as according to diplomatic practice and international law it was sufficient to declare war to the lawful agent, in this case the Swiss Chargé d’Affaires in Bangkok. Furthermore, during the war, mailbag communication could hardly be relied upon. Worse still, Seni had denounced Pibul time after time and had declared himself disconnected from Pibul’s administration already.⁽¹³⁵⁾ The only reference

in an American open document is a memorandum by Acting Secretary of State, A. A. Berle Jr., on January 28, 1942, which recorded his telephone conversation with President Roosevelt. Berle told the President of the news that Thailand had declared war and Hull had approved the policy of ignoring the matter. The President agreed. Thus no action appeared to be required. This view was confirmed when the Chinese Ambassador expressed the Chinese view to the State Department towards the end of January.⁽¹³⁶⁾

Be that as it may, Seni's insistent denouncement of Pibul and the radio broadcast to all free Thais gained the trust of the Americans to the point that they "let him go ahead and develop such Free Thai movement as he can, and ... use the Department's power to certify his right to dispose of a limited amount of money."⁽¹³⁷⁾ Thus FTM military force could easily be set up in America under the military attaché, Colonel Kharb Kunjara, while Seni spoke on its behalf on political platforms.

In England, the situation was quite different. No suitable leaders could be found at first as the Thai minister intended to return to Thailand, Prince Chula Chakabongse found it more expedient to join the home guards, and ex-Queen Rambhai and her brother Prince Svasti were inappropriate for fear of internal suspicion. Although the idea of the FTM began as soon as Pibul declared war, Mr Snoh Tanbunyuen, a student at Trinity College, Cambridge, who was also the President of Samaggi Samagom, the Thai Association in the UK, and Mr Puey Ungphakorn, a student at the London School of Economics, became the leading figures in contacting Seni. In May 1942, Mani Sanasen, a lieutenant of Seni's, arrived and recruitment began.⁽¹³⁸⁾

When it was ascertained that there were more than forty Thais prepared to volunteer for the British army to do any job, the British government recognised the FTM in England under Mani Sanasen but made it clear that it was not recognising a government in exile. Seventeen men and women did not become soldiers. Thirty six began as privates in the Pioneer Corps from August 7, 1942, till mid-January 1943, when they were moved to train in India for later infiltration into Thailand mostly under Force 136 of the SOE. Early in 1944, these FTM members began entering Thailand and soon got in touch with the FSM under "Ruth" inside the country.⁽¹³⁹⁾

An account of the FTM in England would be incomplete without

mentioning Prince Subha Svasti (หม่อมเจ้า ศุภสวัสดิ์ วงศ์สนิท สวัสดิวัตน์ - ท่านจีน) or Prince Svasti as he was better known. He was Queen Rambhai's brother. As soon as the Japanese invaded Thailand, he volunteered to Churchill to help rescue Thai independence. Early in 1942, he was asked to help in the Army, making map details. Once that was accomplished he wished to join the FTM by writing to Seni on May 14, 1942. His idea was that if they succeeded, all Thai political prisoners would be free. He also made it clear that Pridi "must be in the scheme of things. He is one of the few Siamese who really thinks nationally..."⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ Later, he was drafted as "Major Arun" into the British Army, and attached to Force 136 as a leader. How he came to be accepted by the British as a leader was not known, but when he heard of Chamkad in Chungking, he was pleased that it was Pridi who was leading the FSM inside the country. His reasoning convinced the British officials who thought that Chamkad's story was a hoax. He then planned the military operation in Thailand for Force 136 Command with three conditions. First, all trained FTM soldiers must get the same commissions as Englishmen. Second, all operations should be in concert with the Americans. Lastly, he should be allowed to meet Chamkad in Chungking as soon as possible. The first and the last conditions were duly arranged. Once he met Chamkad, the difficulty of the second condition became clear, that the Allies themselves were not really in concert. Each member tried to outwit the others allegedly for safety's sake, and tried to gain maximum political influence over Thailand.⁽¹⁴¹⁾

"Major Arun" carried on Chamkad's mission to the British. A government in exile in India was proposed. If Thailand returned the territories taken in 1943 to British Malaya and Burma, Thai independence could be recognised when respectable persons figured in this government. However, Seni's response to his request of cooperation, and Mani's reports on the capabilities and characters of FSM leaders in Thailand did not correspond with Prince Svasti's impression. Thus the British government immediately shelved the whole issue.⁽¹⁴²⁾

Soon afterwards, Force 136 managed to send some agents into Thailand in 1944. A short time later, the OSS was also successful. Group after group of FTM members entered Thailand on foot and by sea and air. Some were killed, and some were arrested, but the police were under Adul who had an inkling of the FSM but did not actually join them

until August 1944.⁽¹⁴³⁾ All the survivors were taken into custody during the day but got in touch with “Ruth” and his followers at night. After a while, the infiltrators began to send wireless messages to their headquarters in Allied territories. Soon the United States began to smuggle American officers, who used to work in Siam before the War, into Thailand, such as Captain Howard Palmer, a missionary’s son. The British were more cautious and sent in missions and smuggled them out in a few days, before any SOE officers were allowed to be stationed in Bangkok under the aegis of the FSM.

The work of the FSM inside and the FTM outside the country began to converge once Chamkad was able to contact both Seni and Prince Svasti who had proved themselves really working for the liberation of Thailand and a return to democratic administration. Once Pibul was ousted, it became easier to set the FSM into motion because, at least, the Thai government was not obstructing it. However, the growth of the Resistance Movement did not pass unnoticed by the Japanese who became more and more suspicious. On May 21, 1945, Ruth sent an important message to the State Department. Taking the Japanese demand for another 100 million baht credit as a pretext, he was prepared to come out of cover and break openly with the Japanese. He asked for US and SACSEA assurance that Siam’s status would be the same as on December 8, 1941.⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ Acting Secretary of State Grew replied that the US could not unilaterally declare another nation a member of the UN as “Ruth” asked, but Siam’s status was appreciated according to Ruth’s request. However, he and SACSEA requested the FSM to remain under cover and to avoid premature action as SEAC was not ready to drive the Japanese out yet.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾

Whether or not an overt action was actually intended was not disclosed. “Ruth” might have intended to sound out the British and American attitude only. It could also have been a preemptive political move to declare, that “Ruth” put it in his message, “the Thai people... are already prepared for any sacrifice.”⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ This would give a good account towards “working their passage home” as demanded by the British. At any rate, this move pressed an urgent need upon the British and the Americans to rethink and work out their differences concerning Thai political status.

As Mountbatten had not begun the Allied assault on the Japanese

when they capitulated, the FSM could not prove their willingness to make their ultimate sacrifice. Moreover, as the British had not worked out the declaration absolving the war status between Britain and Thailand then, the Thais seemed to be at the mercy of the British. Only the political work of the FSM could be cited as evidence for their activities, as militarily the FSM had achieved only intelligence and coordination work. Thus the above message from "Ruth" became the only invaluable proof on record and became a firm basis on which to argue their case with the British. As for the Americans, Seni's and the FTM's activities there and in Thailand had conclusively proved the Thai cooperation and intention. The Americans seemed to have only support for the Thais which was a reverse of the situation in 1940 and early 1941 when compared to the British.



CHAPTER NINE

The END OF THE WAR

When the Japanese surrendered on August 14, 1945, Britain and Thailand were still, technically, at war. Immediately, negotiations to terminate that status began or rather continued from the war days when the British had been drafting documents for the Thais to accept and join the Allies before the Japanese capitulated.⁽¹⁾ As this had not been achieved, the British could legally treat Thailand as a vanquished enemy which, like Japan, had to surrender unconditionally. The other Allies and the Thais themselves objected vigorously to such treatment, and prolonged negotiations began. This chapter will narrate briefly the international situation that affected Thailand immediately after the War. This will be followed by a short survey of the Thai foreign policy objectives at the time and how attempts were made to implement them. The negotiations and results will be briefly surveyed and Thai diplomatic tactics in these negotiations will be identified. The chapter will end with Thai relations with other Powers and its admission to the United Nations Organisation.

DIPLOMATIC MOVES TOWARDS THE END OF THE WAR

The War in the Far East had, among other things, proved British fallibility as well as the emergence of the US as the dominant world power. By the end and immediately after the War, Britain was relying

heavily on the US. Although Mountbatten was the Supreme Allied Commander of Southeast Asia (SACSEA), the Americans could rightly feel that they were the main reason why the Japanese surrendered and, thus, should have a major role in shaping this part of the world as well. As for the Chinese, Chiang's power had waned so badly in China by 1944 that he would not have been able to conduct operations in Thailand even if he had had the authority.⁽²⁾ So China ended the War victorious in name but with little actual influence in effect. Chiang also accepted that Thailand had been assigned to SEA theatre.⁽³⁾

Throughout the War, an official declaration of British policy towards Thailand was ominously conspicuous by its absence. This was probably the result of the multiple interests of various departments, which were, at times, conflicting: the Colonial Office worried over the Thai acceptance of territories in 1943; the losses and damages to British businesses in Thailand; the fall of Malaya and Singapore; and the notion that "little" Thailand should be punished for declaring war against a "big" Power like Britain. For all these and other reasons the British had failed to recognise Pridi and the FSM as the proper authority of the free will of Thai people as the Americans did, although Mountbatten and the SOE had recommended it for operational and future purposes.⁽⁴⁾

The Siamese Resistance Movement was not slow in seizing and exploiting these divergences. With firm military assistance as a basis, "Ruth" attempted to create a recognised political stature for the movement. Apart from sending missions to Chungking to expound the FSM political expectations and plans, these missions served as stepping stones for further cooperation with the Allies. The Americans received them well but the British were still suspicious and refused to talk politics. Another diplomatic drive was, thus, called for. The occasion arose when, in December 1944, SACSEA sent a message asking for a Siamese military mission to be sent secretly to Ceylon. FSM leaders decided that a military mission would benefit the Allies much more than themselves. Thus, Puey was asked to send a coded message to SACSEA that the mission would include a political representative too. The reply was negative because SACSEA had no authority for engaging in any political talks. Still, the FSM assigned Direk to head the mission with the Army Chief of Staff as a military representative.⁽⁵⁾

The mission, codenamed "SEQUENCE" or "VIOLET", stayed in

Kandy during the last week of February 1945. For practical as well as convenience purposes, an FSM member from England who had infiltrated into Siam accompanied this mission to Kandy. Once the meeting with the Allies had begun, he left and duly returned to Siam.⁽⁶⁾ The mission had talks with Mr Mackenzie and Pointon, leaders of Force 136, many ex-Bangkok British, and Mr Dening (Political Adviser to SACSEA), but not with Lord Mountbatten himself. Direk talked about the political future of Siam with Dening but only in an unofficial manner. Direk explained the situation that was forced upon the Thais in 1941, and the subsequent Resistance Movement and asked for a British declaration of Thai independence and sovereignty.

That SACSEA had to receive Direk as a political emissary was the result of a tactical move by "Ruth" who had, earlier in 1945, sent a mission each to Washington⁽⁷⁾ and Chungking. It was expected that if Direk was not exhilarated by the SOE, the OSS would attempt to win over him. This tactic was well recognised by the British who thought:

"By conducting separate conversations in three different places in this way with the three Powers principally concerned with Siam, Pradist is obviously in an excellent position to play off these Powers one against another, and it is unfortunately the case that the angle of approach of the three Powers is not the same, and that there is thus room for divergence between them."⁽⁸⁾

The proposals made by the Siamese delegation were that "the Siamese Regent desires to declare war on Japan and other Axis States...; to repudiate all treaties and agreements entered into by the former Premier Pibul since the decision of 1941...; to convince the Siamese people of Allied good intentions and thereby unite the Siamese people and soldiers in support of Allied military efforts in Siam against the Japanese; and lastly to establish a free Siamese Provisional Government abroad which would meet temporarily the present needs of the real leaders of the country within Siam and which would be dissolved as soon as the Regent at Bangkok is in a position to appoint a new Provisional Government on Siamese soil."⁽⁹⁾

It was also noted that there were no material differences in

Direk's proposals to Denning and that Denning "judged the desire for collaboration to be undoubtedly genuine" while the Americans were also impressed.

Although the establishment of a Free Siamese Liberation Committee or Government did not materialise because the British "doubted both the wisdom and the practicability" of it⁽¹⁰⁾, "SEQUENCE" proved to be the first semi-political mission accepted by the British. It also forced the British cabinet to consider the Siamese case urgently because the Americans were keen on recognising the Free Siamese Liberation Committee "as the acknowledged symbol of the FS Resistance Movement."⁽¹¹⁾ Had the British accepted, it would have virtually amounted to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the British and the new Siamese government and, thus, the termination of the state of war between them. This, the British would not accept. Instead, they prolonged the issue by pointing out the advisability of the moment for setting up a provisional government on a portion of liberated Siamese territory as contemplated by the Regent himself, when the situation was ripe.⁽¹²⁾ This also trimmed the American sails a little because the proposed seat of government was in Washington with branch offices in London and Chungking.

Within the FSM capability, other missions were sent. A military liaison officer was stationed at SEAC while Chungking maintained at least a delegate from the FSM to keep the seeds of interest alive as well as to report back any political development in the local areas.⁽¹³⁾ The main strategic emphasis was, however, in the USA. Although the US government had always expressed a benevolent and sympathetic attitude towards the Siamese cause, the fact that the Americans were anti-imperialistic, that American society was pluralistic, and that the USA would surely emerge as the dominant world power at the end of the War, made it even more worthwhile for the FSM to cultivate Washington with all the energy it could. Apart from direct cooperation with the American government, Seni gave many lectures introducing Thailand to the American public. He also, with American support, attended many Allied Conferences of international significance including the prelude to the establishment of the United Nations Organisation.⁽¹⁴⁾ This was to remind most delegates that Thailand was an independent state occupied by the Japanese, and was not an enemy of the Allies.

In addition, with American officers secretly harboured in Bangkok by the FSM, a few political missions were sent to America such as that of Phra Pisalsukumvit and his brother from May 21, 1945, to the end of January 1946. This mission stayed in Kandy and New Delhi, at the OSS headquarters, for three weeks to answer OSS queries about the situation in Thailand. In Washington, they met Congressmen and Senators and had interviews with Pentagon officers. They met an ex-Bangkok journalist, Darrell Berrigan, who had escaped through Burma during the Japanese invasion, and obtained United Press cooperation in presenting the Siamese cause. This mission shed some light on Thailand amongst many influential American politicians which proved to be a very useful lever in dealing with the British after the War. They also set up a "Thai Information Service" Office to provide FSM news to the Americans when needed.⁽¹⁵⁾

Earlier in April, Kumut Chandruang, an ex-student in the USA, was assigned by Pridi to go to the US to assist the FSM there. As one of the FSM members, he told the story of the movement as far as he knew to both the Siamese and the Americans. As soon as the War was over, his account was printed as an article "Our Siamese Underground."⁽¹⁶⁾

On the British side, in June 1945, SACSEA asked for Puey to report personally. Puey also asked for a leave to go to England to see his girlfriend. Pridi then asked Puey to approach the British government about recognising the FSM as the legal government of Siam and for the British to unfreeze Siamese reserves. Professor Harold Laski, then Chairman of the ruling Labour Party, was also Professor of Government in the London School of Economics where Puey was a student. He kindly allowed Puey to see him at his own home. Puey, in a British Major's uniform, explained the FSM stand. Professor Laski said he would try to help the Siamese common people though not those with power or properties. Professor Laski fulfilled his promise by writing a memorandum to Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin as Puey had requested.⁽¹⁷⁾

It was hard to determine the success or effect of the "political" activities of the FSM which had tried to do everything they could to promote and publicise the Siamese situation from the Siamese point of view. This and the military cooperation put the British in the dilemma described by an FO official thus:

"If it is decided to give the Siamese a chance to render

more than guerilla assistance our confidence in them must be extended to the political field also if we are not to lay ourselves open to the charge of hypocrisy...Equally, if we do not help the Siamese to help themselves we shall earn American, Chinese and Siamese distrust. The Siamese can now point to the not inconsiderable cooperation given by Ruth and his resistance movement to the Allies... the Siamese resistance elements have demonstrated their bona fides for some time past.”⁽¹⁸⁾

At SEAC, Mr Dening realised too that any stiff terms imposed upon the Siamese would not be taken kindly by the Americans who could get an independent report from the OSS. Dening accepted as “an undoubted fact” the maximum degree of cooperation and valuable military intelligence provided by “Ruth” and the FSM. It was clear that American pressure on the British about Siam would continue. Dening realised that the British were unlikely to be in a strong position in the Far East after the War and thus Siamese goodwill would be in their best interests. He believed that “the real reason why Siam was a bad neighbour in 1941 was because we (the British) could not give her security.”⁽¹⁹⁾ This represented a more realistic approach by a British official of any considerable status. This followed a report by Brigadier Jacques, alias “Hector”, of the real situation he encountered on his secret visit to Bangkok and of his talk to “Ruth”. “Hector” reported in this manner:

“For an appreciable time we have requested all the help the Siamese can give us, and accepted it. For some months we have jollied them along with the hope of an accord with H.M.G. and all the good things, as they believe, that will bring. All their decisions are influenced by these facts...”⁽²⁰⁾

When the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945, Japanese surrender followed in a matter of days. This overtook the cautiously slow British plan for Siam. The FO felt, on August 12, that they were “under a certain moral obligation towards the Siamese Regent who...was ready to come into the open on the side of the Allies but was dissuaded by us...” It was suggested that an SOE representative in Bangkok should give as his personal advice to the Regent that he make an announcement disavowing his country’s

declaration of war and all measures flowing from it which were prejudicial to the Allies' course of war. The declaration should repudiate the alliance and all other agreements with Japan and place Siam and its armed forces at the service of the Allies. The Regent should also declare his readiness to send a representative to Kandy to get in touch with the Allies. The Resistance Movement's proposal of overt action against the Japanese, which was dissuaded by the expressed advice of the Allies, should also be mentioned.⁽²¹⁾ When the Japanese surrendered on August 14, Denning was authorised to arrange for a top secret message on the above lines to be sent to Bangkok.

THAI MOVES

Having received the message, the Regent consulted Prime Minister Khuang and Thawee, Minister of the Prime Minister's Office. On August 16, 1945, the Regent announced the Peace Proclamation with Thawee countersigning it.⁽²²⁾ The declaration omitted four points which Denning had advised, i.e., to place the Siamese forces unreservedly at the disposal of the Allies; reference to overt action proposal; reference to the portion of Indo-China gained in 1941; and mention of a mission to SEAC.⁽²³⁾ Five days later, Denning was satisfied with the Regent's message that he would broadcast about the mission to Kandy; that the delay in placing armed forces at Allies' disposal was to avoid the risk of provoking the Japanese, or disturbing any useful cooperation; and that the Siamese would welcome a plebiscite under the UN supervision on the question of the Indo-China territories.⁽²⁴⁾ Earlier, "Ruth" explained that modesty prevented him from advertising the proposal for overt action. He also expressed the hope that the Allies would make early reference to the matter in public.

The Peace Proclamation referred to the fixed policy of strict neutrality symbolised also by the law defining the duties of the Thais in time of war, passed in September 1941. The declaration of war was both contrary to the will of the Thai people as well as constituting an infringement of the provisions of the Constitution and the law of the land. It proclaimed the declaration of war null and void and not binding on the Thai people as far as the United Nations were concerned. Territories

gained after the Japanese invasion were to be returned. The ideals of the UN laid down in the resolution at San Francisco were to be upheld. The declaration of peace was approved by the Assembly on that very day.⁽²⁵⁾

The next day a significant Thai tactical move towards negotiation with the British was recorded. It revolved around Seni who had gained the full backing of the Americans and thus considerable bargaining power. The move was for Seni to “clear up situation with the US government by an exchange of notes within a few days” and then proceed to London for preliminary negotiations with the British government as a “plenipotentiary of the Regent.”⁽²⁶⁾ This initiative to call the tune was rejected by the FO who insisted that negotiations should take place in Kandy and should, preferably, not be conducted with Seni. It was deemed that they should try to “prevent the US from spoiling the market by an agreement with Siam before we (the British) have liquidated the state of war with Siam.”⁽²⁷⁾

British discomfort was exploited further when on August 20, Khuang resigned to open the way for a new government which had never collaborated with the Japanese and thus was in a “clean” position to negotiate with the Allies. Pridi and other FSM leaders agreed that Seni was most suitable for the task, but while Seni was on his way back Thawee should lead the government. Hence, Thawee formed a cabinet which took charge from August 31 to September 17, 1945, when Seni replaced him. Both governments were filled mostly by FSM comrades. Both premiers held the Foreign Affairs portfolio concurrently. At first Seni refused to take the office. Pridi had to persuade him for the sake of the nation, thinking that both Britain and the US would readily accept him and would be sympathetic to his government. Finally, Seni accepted.⁽²⁸⁾ Thus it was Seni, in the end, who took charge of the government while negotiations leading up to the formal agreement took place.

Thawee's declared policy was to adhere to the Peace Proclamation. A notable action of his government was the announcement from the Prime Minister's Office on September 7, 1945, which changed the name of the country back to “Siam”. Apart from the belief that this was the proper and traditional name,⁽²⁹⁾ it was, probably, hoped that the change of name would allay the fear of potential Thai imperialism as well. This was followed by the severance and dissolution of every form of relationship with Japan. On September 11, the Siamese government officially

notified the Japanese government of the termination of the Pact of Alliance of 1941 between Japan and Siam, and of all treaties and arrangements accessory thereto.⁽³⁰⁾ Thus, Siam was gradually ridding itself from its Axis involvement. When Seni arrived, the foreign policy of the country remained more or less the same.

On September 25, 1945, there was an FSM parade through some main streets of Bangkok. Pridi, the Regent as well as the FSM chief, presided over this "triumphant" celebration. He made a speech tracing the FSM development and objectives. He declared the movement disbanded now that the time condition had been met. He claimed that those working with him were not nation-savers, but were only serving their country. National salvation was the act of all 17 million Thais, directly or otherwise, however little, to make the FSM work easier or more convenient. As for those few Thais who obstructed the movement, they were only Thai in name, legally but not in deed. Thus he thanked all 17 million Thais who had saved the country. Special mentions were made to leaders like Seni, Direk, Thawee, and Adul.⁽³¹⁾ Although sincere in its tone, it could also be construed as an attempt to establish the *genuine* feeling of the Thais. If generally accepted, Pibul's alliance with Japan could be discounted and Thai status should be the same as on December 8, 1941. Domestically, it served to unite the Thai people as one, for it did not distinguish the FSM members from the whole population. Unfortunately, it also created a false impression among the people at large that Siam had won the War on the side of the Allies. The British, of course, thought otherwise.

On September 27, the government submitted the War Criminal Bill to the Assembly. Some members argued that this law contained some retroactive provisions which were contrary to the Constitution, but the majority voted for it and it became an Act on October 8, 1945.⁽³²⁾ This Act was necessary or else the Siamese could not try their own war criminals. Trial by the Allies would amount to Siam being seen, in the eyes of the world, as having finally capitulated to the Allies. In the eyes of the Siamese, the juridical autonomy gained eight years before would also be lost. To preserve Thai independence and sovereignty at this critical time its authority had to be shown symbolically and as well as in practice.⁽³³⁾ Although some people were led to believe wrongly that the Act was merely a revenge taken on Pibul, the fact was that without this

Act and consequent trial, Pibul and other Japan's collaborators would have been tried abroad, even in a Special War Crimes Tribunal, as embodied in various agreements.⁽³⁴⁾

A week later, an executive decree was passed dissolving the Assembly. A general election was to be held within 90 days. The government issued a statement that this twice-extended Assembly lacked the mandate of the people. It cited the Assembly's rejection of the inclusion of punishment of any activities which could lead to totalitarianism in the War Criminal Bill. Foreigners might construe it as Thai support for dictatorship which was contrary to the real feeling of the Thais.⁽³⁵⁾ On December 5, 1945, King Ananda Mahidol returned to Siam, and three days later he honoured Pridi with the title "Elder Statesman" (รัฐบุรุษอาวุโส)

THAI STATUS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE WAR

In the USA, when Seni presented the Peace Proclamation to the Department of State on August 20, Secretary of State Byrnes issued a statement to the press agreeing with the Thai stance. He reiterated the American attitude of sympathy towards the Thais and their non-recognition of the declaration of war. Now that Thailand had been liberated the Americans "look to the resumption by Thailand of its former place in the community of nations as a free sovereign, and independent country."⁽³⁶⁾ In this manner, a war, which the United States had pretended did not exist, was ended.

Meanwhile, in China, on August 24, President Chiang made a statement concerning Thailand to the National Defence Council and Central Executive Committee. He concluded in this fashion:

"We have known all along that Thailand's declaration of war on the United Nations was not a free act, but was the result of Japanese pressure. With the war now over we hope that Thailand will regain her original status of independence and equality. We particularly hope she will quickly resume normal and friendly relations with China."⁽³⁷⁾

In Britain, Foreign Secretary Bevin also made a speech about

Siam in the House of Commons on August 20. The help received from the Siamese Resistance Movement was acknowledged. He mentioned the overt action proposal which was restrained by SACSEA but added that it was in Siamese interests to prevent premature action and unfortunate consequences. The state of war remained to be liquidated. The British attitude would depend on the way in which the Siamese met the requirements of the British troops about to enter Siam; the extent to which the Siamese undid the mistakes done by their predecessors and made restitution for injury, loss and damage caused to British and Allied interests; and the extent of the Siamese contribution to the restoration of peace, good order and economic rehabilitation in Southeast Asia.⁽³⁸⁾

NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE BRITISH

These conditions were translated into a draft Heads of Agreement which was a political agreement forming the basis of the liquidation of war between Britain and Thailand, and a military and quasi-military agreement between Admiral Mountbatten and the Siamese government. These were to be presented to representatives of the Siamese Regent at Kandy.⁽³⁹⁾ According to previous commitments, "if Ruth follows advice and sends representative to Kandy, British propose to communicate with (State) Dept before commencing negotiations regarding the terms on which they would be prepared to terminate state of war".⁽⁴⁰⁾ The British communicated the draft political Heads of Agreement to State Department and the draft military agreement to the US Chiefs of Staff.

As the terms of the Draft Agreements were sometimes outdated and sometimes excessive the US COS opined, on August 30, that "Any agreement on behalf of the Allied Command should be made only with the appropriate representative designated by the Regent of Thailand on behalf of the Thai government, and should be more strictly limited to matters of military concern to the Allies in relation to effecting the surrender of Japanese forces, than is the case with certain provisions of the British proposal."⁽⁴¹⁾

The State Department also found the political terms excessive and likely to constitute an infringement of Siamese sovereignty and independence.

They also queried many ambiguous points.⁽⁴²⁾

Treating Siam as an enemy still, the British found the terms reasonable because “any provisions which an enemy country is required to accept as a condition of the liquidation of a state of war are an infringement of its sovereignty and independence”. They felt Siam should not benefit from any association with Japan in terms of its rice surplus not being exported. Also they drafted these agreements to safeguard all Allied interests until each Power could settle with Siam individually.⁽⁴³⁾ This proved to be the main divergence of policy between Britain and the US. Agreement could not be easily reached, with the questions of rice, security and control of Siamese economy and its time limit as the main stumbling blocks.

As Lord Mountbatten (SACSEA) had to move Allied troops into Thailand for the purpose of disarming and disposing of the Japanese forces in Siam and to relieve and repatriate Allied PoWs and internees, he found it urgently necessary to have some military discussions with the Siamese in order to ensure their smooth operations. The Siamese complied and early in September, a military mission led by Lieutenant General Sakdi Senanarong (พลโทศักดิ์ เสนาณรงค์) arrived at Kandy. At first no agreement was contemplated but, late in the afternoon of September 3, Mountbatten, in his daily staff meeting, decreed that there should be one. Dening (SACSEA Political Adviser) was ordered to prepare it in consultation with the Director of Intelligence and the Deputy Principal Administrative Officer (Generals Penneys and Dening). This was done after dinner that night. The result was an agreement containing 21 clauses, and was similar to the proposed Military Annex to the Heads of Agreement which covered almost every aspect apart from the liquidation of the state of war between Britain and Siam. Matters concerning the procurement and disposal of Siamese rice surplus were incorporated in the Annex to this proposed agreement.

On the morning of September 4, Dening handed the agreement to Thawee Tawethikul (ทวี ตะเวทีกุล), the Director of Political Department of the Thai FM, who was the only civilian in the mission. The Siamese later found that according to General Sakdi's credentials, he was not empowered to sign the agreement as it stood. Therefore, after the lunch party which Mountbatten arranged in the mission's honour (Mountbatten had, throughout the War, refused to meet any FSM member for reasons

of protocol), Mountbatten thought of a compromise. He asked Denning, in consultation with Thawee, to separate purely military issues, which General Sakdi was prepared and empowered to sign, and the rest, into two agreements. These were known as Military Agreements No.1 and No.2. The idea was for part of the mission to take both drafts to Bangkok and invite the Regent (Pridi) to telegraph the necessary powers to General Sakdi to sign both.⁽⁴⁴⁾

Pridi himself had expected some economic demands and was prepared to meet them on humanitarian grounds as well as on the belief that Siam was hardly in a position to bargain with the British. He was able to convince the Prime Minister (Thawee Bunyaket) of this necessity and, not surprisingly, the Assembly approved the two agreements on September 5, with a rider that it was forced upon by the British and not of their free will.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Thus the signal of acceptance was sent to Kandy.

Meanwhile, although Denning also handed a copy of the proposed “21 clauses” agreement to the American representative at SEAC on the morning of September 4, it seemed that the OSS had no knowledge of it until a member of the Siamese mission went to see them. The OSS was already suspicious of the British intention and found this “news” of the proposed agreement to be a confirmation. It suggested the Siamese should try to delay the signing of the agreement, while OSS officers immediately went about questioning and spreading the issue to Washington and elsewhere. They alleged that Mountbatten, using the name of the Allies, was imposing terms which infringed upon Siam’s political and economic independence.⁽⁴⁶⁾

The result was beyond the wildest dream of even the Siamese. There were many instructions from Joint COS in Washington and the FO in London stopping SACSEA to sign any agreement with the Siamese until joint approval was signalled. Under instruction from Washington, Ambassador Winant immediately went to see Prime Minister Attlee at No.10 Downing Street, at about 11.00 p.m. on September 5, and was given an assurance that the British would not empower Mountbatten to sign such agreements. However, a purely military agreement could be signed, if necessary, after a few alterations were made and agreed upon. As Allied troops had begun flying into Bangkok since September 6, the agreement became an urgent necessity. Finally, the draft was approved on September 7.⁽⁴⁷⁾

On September 8, 1945, a revised version of the Temporary Military Agreement No.1 was signed in Kandy. It contained only four articles concerning Allied military cooperation. Essentially, it provided for the entry of Allied troops into Siam for the purpose of disarming and concentrating, in cooperation with the Siamese, the Japanese troops in Siam and for succouring and relieving Allied PoWs and civilian internees. The last article provided that "this agreement does not in any way affect the position of individual Allied Governments vis-a-vis Siam and is entirely without prejudice to any settlement with Siam which they may contemplate." This article was obviously to alleviate the British fear that a Military Agreement before the Thais accepted the preliminary condition to start the liquidation of war would amount to the British recognition of the Thai government which they had, all along, tried to avoid.⁽⁴⁸⁾

The aftermath of this first agreement was probably even more significant than the agreement itself. The US immediately complained of lack of information and of the way they were kept in the dark, though Denning disagreed. The US COS also submitted a full memorandum of their view.⁽⁴⁹⁾ They made it clear that the matters agreed had to arise out of the settlement of the war against Japan only. There would be no separate military agreement with Thailand so long as Thailand was within the theatre of an Allied Command. They disapproved of any clauses which infringed upon the sovereignty and independence of Thailand in an Allied military agreement. Rice reparation was approved but only through diplomatic and not military channels. It suggested that forces subject to Allied Command be withdrawn from Thailand as promptly as matters mentioned above were concluded. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the offer by the Regent of the military services of his country in disarming the Japanese and in caring for Allied PoWs. Thus, the US had made clear its intention to be consulted and its sympathetic treatment of the Thais recognised and respected. This episode only unnecessarily caused mutual suspicion between the two Powers.

On September 22, the British representative asked the Seni government to send another mission to Kandy to negotiate the return to normal relations between Siam and Great Britain. This mission was led by Prince Viwatchai Chaityant, Adviser to the Office of the Prime

Minister as well as to the Ministry of Finance. From the day this mission arrived, discrepancies between the Allies appeared. Mr Charles Yost, the designated American Chargé d'Affaires in Siam arrived in Kandy, saw Denning and insisted that he (Yost) must see the Siamese delegation before Denning gave them text of agreement the next day, to tell them the US government disagreed with some of its items.⁽⁵⁰⁾ The next day, the Heads of Agreement and an Annex were handed to the Thai delegation. These constituted the terms on which the British government were prepared to liquidate the state of war with Siam. The British attitude seemed to be to demand agreement in principle first and settle the details later which the Siamese were not very happy to accept.

The Heads of Agreement contained conditions which concerned Anglo-Siamese relations only. The Annex contained military and other conditions the British deemed to affect the Allies. They represented the price Siam had to pay, in British opinion, for declaring war and for its consequences. The procedure contemplated was that there should first be an exchange of letters recording their acceptance and the intention of both parties to embody their contents into formal agreements. The ones that were not embodied would be cleared up by either another military agreement between SACSEA and Siam, or by exchanges of notes between the British government and the Siamese government, whichever was appropriate.⁽⁵¹⁾ To the Siamese government, the terms of these documents were too severe and would impose a great burden on Siam, even worse than the previously distasteful twenty-one-point agreement. The Siamese were especially concerned with the levy of 1½ million tons of free rice and other remuneration.⁽⁵²⁾ At the same time, the UK herself was then under some severe food rationing.

Armed with American support and Yost's advice, the Siamese delegation was prepared to play the waiting game. Earlier, the Siamese preempted the rice issue by offering it free of charge to UNRRA. The British would not have that as "it would limit the area of potential distribution,"⁽⁵³⁾ which meant the British colonies. Denning was thus instructed to refuse it if this was really offered. The Siamese, in turn, gained US sympathy while the British gained US distrust as to their objective of levying rice. Although Yost advised the Siamese not to sign because negotiations were still going on between London and Washington concerning the agreed terms of the documents to be accepted by the

Siamese, the Siamese delegation had to make a move in their dealing with the British, preferably without mentioning the Americans' attitude. In a plenary session on September 28, they diplomatically impressed upon Denning that for internal reasons, they were anxious to save face as far as possible and thus had to suggest many amendments.⁽⁵⁴⁾

The Siamese delegates were made to understand that if they agreed to the 1½ million tons of free rice, the British might concede on many proposed amendments. The Siamese Assembly duly approved this in principle provided that other conditions were satisfactory.⁽⁵⁵⁾ To delay the matter further, Siamese constitutional procedure was referred to. As the Heads of Agreement contained the Siamese repudiation of all acquisitions of British territory since December 7, 1941, the Assembly's approval was required. The British immediately checked this but found Section 54 of the Siamese Constitution to provide so.⁽⁵⁶⁾ This meant that although the Regent could authoritatively grant the Mission proper credentials to negotiate any treaties, the text of formal agreements concerning the return of any territories had to be submitted to the Assembly before signature could be completed. Therefore the Siamese acquired the two-tiered delay to prolong their agreement, and thus gave the Americans time to manouvre, if needed.

By mid-October, Denning was increasingly annoyed about the delay. He wrote a letter to Prince Viwat that the Siamese Resistance Movement "was never put to the supreme test... if the test had come it must have entailed considerable loss of life and sacrifice..."⁽⁵⁷⁾ Significantly, apart from showing that the negotiations had reached deadlock, it showed that Denning was the one who became impatient and lost out on this battle of wit and nerve by having to refer to this fact which the Siamese could proudly counter, and which the Americans were prepared to confirm. To the Siamese, the Americans and probably the British liberals, had overt action been taken, the Siamese would have emerged as an Ally. In any case, the FO promised Washington immediately after the War that if "Ruth" issued a Peace Declaration and sent representatives to Kandy, which "Ruth" did,

"the British are disposed, because of support by Thai resistance movement and of Allied request not to take action last May, to forego pressing for separate act of unconditional surrender..."⁽⁵⁸⁾

That Dening reasserted the issue to force the Siamese to accept the texts unconditionally would have been contrary to this commitment by the FO. The negotiations broke down and the Siamese delegation returned home.

Meanwhile, the British and the Americans had been in consultation over the terms of the Heads of Agreement and the Annex. The main points of contention which the Americans were determined to thrash out were the question of rice, claims for compensation, security arrangements and other ambiguities in the text. As for rice, in the end it was agreed that the amount of Siamese surplus should be determined by an impartial body such as the Rice Commission and the amount of 1½ million was to be the maximum, after the Americans failed to convince the British that rice should constitute reparation in kind or else this would impair the Siamese economy. They also failed to impress the British that the amount of rice surplus which Siam did not export during the War was equivalent to the lack of import and foreign currency she had to forego. They tried to reduce the amount but the British were immovable on this issue.⁽⁵⁹⁾

As for Allied claims, the British proposed that the Siamese pay for any loss or damage done in Siam. The Americans argued that the Siamese should pay only for damage done by the Siamese which meant the remainder of what the Allies could extract from the Japanese for what they caused on Siamese soil. After some insistence, an Allied Claims Commission, with both Powers having an equal footing, was assigned with the task of determining these claims.⁽⁶⁰⁾

As for security arrangements, the Americans insisted on there being no provisions infringing Siamese sovereignty, and succeeded. The US provided for regional defence but without any "advance commitment" by Siam to "accept measures of a military or strategic nature to which the United States might have serious objection". The Americans wished to amend any ambiguous clauses to provide for Siamese "collaboration in international security arrangements within the international framework"⁽⁶¹⁾ and not the British framework. The US was adamant for fear of the British establishing some kind of quasi-tutelar status or protectorate over Siam as advocated by Crosby during the War.⁽⁶²⁾ The British finally accepted this point on December 21.⁽⁶³⁾

With American insistence, other ambiguous clauses were either qualified or amended. For example, the necessity of British consent if the Siamese wished to reserve economic, commercial or professional

pursuits to their own nationals was scrapped. The British declared that they wished to return to their previous position of most favourable nation in Siam as embodied in the 1937 Treaty. Whether this was their true intention in the first place was unknown but it reassured the Siamese of the obligations they had to accept. Some definite dates were also set on certain provisions such as the placing of Siamese merchant vessels at Allied disposal until March 2, 1946, or the control of exports by the Combined Boards up to September 1, 1947.⁽⁶⁴⁾

While negotiations with the Siamese were suspended, the British took stock and nursed their position towards the Siamese. They learnt from Mr Doll's report on the Siamese economy that Siam would be badly hit if rice was to be exacted in the manner suggested by the previous draft. Doll thought demanding free rice would leave Siam with "no hope of acquiring before the lapse of three years any substantial working capital with which to cooperate in re-establishment of normal conditions in this part of the world."⁽⁶⁵⁾ Thus, gradual procurement was accepted. This was confirmed by Lt Colonel Forrester who was sent by SACSEA to investigate delays on rice procurement in Siam. He reported further that the British demand for free rice both in the short and long term was "unworkable" unless an indefinite period was given. Supply of consumer goods and the restoration of Siamese currency at a reasonable level was urged as "it is illogical to expect Siamese to cooperate with us in bringing about what they consider will be the bankruptcy of their country..."⁽⁶⁶⁾ Thus a more realistic approach was required, and later realised.

Meanwhile, the Board of Trade also pressed the FO to terminate the state of war as the Americans had now begun private trade with Siam while the British were barred by the Trading with the Enemy Act. Thus commercial interests were jeopardised the longer this was prolonged.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Earlier, the government of India opined that "nothing but demands may prove a psychological error in dealing with the Siamese... Dening should have authority to speak in a forthcoming manner and to discuss what we shall be able to do for Siam in return for her meeting our desiderata..."⁽⁶⁸⁾ Therefore, it seemed that the FO was rather harsh and unreasonable for demanding so much at once and not thinking of future goodwill and interests to be gained if greater sympathy was shown to Siam at this stage.

Dening himself realised that there were many factors which

weighed against the British from the very outset. They resulted from the inability to present the terms before the war ended, which the Siamese would have been in no position to refuse. The attitude and intervention of the US and the fact that the British forces entered Siam before agreement was reached led to the necessity of treating the Siamese, for military purposes, as a friendly power. Denning also lamented the appointment of Seni as Prime Minister.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Denning's view of success was gloomy indeed. A more understanding approach became necessary.

By November, Siamese views remained the same. They waited in case the British decided to make a fresh proposal. Possibly told by the Americans, the Siamese would accept liability only to the extent that it would not be paid by the Japanese. They seemed to have agreed to the 1½ million tons of free rice. Seni himself made an offer of agreement if these and some minor concessions were met. But the British regarded it with reserve, pending the Siamese elections and greater domestic stability and certainty.⁽⁷⁰⁾ In fact, the Siamese delegates had already been authorised by the previous Assembly to sign if the terms were satisfactorily negotiated.

The inability to come to terms between the two sides was not helped by Siamese legal-mindedness nor the British failure to declare their true intentions. As an overview, Lt Colonel "Arun", a very pro-British leader of the FSM from England, made an analytical report to the British explaining the missing links between the two sides. The British, he thought, were not in a compromising mood while the Siamese "could not very well accept it all in the face of the letters of the text which could mean far worse" than the British intended.⁽⁷¹⁾ As the Siamese were in no position to bargain with the British, their only hope was to prolong the negotiations and wait for the Americans to help them. The victorious British, on the other hand, were not prepared to let the Siamese call the tune.

On December 9, at the British request, Prince Viwat led another Siamese mission to Singapore. Two days later, he reported to the Government that in the opening session Denning preached that the Heads of Agreement and the Annex were the minimum terms acceptable by the British to terminate the state of war. This was the same as the wording of a letter Denning sent to Seni on December 8, stating that alterations could be made only in words but not substance.⁽⁷²⁾ On December 13, the

Siamese cabinet decided to give in provided the phrase “minimum terms of acceptance” was recorded in the agreement. Pridi immediately imparted this to Mr Yost who promptly reported to Washington. A direct approach was made to the British FO by Ambassador Winant in London that the American political adviser in Siam, Yost, “would recommend to the Thai that they refrain from signing the agreements while Anglo-American discussions were continuing and that if local British pressure persisted, the US would immediately resume diplomatic relations with Thailand and offer comments on the agreements to the Thai.”⁽⁷³⁾ On December 15, Yost told Seni of this message with the assurance that the Americans would take responsibility for the consequences of this delay.⁽⁷⁴⁾ The Government cabled Prince Viwat not to sign and to reassure him of this new development. Seni asked Yost to cable the American representative in Singapore to tell Prince Viwat of the American attitude in restraining the Siamese for the time being.⁽⁷⁵⁾

Even before the latest round of negotiations resumed, the Indian press got wind of the Kandy terms and began to make a meal of it. Early in December, a correspondent for *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), *Leader* (Allahabad) and *Searchlight* (Patna) sent a story from Singapore with a Bangkok dateline. He pointed out the difference between the British and American attitude towards the Siamese and the harsh terms imposed by the British. It persuasively argued on the rule of law that “since Britain is both party to and judge of this dispute Siam already stands convicted, and the Kandy terms are the sentence.” It compared the case with huge German reparations after the previous War by exaggerating the amount of rice to be paid by the Siamese. It pragmatically pointed out that “a Government accepting the Kandy terms gives handle to the opponents to denounce it, so if Britain secures a friendly Government it will at the same time secure an unfriendly electorate and Parliament.”⁽⁷⁶⁾

Then, when the negotiations began, a United Press message from Washington appeared quoting “most reliable” and “highly placed” sources. Many US papers believed it and many editorial criticisms followed in the sense that Britain wanted to make Siam a British colony. It ended thus:

“The stipulations in the treaty presented for Siamese signature are said to include British control of civil administration and economic life, banks, business, foreign

exchange, as well as communications and British decisions as to exports. This arrangement, it is said, is to continue for an indefinite period if the treaty is signed.”⁽⁷⁷⁾

Dening was furious at these somewhat exaggerated reports and found it expedient to give a statement in reply to the press on December 14. He outlined a brief history of the situation concerning the wrongs done by Siam. He refuted the Regent's annulment of the declaration of war on the grounds of creating a precedent, though he omitted to mention Mountbatten's advice to the Regent to do so. He reiterated the fact that the Siamese had not proven their worth in overt action against the Japanese. He went on to refute the above press statements as being untrue and intending to damage Great Britain in the eyes of the world. Finally he sketched out all the sympathetic deeds the British had been rendering to the Siamese since the War.⁽⁷⁸⁾ The point worth noting was that in the eyes of the foreign press in general the British terms were too harsh. Whether this was genuinely believed, or was the result of a Siamese lobby, or both, was not known. Dening was, at last, in a defensive position.

On resumption of the negotiations, Dening was not in a buoyant mood and wished to point out that the Heads of Agreement was not an instrument for negotiation and Great Britain considered Siam “under an inescapable moral obligation to accept.”⁽⁷⁹⁾ The FO urgently answered that on no account should Dening face the Siamese with the Heads of Agreement as an ultimatum. It said “with famine threatening it is essential to avoid any action which might have the effect of hindering the flow of rice from Siam.”⁽⁸⁰⁾ The FO also indicated the Siamese knowing of this urgent need and used it as their trump card to be played whenever necessary. On the next day, the British government agreed to some financial concessions to the Siamese as well as the assessment of the surplus amount by the Rice Commission.⁽⁸¹⁾ Thus was the new compromising and realistic attitude of the FO which contrasted sharply with the increasingly stern attitude of Dening.

As mentioned earlier, what Dening gave to the Siamese delegation amounted to nothing less than an ultimatum which immediately gave rise to prompt American intervention. The Siamese government, too, were on the point of yielding to this might. It was thus conceivable that Dening had acted *ultra vires* of the order from the FO. As no complete account

of this episode has yet been disclosed, if it exists, one can only construct the scene from existing accounts. In December, rumours were rife, especially in the US, insisting that “the British cabinet was being kept in the dark about the demands which its negotiators were making upon Siam.”⁽⁸²⁾ Subsequently, the Americans made another (stern) demand to the British government which the British described as “a virtual ultimatum to accept United States views as regards size of rice levy and security clauses.”⁽⁸³⁾

On December 18, the British decided “drastically to scrutinise Annex to Heads of Agreement with a view to deleting any clauses which were not absolutely essential.”⁽⁸⁴⁾ It was then that the free rice clauses were modified to meet the American requirement and in return, the Americans withheld their diplomatic resumption with Siam for the time being. Three days later, the British also yielded to the alteration of the security clauses according to American wishes. Yost was then told that Anglo-American consultation had been concluded and its recommendation to the Siamese to delay signing the agreement had been withdrawn. Yost was instructed to inform the Siamese that “this was not to be construed as American approval of the agreement and to discuss fully with them the American position during the protracted discussions with the British.”⁽⁸⁵⁾

The only other issue at odds between Britain and Siam then was whether or not the French Indo-China territorial problem should be included in the agreement. As this would prolong the negotiations, on December 25, Dening decided to exclude it from the agreement but handed Prince Viwat a letter in the sense that Great Britain did not recognise any territorial acquisition by Siam after December 11, 1940.⁽⁸⁶⁾ Thus the matter was left to be agreed upon between France and Siam later.

As agreed, on the morning of New Year's Day, 1946, the two governments exchanged letters stating that the Siamese government was prepared to sign a Formal Agreement or Agreements according to the Heads of Agreement and Annex which the British government and the government of India were prepared to accept as a condition for terminating their state of war with Siam. Later that day, the 24 article Formal Agreement was signed. In Bangkok, Seni promptly issued a statement covering the events. Formal diplomatic relations between Siam and Great Britain, and Siam and the USA, resumed on January 5, 1946, with

Mr H.R. Bird and Mr Charles Yost as the respective chargé d'affaires in Bangkok.

OTHER MAJOR NEGOTIATIONS

Concurrent to negotiations with the British, the Siamese tried to accommodate the requirements of other Allies after the War. As for China, apart from immediately withdrawing Siamese troops from Kengtung, Adul was ordered to close down the Manchukuo Legation at once⁽⁸⁷⁾ after the Peace Declaration. This was followed by a violent outbreak by some dissatisfied Chinese in Bangkok late in September, but the situation was soon under control.⁽⁸⁸⁾ On January 23, 1946, a Treaty of Amity between the Kingdom of Siam and the Republic of China was signed.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Five days later ratifications were exchanged at Chungking. Siam thus began full diplomatic relations with China.

The situation with France was more complicated. To the Siamese surprise, the French claimed to be at war with Siam. Technically, and unprecedentedly, it rested on the statement contained in a letter dated March 18, 1944, from the Political Director of 'the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the French Committee of National Liberation to the British representative with the Committee in Algiers', commenting that "*le Comité se considère comme étant en état de guerre de fait avec la Thaïlande.*" The Committee and its successors apparently never notified any representative of the Siamese government of this state of war.⁽⁹⁰⁾

Conflict arose after the War, when the French declared that they would consider themselves at war with Siam unless the latter gave up the entire area ceded to her by the Vichy government, and pronounced the French-Siamese treaty of May 1941 null and void. The Siamese, naturally, did not recognise a state of war between the two countries and maintained that their last agreement was with the Vichy government which was at that time recognised as the French government by most nations. Furthermore, the Siamese argued that they, and later the British and other Allies, suffered a great deal from the action of the French in letting the Japanese into Indo-China in 1940. Admittedly, they were Vichy representatives, but they were still French as much as Pibul was a Thai. Hence, it seemed inconsistent if the French could deny Vichy's

act while basing the state of war on Pibul's act as the Siamese could, by the same token, deny Pibul's act as representing their country. It was apparent that, on this ground, the French had no case against the Siamese.⁽⁹¹⁾

On the point of not being bound by treaty agreements made as a result of coercion, neither France nor Siam was in a position to point their finger at the other either. Both had resorted to the initial use of force to settle their territorial claims, and followed by having the seizure legalised by subsequent treaties. As far as ethnology and freedom were concerned, the return of these territories to French rule would mean the denial of freedom to these people who were more ethnically akin to the Siamese, parallel to that of Alsace and Lorraine to the French rather than the Germans. But the French would not budge on any reasons.

The matter had gone beyond the point where it could be settled on a reasonable juridical, historical or ethnological basis. As one writer observed,

"To both nations satisfaction of their claims has become identified with national pride and involved with considerations of 'face'."⁽⁹²⁾

Thus it became more or less a political issue; a matter of honour, dignity and face-saving, rather than fear of actual loss of territory.

The Siamese tactic was to resort to world sympathy. They relied on the anti-colonial stand of the Americans, the Soviets and the Chinese. The French based their hope on the British on the grounds that if they failed to regain their old territories, the British would realise they might fail to regain theirs too. At the end of the War in Asia, Anglo-French relations were, as it happened, at a particularly delicate stage. The British recognised that any Anglo-Siamese formal treaty without a safeguard of non-recognition of territories ceded after 1939 would strain Anglo-French relations even further. Hence, the British allowed the French to enter into her negotiations with the Siamese by sending French representatives to Kandy.⁽⁹³⁾ As it happened, the British failed then, and so did the French.

Basing their hopes on world opinion being in favour of anti-colonialism, the Siamese tried to avoid any bilateral negotiations with the French. This might be a method of not accepting the existence of the state of war between the two countries. In its place, they stated that the future

of Indo-China should be settled "in accordance with the principles and the procedure of the United Nations Charter."⁽⁹⁴⁾ To determine the real wishes of the people at issue, the Siamese government suggested an administrative committee, composed of the other four permanent members of the Security Council, to control the territory in question for six months or for any considerable period of time and then hold a plebiscite.⁽⁹⁵⁾ They also rejected outright the French claim to the Emerald Buddha which had been transferred from Laos to Bangkok a few hundred years ago, and which the Siamese regarded with esteemed sacredness.

When Britain signed the Formal Agreement with Siam, she reserved the right to raise the question of territories unless Siam agreed to negotiate with the French. The Siamese had to agree but adopted a procrastinating and evasive attitude thereafter. By January 1946, both the British and, significantly, the American government had told Siamese representatives that they did not recognise the territorial changes in 1941. At the same time, it was stated that the French were prepared to agree to some revision of borders but only on a small scale, similar to that proposed in the 1940 Non-Aggression Pact which was not ratified because the French failed to implement it. However, now that the Americans did not support the case, the Siamese were prepared to give in with honour. In April 1946, Direk, the Foreign Minister, sent a private delegation for exchange of views and exploratory talks with the French High Commissioner in Indo-China.⁽⁹⁶⁾

While talks were going on in May, border incidents occurred. On May 27, Pridi, as Prime Minister, sent messages to the President of the United States, the British PM, Marshal Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek, the UN Secretary General, and other political personalities. French aggression was denounced. The Siamese linked this aggression to their difficulty in providing rice as the farmers in the border areas had to leave their homes, and communication and transport were disrupted.⁽⁹⁷⁾ On May 29, the Secretary General of the UN stated his acceptance of this appeal and said he would bring the matter to the Security Council. The French, naturally, denied aggression. The Americans, however, asked the French to stop such rash activities.⁽⁹⁸⁾ As for the British, their Minister, Mr Geoffrey Thompson, was favourable to the Siamese appeal.⁽⁹⁹⁾ But the British government found it expedient to restrain themselves from committing their support to one side or the other.

Although these incidents took place in Siam proper and not in the disputed territories and the French invasion was witnessed by a third party.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ The British “had urged the French to adopt a more conciliatory attitude, but they had been unwilling to do so,” reported the Foreign Secretary to the Cabinet Meeting of May 27, 1946.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ The British thought the Siamese were taking advantage of the event in order to involve other Powers in arguments with the French concerning disputed territories which could well be separated from the border incidents. The British, thus, wished to urge the Siamese to return the territories first. This was also the American attitude.⁽¹⁰²⁾ However, the Americans insisted to the French that if territories were returned, the French should indicate publicly that they were “prepared to proceed in the friendliest manner to an adjustment of the boundaries between Indo-China and Siam with a view to establishing a mutually satisfactory frontier.”⁽¹⁰³⁾ Thus, the British urged the Siamese to follow this line or else their candidature for the UN could be jeopardised.

The Siamese were prepared to go to the UN for the settlement of the dispute. As a non-member, it had to accept beforehand that it would follow the decision of settling disputes according to the Charter. As the settlement might include some territorial changes, on June 17, the Government asked and received authorisation from the Assembly to abide to the UN decision. This, the Siamese informed the Secretary General of the UN on July 15, and applied for membership of the UN on July 21.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

That Siam went all out to get an international hearing displeased the French who would not agree to discuss in the Security Council the return of the territories but only the border incidents. The British favoured UN discussion however, and believed, diplomatically, that such decision by the UN would help everyone.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ The Soviet government, though still without diplomatic links with Siam, at first avoided the subject of Indo-China altogether. But on July 17, the Soviet press published the text of the Siamese appeal to the UN. There also appeared a long article critical of French colonial rule. This was probably the result of Russian displeasure with French attitudes at a recent Paris meeting where France more or less lined up with the US and the UK against the Soviet Union,⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ rather than of their sympathy for the Thai cause.

In July 1946, incidents of French attacks “for no apparent rea-

son" as a British observer, Major Wemyss, reported from the border, continued.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ In the middle of this month, another way out was prescribed. The State Department suggested the case to be taken up by the International Court under Section 2, Article 38, Chapter 2 of the Statute which was a case *ex aequo et bono* or on the basis of what nice settlement should be and not on the basis of law.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ As Siamese government circles realised that retrocession was inevitable, they were disposed to accept this international forum's decision on ways and means of the transfer. The French government was likely to yield as they hoped that "submission of dispute would in itself produce detente."⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

However, this was not the attitude of the French authorities in Indo-China who believed this would amount to, among other things, a "loss of face vis- -vis Cambodia" and the "local reaction to the appointment of Conservator, particularly American, to administer the territory..." Furthermore, "there was no guarantee that discussion would be limited to [the] 1941 treaty" which obviously inferred that "they were none too sure of their ground if [the] 1907 treaty was evoked."⁽¹¹⁰⁾ It was suggested that negotiation of terms should be done in New York and then backed by the UN. For this, the good offices of the US as an honest broker were employed, and on August 2, a new proposal was drafted. Essentially, the International Court was to decide the validity of the 1941 Convention, the interim period was to be agreed upon in advance, and the Siamese would withdraw their complaint from the Security Council.⁽¹¹¹⁾ Thus a mixture of views from Saigon and Paris were incorporated in the end.

The Siamese, thus, set up a delegation of civil servants to be led by Prince Varn, with Khuang as his lieutenant. As an opposition leader to Pridi who was then the Prime Minister, Khuang would have to carry some blame if a retrocession was made. The appointment of Prince Varn, apart from his ability and finesse, was psychologically important as he also had led the delegation to the Tokyo Convention in 1941. Understandably, the French, at first, rejected Prince Varn but as Thompson correctly pointed out, though he "has always sought to trim his sails to the prevailing wind,...as a civil servant he had to take orders or suffer the consequences."⁽¹¹²⁾ Unfortunately, on August 10th, 500 people attacked a French convalescent hospital in Siemreap. The French alleged that it was led by a Siamese and thus asked the US to suspend her good offices

to the cause.⁽¹¹³⁾ After a while, this new issue was simply allowed to lapse.

Early in October, the French presented the Siamese delegation in Washington, through the American broker, with a new proposal which the delegation recommended, for future benefit, to be best accepted.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ This followed a series of semi-official negotiations between the two countries. The Saigon view superseded the Paris opinion by dropping the International Court issue altogether. In this new proposal, the Siamese immediately, without reference to other institutions, accepted the invalidity of the May 9, 1941 Treaty. In so doing, the French position would immediately return to the 1937 Treaty with Siam, and they could not object to the Siamese application for UN membership. The Siamese cabinet agreed. The Assembly, after an extensive debate, agreed, as no other Allies were prepared to back the Siamese case. On October 16, the Siamese Prime Minister broadcast the "supreme sacrifice" the country had made for the sake of the principles and ideals of the UN as advised by the US and the UK.⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Thus, on October 23, the Siamese delegates agreed to the French proposal in principle and accepted it as a basis for negotiation, subject to certain observations.⁽¹¹⁶⁾

Essentially, the Siamese wished to preserve their integrity as far as possible. For example, the word "annul" was insisted on in place of the 1941 Treaty being "null and void". There was to be no reference to any state of war between the two countries. Proper welfare of the people in the disputed areas was to be assured. Damages and reparations were to be clarified, and, significantly, parts of the frontiers covered by the Treaties of 1893, 1904 and 1907 should be subject to examination by the Commission of Conciliation. To safeguard against the recurrence of the 1940 Non-Aggression Treaty aftermath, the Siamese insisted that the Commission should start its work as soon as it was constituted and should finish its work within six months at the latest.⁽¹¹⁷⁾

These observations were incorporated in the Franco-Siamese Agreement and Protocol which were signed on November 17, 1946. For Siamese domestic policy, the Agreement stated that they were... "acting in conformity with the ideals of the United Nations and in the interest of world peace; considering the points of view expressed by the American and British governments..."⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Thus Franco-Siamese relations returned to what they were according to the Treaty of 1937.

The Commission of Conciliation was formed and produced results in June 1947.

As the ultimate objective of postwar Siamese foreign policy after the War was to become a full member of the UN, which was the principal symbol of the family of nations at the time, after some initial approaches, the Siamese formally applied for membership on July 21, 1946 in a letter from Foreign Minister Direk to Mr Trygve Lie, the Secretary General. On August 14, the French declared its intention to veto the resolution on the grounds that a state of war still existed between the two countries. The Russians would veto the resolution too on the grounds that there were no diplomatic relations between Siam and the USSR. So the Siamese decided to defer their application. After agreement with France was reached on December 3, the Siamese agreed to establish diplomatic relations with the Russians. Hence, on December 15, 1946, Siam finally became the 55th member of the UN.⁽¹¹⁹⁾

Thus, by the end of 1946, Siam had absolved herself of the imputation of being an Axis country. Agreements had been reached with all powerful Allied nations that had been at war with her. There were other countries of relatively little significance who declared war on Siam, such as New Zealand, the Union of South Africa and Czechoslovakia, and some which only had severed diplomatic relations with Siam, namely Belgium, Canada, Egypt, the Netherlands and Norway.⁽¹²⁰⁾ Relations with these countries were gradually brought to normality during the years outside the bounds of this thesis. But the basis of such relationships was set when Siam settled agreements with Britain and France and later became a member of the UN at the end of 1946. As Direk, who, as Foreign Minister for most of the period, was instrumental in the conduct of foreign policy in this period, rightly pointed out, being a member of the UN proved advantageous to Siam in four ways. Firstly, the UN was an establishment that could provide security and justice for a small nation like Siam. Secondly, becoming a member of such an institution showed Siamese independence. Thirdly, Siam could receive aid through it as a less-developed country. Lastly, it showed Siam's intention to build and maintain peace and security in the world.⁽¹²¹⁾



CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

From Chapter II onwards, what I consider to be salient features of Thai foreign policy in the period 1932-1946 have been identified and described. Survival and the maintenance of independence are both the principal guiding principles and the ultimate foreign policy goals. Under these two principles, many foreign policies are pursued. Each foreign policy has its own character and style in terms of its aim, formulation, decision-making, and execution. In an independent nation-state, a foreign policy is made domestically but its origin and execution bear the sources from and repercussions within an international level. To study these features in a more meaningful manner, theoretical models and concepts were chosen in Chapter I. During the chapters that follow, though I intended to allow evidence to speak for itself, the way materials were looked at and presented was, to some extent, influenced by these theoretical frameworks.

In this chapter, I shall sketch out a general picture of how the theoretical framework in Chapter I has been applied to the empirical contents in the rest of the thesis. This will be followed by a theoretical evaluation of Thai foreign policy in the period discussed by employing the indicative concept of “compatibility and consensus”. As the period spans some fifteen years, it also covers many foreign policies. To simplify it further, I shall attempt to categorise them into broad patterns, with a brief conclusion as to the correlation between certain patterns and certain policy-makers. Finally, the thesis will end with a section on

concluding appraisals which are intended as lessons as well as recommendations.

THEORETICAL APPLICATION

In Chapter I, I sketched out the theoretical implications of the models and concepts I intended to employ in this thesis. The choice of models was aimed at providing guidelines for us to bear in mind what relevant facts should be looked at, while concepts provide the tools in interpreting and transforming these facts into a meaningful explanation of what has happened. The following section will describe, in greater details, how these models and concepts have been employed in Chapters 2-9.

As described in Chapter I, Brecher's decision-making model provides a comprehensive and appropriate method of foreign policy analysis. Therefore I attempt to employ it throughout. Thus, wherever necessary and possible, I begin each chapter by describing the inputs or the operational environment of a foreign policy decision-making situation. Relevant salient features within both domestic and external levels are identified. Here, Brecher's treatment of these two levels provides us with a good systematic set of checklists of variables to be analysed. However, for the sake of time and convenience, these factors have been simplified somewhat when real empirical contents are considered, because our objective is not to prove any particular theory or model but to use the model as a simple guideline in presenting Thai foreign policy 1932-1946 in a more explanatory and, hopefully, methodological manner.

Thus, for the external environment, only brief words on the 'global system' have been described. The idea is only to give a glimpse of what is going on in the entire world, as it affects a Thai policy-maker's image. In other words, what is generally known as the main world situation is described as a fact of the world Thailand is in and Thai policy-makers have to react to, however peripherally. Some examples are the League of Nations' decision and the war in Europe. 'Subordinate system' here denotes only Southeast Asia. This is where events really affect Thai policy-makers and thus more details are described. Other subordinate systems, such as the colonial spheres and French Indo-China's

agreement with Japan, are briefly discussed when they concern Thailand directly. If they have an indirect effect they are not included but may be described in passing under the subordinate system.

'Dominant bilateral relations' between Thailand and the regional Powers like Britain and Japan, are the most important features because they have a direct effect on the Thai decision-makers' minds. Furthermore, they superseded the last variable of this category, 'other bilateral relations' (Thailand and Malaya, Burma, India, etc) because at the time, through the colonial system, Thailand's immediate neighbours were ruled by Britain and France. Thus, to understand the external operational environment, I have always described each foreign policy situation in terms of a "global system", a "subordinate system" and "dominant bilateral relations". However, these variables, as the name suggests, are not constant in their nature. Even actors vary. For example, France, which had been a dominant bilateral partner of Siam, ceased to be so during 1941, but re-emerged as such in 1945, while China and the USA, who had only a peripheral interest in Siam before the War, emerged as dominant influences during and after it.

For the domestic environment, the checklist is really useful in separating closely linked variables in a unified polity like Thailand. Military capability is certainly important as a resource in the determination of a foreign policy. In the case of Thailand, in the period discussed by this thesis, the armed forces were undergoing rapid modernisation. Their strength, relative to other dominant bilateral partners, might not be enough, but in the domestic sphere they proved to be the overriding source of power. Hence, it is more important to know who had access to their control and how he manipulated them to get his own way against his opposition.

Economic capability is important because the Thais traded with other countries. Their exports of rice and other raw materials such as teak, tin and rubber were essential to any country that lacked these necessities, especially in time of war. At the same time, her total reliance on the import of oil and armaments made it possible for any monopolistic supplier to exert a great influence upon her. As seen clearly in Chapters V and VII, foreign economic pressures were exerted on her. Both the Allies and the Axis wanted Thai raw materials and rice for their war efforts while the supply of oil and armaments was used as a bait.

Furthermore, economic moves can influence other fields as well. For example, that Japan sold fighting planes to Thailand also meant that Thailand had to rely on Japan for spare parts, maintenance, pilot training, etc. Meanwhile, Japan could use this dependence as a lever to demand for other favours from Thailand, such as political and diplomatic ones.

Political structures have to be looked at in a comprehensive political overview and thus need no explanation for inclusion here. They are implicitly referred to when one talks about the extent of the exertion of influence by the next component, interest groups. Although public opinion, whenever it mattered to any significant extent, was still in an embryonic state, it was on occasion referred to by politicians or leaders when it suited them. Thus public opinion had been touched on only in passing and when necessary.

However, interest groups were still significant in the thesis in terms of the exertion of influence among and over various factions (groups) and institutions, such as the militarists, the liberals, the bureaucrats, the businessmen, the mass media, the Assemblymen, the Royal Family, and the foreign community. They tried to impress their opinion on the decision-makers over certain issues in which they were interested. The extent to which their views were taken into consideration depended upon many factors, such as the seriousness of the issue, the stand they took on the issue, their status and position in the political structure, and the style of the decision-makers.

The last variable in the domestic environment, the competing elites, played a major part in the determination of various foreign policies in the thesis. The competition for power between the ruling militarists and the liberals (opposition) produced sharp differences in terms of the foreign policy that emerged with the party that controlled the decision-making machine at the time. The difference as well as the congruence in their views of the operational environment more or less limited the scope of foreign policy to be pursued.

These five variables can hardly be separated because, in a relatively primitive polity like Thailand during this period, it is common that a person who controls military means usually controls political power too. This can easily lead him on to amass economic power, probably through corruption and despotism. The reverse of the process is also possible as money can sometimes buy both power and men. Thus, the people at the

top of the military, political and economic pyramids are usually from the same group or at least they are related. Though competing elites, in theory, act as checks and balances and thus prevent domination by any particular faction, in a polity without democracy and regular elections, it is only a far-fetched dream. Although such elites can exist, ultimately, the man who controls the tanks always dominates the scene. Furthermore, two Thai characteristics, those of diffidence and of respect for the elders, provide a good basis for a political bureaucracy which tends to become more and more conservative. Thus it is very difficult to change such a system from within, or to effect any radical changes for the good of the general public, which was the aim of the 1932 Revolution. However, these five variables help us to understand the internal environment more clearly by reminding us all the time what to look at during any foreign policy situation.

Brecher's "communications" are presented in the thesis by the interpretation of the contents of letters, reports and conversations. These transmit data from the operational environment to the decision-makers. Shaped by the psychological environment of attitudinal prism and elite images, these mould the thinking of a decision-maker into what he perceives to be the operational environmental situation with which he is confronted. By identifying who these decision-makers may be, one can see the different attitudes to, and images of, the real world these decision-makers have.

Throughout the thesis, the two main decision-makers, Pibul and Pridi, have been stigmatised with the political labels, 'military dictator' and 'liberal civilian'. This is for the sake of simplicity because it seems impossible to pinpoint them and how they have become so without the help of hindsight and overall view of their activities. At this point a few on their attitudinal prism will be useful to explain their beliefs as well as images of reality.

Pibul was born in 1897 in Nondhaburi, an outskirt of Bangkok nowadays. Pridi was born three years later in Ayudhya, about 40 miles north of Bangkok. Both were of humble origins and went to local primary and secondary schools. Then both went to further their studies in Bangkok. Pibul graduated from the Military Cadet School and immediately served in an artillery regiment in the province (Pitsanuloke). Meanwhile, Pridi graduated from law school as a brilliant scholar, and

later won a scholarship to study in France where he gained his doctorate in law and an advanced degree in economics. Pibul, as a Lieutenant, attended General Staff Academy and also won a scholarship to Ecole d'Application d'Artillerie in Fontainebleau.⁽¹⁾

In Paris, both men got acquainted with each other and along with a few other friends, shared the general view that a constitutional government was necessary for Siamese national progress. A plot for a revolution was thus hatched. A few years after they returned, it was successfully carried out in 1932. Since then, both men had worked to improve Siam, but in different manners as they perceived the problems and the methods of solving them differently.

Pibul was a soldier through and through, and had little or no interests outside the Army in 1932. Before 1932, he seemed to believe that absolute monarchy was hindering the country's progress. Coupled with retrenchment in the army which would eventually affect his career, the monopoly of top jobs within the services by members of the Royal Family clearly confirmed his belief that the end of such a system would solve the country's (and his) problems. As constitutionalism was its replacement, no matter how well Pibul understood that concept, he tried initially to protect it by all means, and proved himself a pillar of strength during the coup in 1933 and later the crushing of the Bovoradej Rebellion.

Pibul was realistic, not idealistic. In fact, in his vision of the political struggle in Siam, he believed in tanks, machine guns and coups as the ultimate arbiter of power. Mass participation and effective political institutions did not matter. The two successful coups and one counter-rebellion in which he played a leading part, within the space of two years, only served to endorse his views. To him, might seemed to be right.

Furthermore, Pibul was always personally ambitious and an opportunist. His main concern, after the coup, was to climb to the top of the military tree.⁽²⁾ Once there, he tried to be as acceptable as possible as the leader of the military clique which he saw as a firm base for his power. In addition, once he assumed political positions (as Minister of Defence and later Prime Minister) he learnt how to employ persuasion, bribery, patronage and nepotism to resolve political conflicts in favour of his interests, while his control of the military was utilised to perpetuate and safeguard his political career.⁽³⁾ This fitted well with the traditional

hierarchical patron-client relationship within Siamese society.

Pibul was certainly nationalistic and wanted to see a more 'civilised' Thailand, but he erred in blurring this aim with his own personal interests, self-aggrandisement and ambitions.⁽⁴⁾ His national policy was styled accordingly: Thailand should progress, together with his leadership, according to his way of thinking alone. Once he became Minister of Defence, he genuinely attempted to modernise the services, especially the Army which became his power base. Once he controlled this supreme power base, he began to follow the political fashion of the 1930s, dictatorship. He exerted his control over every other notable political institution. His dictatorial, one-track line of thinking also made him narrow-minded. As one of his long-time friends remarked, Pibul became jealous and suspicious of everyone apart from those who always agreed with him⁽⁵⁾, i.e., his own clique. His thinking was more and more enclosed within this clique whose main members were Prayoon, Vanich, Vichitr as well as most of the Army hierarchy.

Prayoon, in his own autobiography⁽⁶⁾, shows that he did not possess any real principles or ideals. He tended to drift along with the prevailing power of the day and to change sides frequently, just to catch the wind. Vanich, as seen earlier, seemed to care more about his own personal benefits rather than the national interest. The Army men were Pibul's subordinates and mostly revered Pibul without any question. They formed the majority of Pibul's clique which tended to follow his whim rather than risk proposing any conflicting or new ideas within the group.

Vichitr was different. He was an able thinker as well as a propagandist. He had the ability to get his beliefs across to Pibul and most ordinary people who were without any conviction. It was not clear whether Vichitr was the apostle of the thinking within Pibul's clique or he was simply polishing Pibul's original ideas on foreign policy. What was undeniable was the fact that Vichitr became its chief spokesman, and his view of the policy to be pursued was well echoed by Pibul and the clique. There has never appeared any evidence to suggest that Pibul disagreed or disapproved of any of Vichitr's activities. His view as propounded in his "secret memorandum" spelled out the attitude of Pibul's clique, whatever its merit.

Vichitr's ability as an author is evident even today. His many

songs, books and plays are, however, very nationalistic, even chauvinistic in many cases. His purpose might have been truly patriotic but it might also have been to support the course of militaristic nationalism in Thailand, with Pibul as the leader. Apart from being instrumental in promoting Pibul's image as the "leader", Vichitr went as far as to write a play depicting Pibul as possessing some extraordinary powers.⁽⁷⁾

Not surprisingly, the psychology of Pibul's group was shaped mainly by Vichitr, within the global framework. Pibul himself, surely, saw the rise of military dictatorships in the Axis countries as something to follow as it would enhance and maintain his own status. This probably provided him with the tendency to ally his nation with them when he saw fit to do so, especially as this would imply his recognition as a leader of some significance in the international arena.

Domestically, Vichitr's cultural drives were geared at stirring as well as shaping Thai nationalism or chauvinism which, in turn, created and sustained the necessity of militaristic nationalism to the extreme. Vichitr's assertion that "Thailand must become a power or perish" connected it with the external environment. Apparently, it drummed up an atmosphere in the country to the extent that anyone who did not think along this line would be condemned as unpatriotic. With the natural desire that Western imperialism should be driven out of the region, this "created" an irredentist consensus and forced the authorities to act for this "national interest". This gave Pibul the platform to manipulate the domestic and external situation to his advantage, by posing as the real leader who acted according to (the created) popular call.

As there were no dissenting voices within Pibul's clique, he was led to believe, probably genuinely, that what his group believed was really good for the country. That the national consensus over the issue was manufactured was, probably, ignored, and thus there appeared a strong but false belief which confirmed the above. The more dictatorial Pibul became, the more "yes-men" surrounded him, and a false, one-track, consciousness was the result. Able as Vichitr might be, he used his ability to serve and implement Pibul's desire rather than giving him counsel or pointing out alternatives. This was aided by the Pibul clique's ability to control and manipulate the mass media so that the populace were led into thinking in the same mould.⁽⁸⁾ As it was, the atmosphere they created engulfed everyone who genuinely believed it to be real.

In contrast, Pridi had long been impressed by socialist ideas. Being an earnest student of legal and political affairs, he read voraciously, certainly covering various political philosophies of previous centuries. Believing that economics are the root of politics, his interest must have been aroused too by the revolution in Russia, during his teens. Furthermore, while he was studying in France, the hotbed of progressive and revolutionary ideas in those days, he had many Indo-Chinese friends who were revolutionaries. It should also be noted that he obtained an advanced degree in political economy which gave him a good base in planning a more appropriate distribution of wealth in Siam. He thus believed that adopting socialism would make Siam into a progressive country. His idealism, sincerity and integrity won many followers in Paris, including the other core members of the 1932 revolution.⁽⁹⁾ His organisational skills and leadership were put into practice in the establishment of the Siamese Students' Association in France of which he was at one time its president.

When he returned to Siam he also became lecturer at the Law School. There he mixed grains of democracy in his teaching of Administrative Law by explaining about what is now called "constitutional law," and adding socio economic equality as another important duty to be guaranteed by the state. This made his lectures interesting, and he himself became famous. He also interacted with his students as if they were his friends. Many of them became his staunch supporters and colleagues ever after, such as Direk Jayanama and Sanguan Tularaks. They regarded him with great respect, intellectually and personally. As Coast observed, "Being a studious, serious, very able person, on his return to Bangkok he became a centre of the progressive-minded, younger generation."⁽¹⁰⁾

To Pridi, the 1932 coup meant little "unless it was followed up by a constructive programme covering every field of Siamese life."⁽¹¹⁾ He became an idealist who wished to see a democratic and prosperous Siam, with a fairer distribution of wealth as well; thus he introduced his far-reaching draft economic plan in 1933. Unfortunately for Siam, it was viewed to be too advanced for the time and provided his opponents with the opportunity to stigmatise him with the label "communistic". Later on, while Pibul was building his base in the Army, Pridi carried out his reformist programmes in the Ministry of Interior and then used his

diplomatic skills in the revision of the treaties in 1937. It was as Minister of Finance, paradoxically under Pibul's premiership, that Pridi was able to implement some of his socialist ideas in favour of the Siamese peasantry.

As Adul, who had been Pibul's chum since their early days as soldiers, observed, Pridi was knowledgeable both in domestic as well as international politics. He was far-sighted, kind, and wanted to see a constitutional process prevail in Siam.⁽¹²⁾ Probably his training as a lawyer taught him that legality, and not might, is right. Thus his foreign policy style did not sway according to the political fashion of the day. His progressive and patriotic ideals were also reflected in his liberal (as opposed to conservative) approach to foreign policy decision-making. He thus upheld national survival and independence, the first of the six principles set out by the People's Party after the 1932 Revolution, as the guiding star. At the same time, he considered the well-being of the people to be as important, and thus he did not pursue a successful policy that would enhance his group's status only. A policy of neutrality or playing one power against the other was thus upheld, without ever committing the country to the winning or the (in the short-term) rewarding side, but the legally right side.

He also gathered, through his well proven leadership quality and principles, many able followers who favoured democracy. Most of the elected Assemblymen were in this category, plus his many students as stated above. They were obviously democracy-lovers and with their strong support, Pridi was able to lead the FSM which opposed the militarist dictatorial power of the Japanese.

In sharp contrast to Pibul's clique, Pridi's lieutenants could, and often did, put forward their arguments against his, and usually the better reasoned one prevailed. (A good example, as shown in Chapter 8, was between Pridi, Adul and Direk on the latter's appointment as Thai Ambassador to Japan.) Thus, this liberal group attracted many able, reasonable figures into its circle, such as Adul, Chamkad, Thawee and Direk. They formed a knowledgeable and enthusiastic faction within the elite group. It should be stated, in retrospect, that, in contrast to members of Pibul's clique, members of Pridi's circle rarely served in subsequent governments, at least in any capacity of note. Once democracy in Siam went into eclipse, they went also. Meanwhile Vichitr, who

once propounded the policy of alliance with Japan, followed Pibul to power again in 1948 by relying on the Americans this time, allegedly against the spread of Communism. Later, he served as one of Sarit's policy-makers. Sarit, of course, staged the coup in 1957 that toppled Pibul. So it seems that the difference in attitudes and principles between the two camps can be traced in retrospect. By observing them, one can see the different predispositions which were inherent in them throughout their careers.

As can be seen, although both Pibul and Pridi were born in the same general environment of ideology and historical legacy, their personality predispositions were built up in different manners and circumstances. This led to differences in their attitudinal prisms which represented the filter through which they perceived the operational environment (the ten external and internal components). Coupled with their own self-perception in any given situation, their differing views on the situation provided the main psychological environment against which they made their decisions.

It should be mentioned that the foreign community plays an important role in the Thai foreign policy decision-making machine too. This is because apart from being interest groups in their own right, they usually have direct communication with the competing elites and can influence them. The weight of their influence depends upon the channel through which they communicate. In any case, foreigners' views can be manipulated by politicians to bolster or contradict certain goals they wish to pursue (or not).

Throughout the thesis, Crosby, the British Minister to Bangkok, played a prominent role as a pillar for the Thai liberals. Crosby's understanding of Thai politics and world affairs proved to be a crucial factor in Thai foreign policy during the period. As far as Siamese interests were not in serious conflict with Britain's, it seems that Crosby tried to accommodate, in the hope of maintaining the British position as the best friend of the Siamese. In so doing, he showed his awareness of the changing atmosphere of world politics. This probably played a large part in Thailand's successful revision of treaties in 1937 and conclusion of Non-Aggression Pacts in 1940.

Crosby's role also exercised some constraints on what Thai policy-makers could do. He had a big influence on British foreign policy

towards Siam. As the doyen minister for many years, as well as an old (Siamese) hand who could read and speak the language, his view was highly respected among the foreign community circles too (the case of Lepessier could be cited here). The role he actually played in shaping Thai foreign policy cannot be pinpointed, but as an important element in shaping the competing elites' psychological environment he made his influence felt by preaching moderation and anti-dictatorship. This might have swayed many liberal minds and provided them with the moral support for their course, if nothing else.

His influence on British policy towards Thailand, thus the operational environment, apart from the various despatches and analytical reports of the situation in Siam, can be seen in the two articles he produced in 1943 and 1944 and his book in 1945. In these writings, he pointed the way towards reaching a basis for postwar settlement with Siam, especially the far-sighted vision that the Siamese liberals should be given all possible help if democracy was desired in Siam.

In contrast to Crosby's role, the Japanese Minister and military attaches gave the pro-Japanese and dictatorial leaning faction support for their course. Through their ability to channel their views to Pibul and his clique, who were in power, they were able to exert influence directly on the decision-makers. Thus they helped to create the external environment through their manipulated foreign policy inputs, distorting or confirming any foreign policy situation in Pibul's psychological environment. The more Pibul leant towards the Japanese, the more influence they exerted on him. To Pibul, this probably helped him stay at the helm domestically too. In any case, his attitudinal prism and group psychology were such that he might not be able to see the difference between the real and the created atmospheres.

Other foreign personnel had varying degrees of influence on Thai policy-makers. For example, Doll, the British Financial Adviser, used to discuss world affairs with Pridi almost daily and thus could be said to have some influence upon Pridi's outlook of the world. At the same time, Doll was able to provide reports on Pridi, as a person and a leader of the liberals, when Pridi's stature was examined before his leadership of the FSM was accepted by the British. The discretion of Baxter, the Financial Adviser in 1933, in keeping quiet when King Prajadhipok suggested that all advisers should resign en bloc as a protest

against the new government (see Chapter 3), prevented this episode from developing further into a crisis which might have provoked foreign intervention.

Meanwhile, it would also be interesting to study the connection between corresponding competing elites in Siam and other countries, such as Japan (the navy, army, liberals, businessmen, foreign office personnel, etc). Their relationships might shed some light on the history of the period, but are not within the scope of this thesis.

Exactly when a foreign policy is actually made cannot be easily ascertained. Generally, it should be made in the cabinet meeting but it could very well have been prepared elsewhere in advance. For example, the actual decisions to allow the Japanese transit, to cooperate with them, and to declare war against the Allies were made “through” the cabinet but was clearly predetermined by the pro-Japanese stance of Pibul’s clique along the lines of strategic thinking at the time. As for tactical policies, they were even more difficult to ascertain. They might have been only a response to the changing situation, within the framework of strategic policy.

However, the questions why and how are important in a decision-making process. All the inputs in the model can provide us with an idea of how decision-makers decide, the reasons behind their decisions, and probably the identity of the ultimate foreign policy decision-maker whose policy carries the day. How a decision or a policy comes about is examined through a process of interplay between various components of the operational environment as seen through a decision-maker’s psychological environment. As such, a decision-making model provides a dynamic process and not a method of spotting exactly when a decision is made. The emphasis lies in the relative weight of how and which factors contribute or combine to shape the national action in a particular situation.

Once a policy is decided upon, some can be identified through public announcements, such as those made in the Assembly and to the press. Some can only be detected through foreign policy activities. Furthermore, declared and actual policy pursued may not coincide in some cases, and in such cases foreign policy activities indicate the real policy being pursued. In any case, more than one, even contradictory, policy may be pursued at the same moment. For example, the commit-

ment Pibul gave to Torigoe (which signified a pro-Japanese stand in the long run) could not be reconciled with Thailand's declared policy of neutrality, but was made to cater for the success of the Thai irredentist policy.

Given that a well-defined policy is identified or achieved, it will be transformed into strategic and tactical decisions within that broad policy. The main policy of "neutrality" which Siam pursued, in various guises, between 1932-1941, can be used as an example here. Although its main merit was derived from the fact that Siam could not afford to take sides in any conflict involving any Powers who were her dominating bilateral partners, even in time of peace it was successfully pursued (during the re-negotiation of treaties in 1937). It was used in the Siamese vote of abstention in the League of Nations in 1933, and distinctively in various areas of policy during the years 1940-1941, as seen in Chapter Seven. The sum total of these policies as implemented is described as Thai foreign relations/affairs. They are the substance of acts or decisions and are sometimes presented as Thai actions or reactions to certain issues and coincide with Brecher's notion of output or outcome.

Through "feedback", these acts become new inputs into the operational environment, together with reactions to these acts from both the domestic and external spheres. Thus the whole model finishes a cycle and a new foreign-policy situation is created. In this thesis, the 'feedback' process is generally described in the appraisal of the situation at the end of each chapter. Thus, in some cases, the relevant operational environment of the next chapter has already been described, and is thus not repeated at the beginning of this next chapter. Thus, while treating the materials in this same methodical manner, there appear some slight differences in the presentation of each chapter.

As for Rosenau's Pretheory, this thesis shows, unintentionally, that his ranking of variables, however arbitrarily, has a remarkable resemblance to the relative degree of influence within the Thai foreign policy decision-making circles during 1932-1946. By assessing Thailand's national attributes according to Rosenau's arbitrary indications of a small, underdeveloped, and (rather) closed society, Rosenau's ranking reads: individual, systemic, role, governmental and societal.

In Thai foreign policy decision-making circles, the idiosyncrasies of Pibul's dictatorial and militaristic character, and the liberal, far-sighted

vision of Pridi and Direk apparently dominated the whole period. Which-ever faction was in control of foreign policy determined the policy according to its disposition and style. Next in order of importance in the formation of any foreign policy was the 'systemic' variable or the changing external environment in which Thai policy-makers had to operate in. This forced Thailand to adopt and adapt in order to survive within it. As long as Pibul ruled, this second variable could never surpass the first in its importance. Being a dictator, once he set his mind on playing along the irredentist line, he paid only slight regard to international opinion that was unfavourable.

The 'role' variable proved to be of less importance. Allison's "standard operating procedures" did not exist in Thailand then as the Thai polity was not yet bureaucratic enough. Although it was true that most ministries saw their own importance rather in excess of reality (the military leaders would like a larger and better Army, while the Ministry of Finance would like to balance the budget or run a surplus), different leaders have different degrees of principle and conviction which proved to be more decisive. For instance, the handling of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was vastly different, if not opposite, when the liberals were in control than when the pro-dictatorship group were (Pridi and Direk on the one hand, Pibul and Vichitr on the other).

The 'governmental' variable could hardly affect any foreign policy at the time as power was still concentrated in the executive hands. As the new political system had just been created in 1932, the legislature was still in its infancy and could not be expected to play a more important role. The 'societal' variable was rightly the last in degree of importance because with national unity intact and a negligible degree of industrialisation or depression, public opinion could be neglected.

Rosenau's ranking indicates that one can safely pay different degrees of attention to different variables, knowing that in such a type of state certain variables are more influential than others in the formation of foreign policy. In the case of Thailand during this period, it goes on to emphasise the importance of decision-makers (attitudinal prisms and elite images) as the main weight in the determination of foreign policy. Other components were of even less of importance and accordingly less attention should be paid to them.

As for Rosenau's "Pretheory Extended" version, it seems obvious

that the intensity of interaction is what matters most in a foreign policy decision, which is the essence of it. As can be seen in this thesis, all salient Thai foreign policies concern those which had relatively more contacts with Thailand, like Britain, France and Japan, while Germany, a great Power of the day in its own right, had little to do with Thailand and did not appear much in Thai foreign policy.

As the boundaries between internal and external environments become more and more blurred, the concept of "linkage politics" helps us understand this inevitable phenomenon better. It helps to integrate the two environments when its separation would render the situation incomprehensible. When this distinction is impossible, the concept of "issue areas" can help us to separate the situation into categories according to their nature without worrying about environmental boundaries. These two concepts are prominent in Chapters VII, VIII and IX when pressures from the external environment were so strong that domestic politics had to adapt accordingly. But, at the same time, domestic politics reacted to this both in internal and external relations. Its reactions, through "feedback", re-emerged into the system again. This became the interplay of external-internal-external-internal relationships. For example, the rise of dictatorship and the discrediting of democracy in the world led to the rise of Pibul over the liberals. This led Pibul to transform nationalism into military nationalism and irredentism. To keep himself at the helm, he had to satisfy the new consensus by leading Thailand into conflict in Indo-China. In so doing, he secretly allied Thailand to Japan which led to the declaration of war on the Allies. When Japan fell, Pibul's power crumbled at home.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to pinpoint the various types of linkage processes in the thesis. This is so because we cannot ascertain the roles played by all actors who had influence upon Thai foreign policy. A penetrative process, as set out by Rosenau, can be seen clearly only when the Japanese were in Thailand from December 8, 1941 to the Japanese capitulation. But even within that period it seems that instead of the Japanese sharing authority in allocating Thai values Pibul's cultural drive militated in the opposite direction. Even before that, the rise of Pibul seems to have been an emulative or imitative process (on Pibul's part) of Japanese militarism as well as the German and Italian dictatorships, but it could also be argued that it occurred because the Thai system

had been penetrated.

Other concepts, like “perception and image”, “value”, “national role” and “national interest”, help us to see more clearly the communication and psychological processes in Brecher’s model. As seen earlier, the difference between Pibul’s and Pridi’s attitudinal prisms was instrumental in prompting a different style of foreign policy decision-making. Moreover, this difference also provided these two personalities with differing perceptions and images of the real world (operational environment). They reacted to what they perceived to be the real world according to their images of the environment. Therefore, it is the operational environment as perceived through their attitudinal prisms and elite images which shaped their decisions, although the outcome or action of their decisions affected the actual operational environment. More often than not, their psychological environments did not coincide with the operational environment.

Values in Thailand reflect the power and permanence of the established order. This “power and permanence” is achieved when the society makes its tradition sacred, as it did in Siam. This implies the “survival value” for the type of civilisation in which these ideas have evolved. Although Thai history mainly reflects the interplay of personalities within a hierarchical structure of authority, the values that are carried through support this order. Such values are Buddhism, which concerns the Thai way of life (especially tolerance), and individuality, in the local or family environment, and the acceptance of the power of the administration in the national environment which concerns the political and economic side of the society. The latter produces a patron-client relationship which reflects the values of personal freedom and social order or tolerance for individual variations in behaviour on the one hand, and dependence on power and respect for authority on the other. This relationship is dynamic and depends on personality, personal interest and personal expectations which depend on the activities and attitudes of other individuals within the society.⁽¹³⁾ In such cases, the leader’s role becomes well respected by his subordinates or clients within this status-conscious society. Thus, groups or cliques are formed around strong personalities within the elite group. This overshadows the role of organisational bureaucracy and creates a firm platform to be exploited by any leading characters within society, such as Pibul and his clique,

and Pridi and his lieutenants.

Values can also be employed to prescribe ethical standards by which action can be judged. However, the various definitions of values render it impossible to decide which (set of) values should be used as a moral criterion. For example, those who firmly believe that national integrity and independence are the supreme values to be upheld would surely feel that Pibul betrayed the country. Meanwhile those who believe national survival (with the least scar) to be a more important value may find Pibul's action between 1941 and 1944 to be the best course available. By realising this pitfall, it will help us understand, or at least be aware of these differences, more critically whenever the term is used in a polemical or explanatory fashion in the speeches or conversations or letters that one has to analyse or interpret.

Values in society can be created and certain values can be brought to the fore by stirring up old feelings. When constitutionalism replaced absolutism in 1932, the values of equal opportunity, independence, prosperity, etc., were emphasised to gear the people towards this new mode of government with eager anticipation. During 1942-1944, Pibul tried to instil the values of "Thainess" in many aspects of Thai life allegedly to counter the attempt to "Nipponise" the Thais by the Japanese. Militarism and liberalism were also the prevailing conflicting values (ideologies) at the time, but were probably introduced to Thailand through Westerners and also by those Thais who wished to propagate them. By stirring up irredentism, which had existed amongst the Siamese for decades, the instigators were able to re-create this value, allied with nationalism, to support their own policies.

On the whole, the ability to understand various guises of "values" help us to grasp the subtlety of the term being employed by different actors. It also helps us to explain certain phenomena too, such as the loosely structured political and economic status in Thai society. The term "national interest", like "values", also helps us in the understanding of various levels (or definitions) used by different or even the same actors at different times. "National interest", in a polemical sense, denotes the end-product of the objective or goal described, while "values" denotes the reasoning element in the argument for that objective.

Not only do scholars tend to define the term "national role" (or "national interest" and "values") to suit their research, political

leaders often do the same to suit their goals. This lack of consensus on definitions or on the empirical referents gives rise to such manipulation. But as the concept was implicitly referred to by our actors to mean many things and in many capacities in their arguments for or against certain issues, a rough grasp of the concept has been valuable in our understanding of empirical evidence.

Holsti's "national role conception" and "national role prescription" indicate the difference in perception a Thai leader has of his country's role, and the perception other countries have of the role Thailand should have. It thus emphasises the importance of "perception" as a useful concept and the significance of the difference between a decision-maker's operational and psychological environments. The closer a decision-maker's self-defined national role conceptions to the role prescription, the more he lives in reality as his OE and PE almost coincide (assuming, of course, that these roles are well defined and other countries acted according to their role prescription too). Accordingly, there is a greater chance of his policy being successful.

In reality both national role conception and prescription are not static and cannot be defined universally. Not only is role conception manipulated by national leaders, role prescription is also defined by foreign actors. Different actors perceive Thailand's (or any other country's) role differently. The Japanese and British prescriptions of Thailand's role in the external environment obviously differed during 1932-1946, while Pibul's conception of Thailand's role in the external environment certainly differed from Pridi's. Furthermore, each actor might not say what he really perceived to be Thailand's role but prescribed it to suit his own objective. For example, the Pibul clique's collaboration with the Japanese could be referred to as a passive independent role necessary to pull the country through the War. Meanwhile, the Japanese "Asia for Asiatics" banner fits the role of an "anti-imperialist agent" where Japan served as the "regional leader".

Arguably, Pridi's FSM reflected the role Pridi conceived of Thailand at the time: "active independence" to rectify the wrongs done by Pibul. The Allies, on the other hand, regarded or prescribed the FSM as their collaborators and Pibul as a Japanese collaborator (see Allied propaganda in Thailand during the War). Finally, the different roles Thailand had been prescribed by members of the Allies were also

interesting, (Britain: collaborator; the US: enemy-occupied territory to be liberated) and became a standpoint in the argument after the War (see Chapter 9).

Like values (and national interest), national role conception can be created or stirred up to serve a policy-maker's purposes. The Indo-China conflict is a good example here. The role of the "irredentists" was probably stirred up to create militaristic nationalism, which, in turn, saw the necessity of Pibul's leadership through the military. Pibul was, allegedly, forced to play this role of leadership as the one to regain the ceded territories. At the same time, Japan, by promising help, created a new (Japanese) role prescription for Thailand (thus fulfilling the "anti-imperialist" role). Paradoxically, the Thais had argued too that by annexing the ceded territories, they had tried to "balance" the power in the region by offsetting the advantage of the Japanese hold in the east coast of Indo-China.

The concepts of values, national role and national interest are by no means clear or well-defined. They surfaced intermittently, in various guises, in the thesis, usually in support of certain arguments. By bearing their different connotations in mind, they become tools we can employ in context interpretation and empirical evidence analysis. They could help to explain certain missing links between the operational and psychological environments of any policy-maker.

Having reviewed the successful applicability of the theoretical framework and its practice on Thai foreign policy 1932-1946, I must also point out its limitations.

This is so because, first of all, the aim of the thesis is to use these models and concepts in explaining Thai foreign policy. It is not an attempt to prove or disprove the validity of the theories.

Secondly, the models and concepts presented are selective and not exhaustive. They have been chosen because, I believe, they could be useful in serving my objectives. There are, of course, many other models and concepts in foreign policy analysis which could well be employed but I have found the selected ones to be most relevant. As for my main model, Brecher's decision-making model, it has been evaluated by a group of theorists as comprehensive, operational and of public relevance. They find that it lacks a typology of states and concerns only events, and thus does not satisfy the comparativity criteria. But they conclude that it

suits single-case study analysis⁽¹⁴⁾ which is the theme of this thesis.

Thirdly, because the theoretical framework was chosen before I embarked upon the empirical part of the thesis, and although I have tried to allow evidence to speak for itself when it first appeared, the resulting presentation cannot but reflect the pre-existing framework. Thus, its applicability may be, to some extent, predetermined. This problem is well recognised by Robert Jervis who believes, among other things, that scholars and decision-makers are apt to err by being too wedded to the established view and too close to new information respectively. Jervis believes that decision-makers' "theories and images play a large part in determining what they notice" but he also realises that "facts can be interpreted, and indeed identified, only with the aid of hypotheses and theories."⁽¹⁵⁾

As a decision-maker when writing this thesis, I cannot escape from Jervis's "Hypothesis on Misperception". Realising that, I tried to keep an open mind when empirical materials were being collected and interpreted. However, my analysis and interpretation of the materials were made through my own attitudinal prisms which include the theoretical framework. I only hope I have not been too biased in my presentation of the empirical evidence.

THEORETICAL EVALUATION

As S. M. Smith points out, any theoretical discussion of general nature of a state's foreign policy must offer some method of evaluating the connection between the domestic setting of a state and its external environment.⁽¹⁶⁾ This is where the concept of "compatibility and consensus" comes in, because by looking at internal politics behind a policy in relation to its external setting, an observer can see its chances of success and failure.

It may be argued that it is useless to know such, as events had unfolded themselves already within this thesis. I can offer three good reasons in answer.

Firstly, however vague the indicators may be, whenever the degree of consensus does not correspond well with that of compatibility, it makes us aware that there must be, at least, another more important

variable operating if the foreign policy is successful. For example, the question why Pibul easily acquiesced to the Japanese demands during the fateful days between December 8, 1941, and January 25, 1942, (see chapters VII and VIII) could not be explained purely by his dictatorial inclination nor the attitudes of the Powers alone. The consensus of the general public was surely to defend Thailand's neutrality. This coincided with the view of the Allies. Pibul himself probably adhered to this policy as he had, earlier in September 1941, introduced the Act prescribing the duties of the Thais in time of war. Why then was the Agreement of December 21 made and war declared on the Allies as they are contrary to both consensus and compatibility? This makes us look deeper into the issue to find if there was any secret pact between Japan and Thailand that the general public did not know of. The answer seems to lie in Pibul's oral commitment to Torigoe, which certainly helps us to understand the event more clearly. However, another possible explanation could simply be that the external environment had changed towards the absolute dominance of the Japanese and thus the general domestic "consensus" was not in accordance with external "compatibility". Pibul's perception of this external environment, with Vichitr's encouragement, might have made him decide to switch camp.

Secondly, the indication gives decision-makers some yardstick as to the probability of their policy being successful. If a decision-maker rationalises his policy according to external compatibility, there is a strong likelihood that he will succeed if he can gain a consensus in the domestic environment. Thus, he can evaluate his chances of success and act according to his evaluation of the optimal situation. At the same time, if there is a strong consensus domestically in an issue, he may be able to find an outlet for this feeling by exploring any weak point in the external environment. A good example of this point is during the Indo-Chinese dispute (see Chapter VI) when Pibul transformed the nationalistic feeling into irredentist aspiration, which is a form of national interest. He then exploited the French capitulation to the Nazis, and thus the weakness of Indo-China, to the advantage of the Thais. Therefore, he had the support of, more or less, the whole nation while the situation in Indo-China was not incompatible with this objective at the time. Conversely, a decision-maker had to realise too that if he swims against the tide domestically he is bound to fail even if his policy is compatible to the external environ-

ment. Worse still, if there is neither consensus nor compatibility in his policy, his failure is assured. This is the case of Pibul's fall in 1944.

Thirdly, the concept provides an analytical yardstick for the observer to predict the likely outcome of any policy. One can see that if a decision-maker can correctly assess both the "consensus" and "compatibility" of a foreign policy situation and act accordingly, his chance of success is more or less guaranteed. Unless a major variable is omitted from his assessment, whether internal or external, the likelihood of him being correct is great. At the same time, it can be predicted that any policy which lacks either consensus or compatibility, or both, is doomed to fail.

Bearing these in mind, it seems that what a decision-maker of a small state should concern himself with is the best national strategy/policy out of various alternatives, that complies well with national consensus. This is so not only because "the nation performs at its best when welded together in a common ideological manner"⁽¹⁷⁾, but also because "it is of course true to a greater or lesser extent for all small states that their foreign policies are formed in response to actions taken by other states and are determined by general situations which only to a very small degree are created by themselves. Decisions with far-reaching consequences for small states are made over their heads and the small state is presented with a kind of *fait accompli*".⁽¹⁸⁾ At times, a small or weak state plays a prominent part in the international drama, but the chief reason for this stems from the relationships between the great powers themselves.⁽¹⁹⁾ Thus, it should be remembered that the prevailing domestic ideology, or set of beliefs, should be well considered in any foreign policy. At the same time, the decision-maker should not arouse or instil a sense of false ideology within the general public for his own goal in the external environment, in case it leads him into potentially disastrous decisions. An example here is the Pibul clique's creation of pro-Japanese posture and its "benefits" thereof. A contrasting example is the gradual emergence and strength of the Free Siamese Movement which was based on the real Thai sentiment of freedom from any external rule. These two sets of beliefs operated domestically within the context of, more or less, the same set of external environment: Japanese domination of Southeast Asia.

Before the War, Pibul's clique was able to drum up military

nationalism in the form of irredentism. Hence there was a consensus for the return of the ceded territories. This was compatible to the Japanese objective of gaining a foothold in Indo-China as well as creating a compatible situation for Thai aspirations. This succeeded as long as Japan could guarantee the situation, and led to the Thai ruling clique joining the Japanese during the first years of the War, despite the consensus against it. Meanwhile, Pridi led a movement that accommodated this consensus and it grew in strength. By 1944, the external environment had also changed to the extent that the Allies were winning and thus, the compatible environment was to side with the Allies. When consensus and compatibility coincided, Pridi's movement succeeded. (see Chapter VIII)

However, one has to be aware of the fact that both "consensus" and "compatibility" can be manipulated and created too. This can be detected only with the help of retrospective evidence. One must realise that this was not available to policy-makers at the time. But for the purpose of making our understanding of the period clearer and more meaningful, unfortunately, one has to judge any policy with all the available data at one's disposal. This also causes many controversies as to the interpretation of the operational environment among various analysts.

On the surface, it seems that the external environment, leading up to the fateful day in December 1941, tended towards the absolute dominance of the Japanese over Asia. But this was true only in the regional subsystem, not absolutely in global terms. It was then divided between the (dictatorial) Axis and the (democratic) Allies. Therefore, the compatible external environment, as seen by Pibul's clique, was the one in which Japan was undoubtedly the master of Asia, which was the scene "created" by Japan and still under dispute by the Allies. This "created" atmosphere was probably recognised by Pridi and his lieutenants who steered clear of allying themselves with the Japanese. The difference between regional and global compatibility levels could be seen too during the Indo-China conflict. The fall of France was well exploited by the Japanese who helped create a regional environment not incompatible to Thai aspirations. With a global view, one can see that the British and the Americans were against the annexation but for those very small claims, and thus it was a different environment from the solely regional view. These differences were exploited by Thai leaders to suit their

arguments and as can be seen, the regional, Japanese-dominated situation was referred to by the pro-Japanese faction (probably their psychological lens made them see only this narrow view), while the global view was associated more with the liberals. Although small states are usually constrained to a regional rather than global outlook, in the long run, with hindsight, one can see that the latter proves to be the “real compatibility”

Though the external environment can be changed in a short period of time, national consensus takes a long time to change. This is because to be created, re-created or changed. As people do not change their values easily, especially deep-rooted ones like love of independence, national consensus changes only slowly, if at all. For example, it was not difficult to drum up irredentist enthusiasm, or patriotic spirit among the Thais to pursue a policy against any invader (Act Prescribing the duties of the Thais, September 1941) but to change course into accepting the Japanese occupation never succeeded though Pibul and his clique held firm control of the mass media. Moreover, Pibul might have been led to believe, through the “yes-men” who surrounded him, that the consensus was genuinely with him (and thus success was likely) or that the consensus against him was in error (so he acted according to his belief that it was popular). Being a dictator, his policy had to be followed. When this policy was executed within the created regionally compatible atmosphere, it was bound to be successfully carried out in the short run.

Some may argue that Pibul's and Pridi's oppositional activities provided a subtle form of elite consensus that was at work in enabling Thailand to adjust opportunely to shifts in the external environment. Under this hypothesis, the substantiating arguments might be that the absence of Pibul at the crucial moment of the Japanese advance into Thailand enabled the other group to claim, later, to have resisted the Japanese, while Pibul ensured, for the time being, Thailand's accommodation to Japan. Similarly, Pridi's “exit” was scarcely obstructed, and none took serious steps to secure his signature to the Declaration of War, thus providing the elite group with room to manoeuvre. However, I disagree with this hypothesis to the extent that though these “competing elites at work” enabled Thailand to shift in time of changing environment, it was hardly deliberate on the part of either Pibul or Pridi.

That Pibul stayed out of reach at the crucial moment was based on the assumption that Pibul knew the exact time of the attack which was

very unlikely. Had he really meant to enable the other group to claim later that the token resistance of five hours was intentional, he would surely have spelled it out in his prepared defence notes to the War Criminal trial after the War, and thus it would have appeared in his biography, a series of books written by his son, Anant Pibulsongkhram, who had full access to his documents. It would have shown Pibul's far-sightedness and patriotism to the full, and surely would have explained his dubious motive to the public. The same could be argued about the absence of any serious steps to secure Pridi's signature. As for Pridi's unobstructed "exit", Adul testified that it was the Japanese who demanded it. Pibul was hardly in a position to decide such, and was probably really glad to be able to kick his rival upstairs and out of his way. That their rivalries were not out in the open and led some to believe a form of elite consensus was at work was probably because of a characteristic feature of Thai behaviour. One author described the importance of the "maintenance of outward harmony and public avoidance of controversy through polite forms of social expression, which may conceal internal feelings of anger or resentment".⁽²⁰⁾

Yet, one has to accept that Pibul did not have the advantage of hindsight to help him in making decisions. He might have done everything a patriot should, but he erred in allowing his "created" and "manipulated" consensus to narrow his thinking down into a one-track thinking again and again. Coupled with his attitudinal prisms and elite images, he, probably unconsciously, allowed his own creation to deceive him into believing it was real. His group psychology surely added to this false belief. Furthermore, Pibul erred in pinning national fate to the (now known to be) Japanese-created compatibility and thus maintained it only as long as the creator was still victorious. On the other hand, the liberals did not have the benefit of hindsight either, but their predisposition made them see further than the regional issue. It is a case of "right is might" and not "might is right". Thus they operated within the real operational environment and not the created one. Hence their "consensus and compatibility" kept up with reality. With these two indicators at their disposal, their policies were likely to succeed.

Throughout this thesis, one can see that Thai foreign policy decision-makers had been remarkably successful apart from the period under Pibul's domination, 1940-1944. (Pibul knew it by 1944 and tried

unsuccessfully to change his foreign policy by attempting to contact the Allies.) If one looks back one can assert that in every successful policy there is no contradiction between domestic consensus and external compatibility. Thus, this concept helps us understand the success and failure of any foreign policy.

PATTERNS OF THAI FOREIGN POLICY

Since 1932, Thai foreign policy-makers had adapted well to the circumstances. The policy of goodwill to all was necessary to gain recognition when the Revolution was in the stage of consolidation. The idea was to avoid giving any pretext for foreigners to intervene. Once this was achieved and domestic disturbance subsided, Thailand began to exert her presence in the international sphere. Thus the policy of revising unequal treaties was pursued, with great success. When world tension increased, Thailand declared the policy of "neutrality", to her own benefit.

Unfortunately, the Thai leaders deviated from this policy and demanded the return of Indo-Chinese territories to Thailand, committing Thailand to the Japanese side in the process. This was followed by the consequent disastrous policy of the military and pro-Japanese clique allying the kingdom with Japan during the War. Fortunately the liberals secretly pursued a policy of aiding and abetting the Allies, and were able to get rid of Pibul before the War ended. After the War, the policy of absolving Thailand from the status of being a Japanese ally was therefore possible, and culminated in her becoming a member of the UN, the ultimate guarantee of her independence.

From the above, there appears to be no single pattern of Thai foreign policy in this period. But there was one guiding star: survival. To this end, every foreign policy was aimed at, with varying degrees of foresights and successes. Before the War, the background of Thai diplomacy "was based on long-standing antagonism towards France, uncertainty about British friendship, and admiration for the economic and military power of Japan."⁽²¹⁾ Against this background, five patterns of foreign policy may be developed.

Firstly, the pattern of a society open to unavoidable foreign

penetration. Foreigners of all nations were allowed to promote both trade and religion freely since 1855, when King Mongkut concluded a treaty with Sir John Bowring. As Prince Varn admiringly talked about the King:

“Thus it was his deliberate policy to give all the powers the same treatment of the open door and equal opportunities or, in other words, to look to the international community or to many nations instead of one, for safeguarding Thailand’s national independence...”⁽²²⁾

During 1932-1946, except for the period 1941-1944, the Thais pronounced their policy of “strict neutrality” on many occasions. This “neutrality” prescribed an open society with equal opportunity to all. It was also diplomatically resorted to in many instances such as its vote of abstention in the League of Nations in 1933, and its return to the sale of tin and rubber in the open market in 1940. This was to avoid giving any country particular favour.

Secondly, the pattern of “balance of power”. Closely associated with the “open door” policy is the idea that no single foreign country should be so powerful in Thailand that it could dominate the country. Before the War, the Thais were able to balance off the two dominant Powers in the region, Britain and Japan. After the War, the Thais were, again, able to exploit American humanitarian attitude towards her to balance off the severe British demands. Meanwhile, the dominant Powers themselves tried to balance their influence in Thailand, or at least not to be outdone by the other. This, the Thais exploited to the full again by playing off one against the other, as can be seen in the material gains she acquired during these two episodes. As both sides wished to keep their influence intact they had to match the other with equivalent aids to the Thais. The Thais may seem opportunistic here, but, morally too, no country should attempt to control excessively another country either. This was the price the Powers were happy to pay.

This pattern was also employed during the revision of the treaties in 1937 (see Chapter IV), and again in the negotiations towards the conclusion of the Non-Aggression Pacts with France, Britain and Japan (see Chapter V). It is evidently a case of “divide the rulers and rule ourselves”.

Thirdly, the pattern of “flexibility” or, as in the case of a weak

state, "bend with the wind". This is based on the belief that when the angry wind blows, small trees that bend in the direction of the wind survive, while big ones, that do not, will eventually break. Therefore if foreign pressures were too great to resist and there were no external allies to help, it was necessary to accommodate to those pressures for the sake of survival. This was the foreign policy of Kings Mongkut and Chulalongkorn in opening up the country and granting some territorial concessions as well as extraterritorial privileges. In 1933, Thailand voted to abstain from condemning Japan as an aggressor in the Manchurian crisis, trimming her sails and bending with the increasing wind. The ultimate incident in this pattern is the agreement for the passage of Japanese troops through Thailand on December 8, 1941. As already mentioned at the end of Chapter VII, this proved to be necessary and the best alternative then open to the Thais.

Fourthly, the pattern of "alliance" with (a) great Power(s). The basis of this thinking is that Thailand, being a weak nation, should secure a commitment by at least one great Power to defend her. This policy was implemented after December 8, 1941, by Pibul's faction, in allying Thailand with Japan. This led to a closer relationship between the two countries as seen in Chapter VIII. Thai leaders alleged that it was in the Thai national interest, whatever that meant, to do so. Essentially, it amounted to putting all the Thai eggs in the Japanese basket and as a writer notes, it "rendered negative results rather than positive advantages."⁽²³⁾ The Free Siamese Movement's policy could also be construed to fall into this pattern because it relied, almost entirely, on the Allies. But one had to take into account the fact that the situation dictated the policy as the Allies were the only worthwhile counterweight to the Japanese. Hence to negate the effect of the alliance with Japan it was necessary to gain the full support of the Allies. Had strict neutrality been maintained after December 8, 1941, there might have been no need for Thailand to join either side. Without backing any horse, one cannot lose.

The last pattern, of irredentism, was not so much a pattern as an *ad hoc*, opportunistic policy. This was seen when Thailand took back some territories from French Indo-China in 1941, and from British Malaya and Burma in 1943. There might be some historical or ethnic justifications to these claims but the manner in which they were taken discredited the whole claims, in the long run. In the end, when the legiti-

mate protectors were free from other engagements, these territories had to be returned. Apart from causing some unnecessary ill-feelings which resulted, in a small way, in Thailand being penalised after the War, because Thailand was not really capable of conquering Indo-China herself, this led on to Pibul's commitment to Torigoe, and probably the real beginning of the "alliance" policy.

It must be mentioned that irredentism is not *ad hoc* but a natural policy. Irredentism had been laden within the Thais' psyche since the imperialist Powers exacted some of their territories. However, military irredentist and pan-Thai policy certainly was an opportunistic one. The mistake seems to stem from the militaristic-aggressive attitude of the Thai decision-makers to jump the gun too soon which appeared opportunistic, and eventually produced more loss than gain.

From these five patterns, one can see that the first three did not bring harm to the country while the other two required a great deal of work to absolve the country from. Every foreign policy-maker cited 'national interest' as his motive, but each had his own understanding of the term. As no leader had given his intended definition of the term, one cannot match his motives with any particular pattern(s). But from the content analysis in previous chapters, it can be generally said that the last two patterns could be identified with Pibul's faction; that is, with Vichitr, Vanich, Phra Boriphan, Sinthu, etc. This is the so-called "military and pro-Japanese clique" which favoured Pibul as a dictator. Meanwhile, the first three patterns could be identified with the liberals with Pridi and Direk as the leading personalities. This faction was usually supported by, for example, Vilas, Adul, Thawee, most elected Assemblymen, and Crosby. During the War, this group became the core of the anti-Japanese Free Siamese Movement, and was joined by others such as Prince Svasti and Seni in their fight for Thai freedom. They thought nationally, and by that I mean for the good of the nation, not for the (temporary) gain of the nation which the former group seemed to think. Then there were people like Prince Aditya, the Regent, whose character was so weak that he acted according to the whims of the leader, and good bureaucrats like the able Prince Varn who carried out any order efficiently as a good civil servant should.

Therefore, it seems unassuming to say that the results of Thai foreign policies were better when the liberals controlled the decision-

making apparatus than when the militarist-cum-dictator did. As the liberal civilians were mostly members of the Assembly, it is a safe bet that most of them favour democracy and fair elections.

A democratic form of government also has room to manoeuvre in its foreign policy because it can always refer to national consensus and mandate as a firm basis for any policy. Furthermore, it can avoid severe demands from external pressures because, by constitution, it has to be accountable to the Assembly which could simply reject it. This tactic of playing for time was quite successful during the Thai negotiations with Great Britain and France (see Chapter IX). Hence, a democratic form of government is more conducive to good and beneficial foreign policy, at least in the case of Thailand between 1932 and 1946.

CONCLUDING APPRAISAL

1). Theoretical models and concepts could be usefully employed in explaining Thai foreign policy between 1932-1946 in a more meaningful way than just a diplomatic history of the period. Models provide us with relevant checklists of the elements to be looked at, and how they interplay in the formation of a foreign policy. Concepts help to explain definitions, usage and understandings of factors that recur frequently in the analysis of any foreign policy. By forming a broad theoretical framework, when more information is disclosed or discovered, any researcher can more easily categorise and add them into the various variables within the framework. This should shed more light on or produce a different complexion to our understanding of Thai foreign policy between 1932 and 1946.

Furthermore, an observer or a decision-maker may find it useful to analyse any foreign policy situation by operating this theoretical framework and its application to empirical contents in the manner that this thesis is written. The checklist and theoretical evaluation may help one assess any foreign policy situation correctly, so that mistakes will not be repeated unnecessarily. Admittedly, this broad theoretical framework and the way information is treated here is only one of the methods in dealing with the subject but, hopefully, it is a worthwhile start to be developed upon.

It is worth noting that this thesis is written according to selective and available information. There are many other facts that I have no access to. Further research should be able to shed more light on the topic. Research papers based mainly on primary documents in the USA and Japan could produce a clearer overview from different angles. In any case, even in London, many documents of the period in the FO papers are still closed or kept at the department of origin. If they are accessible, different implication and complexion to this research may be the result.

2). Although Thai foreign policy during 1932-1946 had been quite a success, one has to bear in mind that "what characterises a political problem is that no answer will fit the terms of the problems stated. A political problem therefore is not solved, it may be settled, which is a different thing altogether."⁽²⁴⁾ A solution here means an answer which fully satisfies all the requirements laid down and which if found by anyone, everyone else would acknowledge it. In a settlement, some parties are not satisfied and unconvinced and, thus, "while legally bound, [they are] psychologically dissatisfied."⁽²⁵⁾ Hence, a foreign policy that is successfully formed and executed is not necessarily the solution but probably the best settlement at the time. With hindsight, one may be able to learn what requirements had been left out of the settlement. Two good examples are the Indo-China dispute and the negotiations with Britain after the War.

The foreign policy of regaining the ceded territories from French Indo-China was a big success according to Thai decision-makers in those days. After the War, it became a point of contention between the two countries again. And as events unfolded, in the end, there was no gain for the Thais.

As for the other example, the Thais seemed to have exacted their best possible terms in the Formal Agreement with the British but in reality the Thai liberals had unwittingly lost their own chance of planting the seeds of democracy. The opportunity arose when the British tried to put a control on and reorganise the Thai army so that a return of military dictatorship would be impossible. This appeared in one of the twenty-one demands which, with the US help, the Thais had successfully avoided (see Chapter IX). The demand was probably based on Crosby's realistic warning in 1943 that

"If the failure of constitutional government in Siam has

proved one thing, it is that a relatively powerful army must represent a standing menace to the liberties of the people of any country in which the traditional form of government has been weakened or destroyed without the creation of an effective public opinion to supplement or replace it. The political eclipse of the Siamese liberals will endure so long as the army and navy continue to possess the physical means of keeping them in subjection. Not until this impediment had been removed will there be a prospect for the application of democratic principles in Siam..."⁽²⁶⁾

As this British pragmatic and concrete proposal was attached to many other unattractive proposals, the Americans, whose experience about Thailand tended toward the humanitarian and idealistic ends, intervened and had them withdrawn, almost en bloc. The Thais gleefully praised the Americans for this. But this rejection had an adverse repercussions on the re-emerging democratic system in Thailand.⁽²⁷⁾ Without any restraint, as early as the end of 1947, the Thai military were able to stage a coup. Since then, they have controlled the reins of Thai government except for a short interval between 1973 and 1976. Thus one of the most successful Thai foreign policy moves has turned out to be a suicidal one domestically. The long-term legacy does not necessarily correspond with the short-term gain, internally, externally, or both.

3). Although the concept of "linkage politics" may have helped us understand the inseparable connection between the international and domestic environments, their separation is analytically useful. It is, however, important to understand how they are connected, and here the four processes become meaningful: penetrative, reactive, emulative and imitative. By applying these processes to different Thai foreign policies and their salient sources as described in this thesis, it is possible to form certain correlations.

It seems that all successful Thai foreign policies during the period 1932-1946, apart from having a firm base of national consensus, were "reactive" to the demanding international environments. Whenever decision-makers realise that Thailand, in terms of relative power, internationally, is a weak and small country, they will see that the effective role Thailand can play is minimal. Thailand should not assume a role of a busy actor, but should act according to righteousness and protocol, in

that order. This line should be embodied in the principles of any foreign policy. It means that no foreign policy should be followed simply because it is desirable.

For example, the re-negotiations of treaties in 1937 were successful because Thailand based its case on equality and reciprocity which no nation could justifiably refuse lest it would be condemned by the Family of Nations as imperialistic and immoral. This policy was also a response to international environment because these treaties had either expired or almost expired by then and a new series of treaties were necessary to govern the continuing relationships according to international rules and protocols.

On the other hand, the pro-Japanese foreign policy, apart from lacking national consensus, is not really “reactive” but “imitative” or even “emulative” in its nature. It overestimated the role Thailand could afford to play effectively within the external environment. With very limited capability, Pibul had to rely heavily on external support, with disastrous results in the end. It deviated from the principle of “righteousness and protocol” but followed “might” instead. A writer observed correctly that, by declaring war “Pibul had once again copied the policy of King Vajiravudh, yet this time it seemed that he was following one of his good policies without understanding its true merits.”⁽²⁸⁾ This can be sharply contrasted by the policy of the liberals in forming the FSM, joining the Allies in the belief that the righteous Allies were fighting against an aggressive force.

Therefore, a decision-maker should always bear in mind the realistic role his country could effectively play within the international environment. As for Thailand, and other weak and small nations, a reactive foreign policy seems to be most suitable. Apart from survival and independence, the guiding principles in forming a successful foreign policy should be righteousness and protocols, not the fashion of the day.

4). Implicit in the above passage is the recognition that Thailand was categorised as a small or weak state in the international ranking at the time. Although it seems impossible to define any of the groups of states in the international hierarchy in one concise and elegant statement, the power of a state can and should be measured in relation to its neighbours, and by the degree to which the strength at its disposal matches its national goals and ambitions.⁽²⁹⁾ Even if states, in terms of strength,

are not static, during 1932-1946 it is undeniable that Thailand was a weak or small state compared to her neighbours (Britain and France) and the other regional powers (e.g. Japan). It is interesting to find that Thailand's foreign policy behaviour, more often than not, followed similar behaviours of states of similar type.

It has to be mentioned from the outset that much of the foreign policy behaviour is based on intuitive evaluations by policy-makers in trying to assess the relative strength and position of the opposition,⁽³⁰⁾ or on the leader's perception of "national role". During this period, it seems that, apart from Pibul and Vichitr's contention that Thailand must become a power or perish, Thai leaders accepted the role prescription of a weak state and based their policies accordingly. During the "power or perish" atmosphere, though based on the premise that Thailand was weak, Thailand's aspirations were enlarged and came into conflict with those of the French as a result. This is contrary to David Vital's belief that it is of supreme importance for the weak to refrain, if they can, "from enlarging the scope of the conflict and raising the value of the stake — real or imagined — of the party which possesses superior force".⁽³¹⁾ But this could be explained by the fact that Pibul probably believed that the French had ceased to perform the power function permanently, and that he could not resist the domestic consensus to act in that fashion. Yet, Pibul's followers could also point to the fact that the policy was necessarily dictated by the situation, i.e., to counter Japan's influence in Indo-China (but surely the manner it was pursued gave the Japanese even more influence on Thailand itself and seems to have negated this advantage, with hindsight of course). This line of argument fits in well with the weak state's general characteristic: that the international system leaves them less room for choice in the decision-making process and that domestic determinants of foreign policy are less salient in weak states.⁽³²⁾ Thus there is a greater preoccupation with "survival".

As M.R. Singer points out, foremost among the foreign policy objectives of small developing states "is to maintain the existence of the state".⁽³³⁾ He argues that that objective may not be in the best interests of the state. But again one has to contend with the concept of "national interest" and who decides what the "national interest" is. Singer adds that small states usually have to balance two objectives: "autonomy and security".⁽³⁴⁾ In time of conflict, if unavoidable, they either sacrifice a

large degree of autonomy to receive protection or keep autonomy but lose some security. In this thesis, it seems that Pibul would favour the former because of his militaristic (thus he suffered from a security syndrome) perception, and the liberals would favour the latter.

It is true that the foreign policy of small or weak states, is determined by their governments and parliaments in so far as the formal decisions through which the policy is given expression appear as decisions of these organs. In reality, their foreign policy is determined by factors on which their governments have little influence. The main task of policy-makers therefore is to keep informed about these factors and their interplay, and form an opinion of the right moment to exploit the prevailing situation to further the national interest.⁽³⁵⁾ This means that the external compatibility cannot be changed easily, and it becomes even more important for decision-makers to spot the weakness or opportunity within the external environment, and have the consensus at hand to form a popular policy in response. Small states should try to make the best out of the available resources rather than wait passively for things to happen. During peacetime, small states can affect the international arena too, such as the case of Thailand's negotiation of Treaties in 1937. During a time of tension, small states can still do so, but at a cost, such as the Indo-China conflict. Usually the external forces will impose their will upon small states, such as Thailand during the War years. However, it is interesting to see how and why different elite groups react to this same operational situation. In a vertical analysis of a small state, as described in this thesis, this decision-making model seems even more appropriate because it incorporates these various situations into a process, and thus is easier to grasp.

However, weak states do have advantages too. It is noted that "the great power needs to be reminded not to take the friendship of a weak state for granted; it should be encouraged from time to time to show its interest through economic aid, statements of political support, improving the terms of trade, etc."⁽³⁶⁾ This applies directly to the Thai policy of playing one Power against another during the 1937 and 1940 negotiations of Treaties and Non-Aggression Pacts, and the call for material support as well as political support between 1939 and 1941 from the British, the Americans and the Japanese. But there is also a dilemma in that the supply of weapons to weak states can turn out to be the most efficient way for

the Powers to exert influence in their struggle for hegemony.⁽³⁷⁾ Total dependence on a country's weapon system would lead to weapon subservience and could lead on to other fields too. This is probably why the Japanese tried to encourage more and more Thai servicemen to be trained in Japan, especially in the case of Sinthu who obviously admired Japan's navy more than the West's.

As can be seen, a weak state, as the name signifies, does not possess enough domestic strength to stand on its own in the international system; external or indirect sources will have to be added. Looking from a weak state's point of view, it is more important how to attract and accommodate these sources. Located at the crossroads of mainland Southeast Asia, Thailand was of strategic importance to both Japan and Britain; so it was natural that it could not avoid being pulled into any conflict between these two Powers. Before the actual conflict broke out, it could extract many gains from both camps, but once the conflict actually started another pattern was necessary. The Thais chose the best option on December 8, 1941. From then on, they sided with the Japanese, at least the government did. This was, again, in keeping with a weak state's character as recognised by Handel:

“Unable to stay aloof in a central conflict (or an approaching conflict) between the great Powers, the weak states must side with or at least lean toward one or another of the Powers. In times of conflict complete neutrality is practically impossible. Even the avowedly neutral states have to learn to ‘bend’ to the will of the more strongly pressuring power in order to maintain their integrity and prevent an attack.”⁽³⁸⁾

The choice of opponents and allies is crucial for the weak states and poses a serious dilemma. It cannot stand against the immediate threat (aggressive and stronger side) if it wants to maintain independence. The aggressors are usually not the right but the mighty side, initially. Thus, the short-term interests of the weak states can often be contrary to their long-range interests. But the need to survive in the short run is usually more immediate and pressing than speculations about who will win in the end. Once again, Handel sets out the optimal policy in this fashion.

“To be successful, the diplomacy of a weak state must be

conducted in the following manner: it must always side with or placate the stronger and more threatening power at each state of the conflict; it must switch its position when the balance changes, exactly at the moment the declining power with which it originally sided is too weak to retaliate, and while the ascendant power still needs help. The risks in this type of policy are enormous; they can at best be minimised, but never completely eliminated. The weak state has to be extremely cautious, especially with its timing; it must carefully calculate the risks involved at each stage..."⁽³⁹⁾

It is remarkable that Thai foreign policy during 1941-1945, as shown in Chapters VII and VIII, corresponds well with the above notion. The difference seems to be that the above observation implies the unity of the weak state which was not the case in Thailand then. Though the rise and fall of Pibul and Pridi coincided with those of the Japanese and the Allies, it could hardly be interpreted in terms of its continuity as being the result of a Thai elite consensus or non-consensus at work. This is because, without the FSM, it was unlikely that the Allies would play along with Pibul's change of heart (in his attempt in 1944 to contact them). Pibul's unwillingness to relinquish power in 1944 also illustrated that the policy of really joining the Allies was not predetermined by him.

On the whole, Pibul's policy on December 8, 1941, was right. After that he erred in not only leaning but allying deeply with the Japanese. Fortunately for Thailand, and without Pibul's acquiescence, there existed the FSM which was able to deprive Pibul of power in time to change the fate of the country to a less severe punishment after the war. (This open break between the two factions, unfortunately, has since become irreconcilable.) It was a coincidence (though those who study small/weak states behaviour in a horizontal level may say it is natural) that Thai foreign affairs during the period fit in with the general characteristic behaviour of weak states in international politics, though the actors' motives may not fit the nature expected.

5). Apart from the various foreign policies identified and described in this thesis, many original historical insights have been introduced to substantiate the interpretations of various issues. In some cases, they provide the basis for overturning existing conventional

judgements. In others, they provide nuanced interpretations of historical materials. Here, I propose to point out some of the salient cases in the thesis.

King Prajadhipok's letter to the Financial Adviser in August 1933, (p. 90) urging all advisers to resign in protest against the return of Pridi could have given Britain a good cause to consider intervention. Fortunately, the British were more realistic and played it down. Had the Financial Adviser been so indiscreet as to impart it to the new regime, a major conflict might have broken out between the King and the government which could easily have led to foreign intervention. This proved, among other things, that the fear of foreign intervention was real. Domestically, some able propagandists could easily have connected it to the Bovoradej Rebellion, whatever the merit, resulting in more troubles.

The negotiations of new treaties during the 1930s were not as smooth and easy as they turned out to be. The Siamese had failed once already in their negotiations with the Americans (p. 104). Pridi's tactics and emphases as well as the realistic role played by Crosby should be appreciated more than they are now. The emphases were on the principles of equality and reciprocity. The tactics were to denounce the old treaties without any condition first. Then the negotiations were made on the principle of uniformity, thus negating any "special" advantage that any Power might ask for. By producing the drafts first as well as choosing the venue of negotiation, Pridi made sure of the principle of equality. These were aided to a large extent by the accommodating role that Crosby took (pp. 110-112 in particular). The successful conclusion of the Non-Aggression Pacts, which showed Thai neutrality, should be attributed mainly to the differing but appropriate tactics towards different Powers.

A lot has been written about the Indo-China conflict but Pridi's moderate and legal tone (pp. 167-169) has hardly been registered elsewhere. Neither has the difference of attitude between Lepissier, the French Minister in Bangkok, and his superiors in the Quai d'Orsay as well as those in Indo-China itself, been appreciated before. Poor Lepissier could not please anyone, while Crosby was accused by the French authorities of having led Lepissier into accommodating the Thai position. Pibul's oral commitment to Torigoe (as Flood showed and

quoted here in pp. 182-183) was so important in this conflict and the position of Thailand while the War was imminent, that no comprehensive political analysis of this period could ever leave it out. Political rivalry between Japan and Britain was further illustrated when both tried to act as "mediator" in the conflict (pp. 185-187).

In Chapter 7, that Thailand lent Japan some money only told a small part of the story. The way they resisted other demands, the final terms agreed upon and their results were interpreted in the light of reports by the British Financial Adviser. Militarily, the British conception of operation "Matador" nearly changed the whole complexion of the invasion of Thai soil, but for Crosby's plea. Even before Pearl Harbour, Roosevelt showed a more forthcoming attitude towards the Thais than Churchill did, judging from their public declarations. In any case, Churchill's message did not reach Pibul until after the cease-fire had been ordered (pp. 206-207 and 221).

Vichitr's secret memorandum which spelled out the philosophy/ideology of Pibul's clique has been presented. How weak this argument has also been pointed out (p. 215). The possibility of Pibul's knowledge of the Japanese invasion and its merit has been discussed with added materials in terms of Crosby's reports to the FO (pp. 222-223). In any case, the emphasis was that the responsibility of the Thai cabinet was the survival of Thailand, and not the defence of Malaya or any other place. Furthermore the decision on December 8, 1941, had to be separated from later decisions, as it concluded a phase of Thai foreign policy.

It was a Japanese, and not Pibul's, initiative that Pridi was "kicked" upstairs to become Regent. According to Adul, it was not Pibul's idea either that Direk became the Thai Ambassador to Tokyo (pp. 228-229). The declaration of war was not illegal as generally believed. But there were two major irregularities which could be referred to. Firstly the manner and procedure were not according to usual protocol. Secondly, that Pridi did assent and sign his name was not true. This might have had some psychological bearings on the whole episode, because had Pridi been allowed to register his objection, by refusing to sign, it would have shown the cleavage within the elite group to the people at large and the world.

Various problems encountered by the FSM from the British as well as American sources were produced because they affected negotia-

tions after the War. The myth about Seni's refusal to deliver the declaration of war to Mr Hull is denounced, but his role as an FTM leader was appreciated. Special emphasis has been given to the proposed overt action by the FSM.

The tactical move that forced SEAC to accept a semi-political mission, SEQUENCE, was recognised by the British FO, and the Siamese proposal was considered (pp. 263-265). Here the policy of playing one power against another was supported. It is significant to note that the Siamese Peace Proclamation was urged by the British, through Lord Mountbatten's SEAC.

That Seni was made as a "plenipotentiary of the Regent" and later the designated Prime Minister (pp. 269-270) seemed to be a good tactical ploy by the Siamese, but it also contradicts somewhat Seni's account that he was sent away to Washington in 1940 because Pridi was jealous of his increasing popularity with the students of Thammasat University.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Or perhaps Pridi found this to be best for Thai national interests. The importance to Thai independence was emphasised in the passing of the War Criminal Act, and not as revenge on Pibul as some writers have alleged.

In the negotiations after the war, the sequence concerning the infamous and oft-quoted "21 clauses agreement" was clarified, through British sources (pp. 272-275). It turned out to be the result of some miscommunication between SEAC and the OSS who blew it up out of proportion. This became the start of the Siamese exploitation of the cleavage between these two Allies. The British encountered pressure from within (such as the Board of Trade) and without (India, etc.) to be more forthcoming with the Siamese. On the other hand, the Siamese, backed by the US, were prepared to wait and thus prolong the negotiation as long as possible. The final interesting original material presented is the unprecedented manner in which the French Committee of National Liberation claimed to be at war with Siam (pp. 284-285).

6). Decision-makers should not only continuously reassess their foreign policy attitudes but also reevaluate the effectiveness of the decision and policy-making structure and system in terms of their capabilities and commitment. By being constantly aware of the changing situation both domestically and externally, decision-makers will live in reality. Something in the style of a "cost-benefit analysis" of the pros

and cons of any foreign policy should be made. This should be done with the full awareness of the country's capability in effecting that policy. That foreign policy decision-makers pursue a defined and conscious set of goals is not enough. They have to decide on a policy within the limit of the country's capability, if they expect their success to last.

Whatever the merit of the irredentists' aspiration in 1940, the leaders should not have deceived themselves about Thai military capability. There seems to have been no evaluation of the effectiveness of the decision to pursue this objective. Pibul and his clique, having created the irredentist and pan-Thai movement, could not control it, and had to commit themselves to its cause. This made them go all out to satisfy the consensus of their manufactured opinion, without caring for any warning flag. Within Pibul's own clique, the thinking was almost the same as no one dared to oppose him. Without any self-criticism or any objective analysis of the decision-making system itself, Pibul was led, probably innocently, to believe that his ruling policy was right, and thus neglected the real world situation.

Once Pibul set out to achieve his foreign policy goal, he found that his image of the real world was not correct. Instead of reassessing his policy when he realised that his military capability was not as he expected, Pibul tried to find other factors which could rectify his capability, at all costs. Without considering the pros and cons in a "cost-benefit analysis" way, he thought of an immediate gain by secretly giving commitment to the Japanese. To put it crudely, he sold the nation just to achieve the foreign policy goal. In the short run, this gave the Thais satisfaction and enhanced his own leadership position. In the long run, the territorial gain did not last while the commitment had plunged the Thais into siding with the Japanese which, even with the good deeds of the liberal-led Free Siamese Movement, Thailand absolved herself at a high cost.

7). Finally, it is my belief that a foreign policy should not be used as a result or a means of domestic politics (but as a reaction to external demand). This is so because to effect such a policy, the decision-maker may have to resort to something that benefits him and his position but is inadvertently disadvantageous to the country as a whole. Again, the rivalry between Pibul and the liberals provides a very good case to study.

As an observer notes, Siam's pro-Japanese foreign policy "was

inextricably rooted in its internal politics".⁽⁴¹⁾ As seen in Chapter IV, while Pridi was toiling with bringing equality status to Siam, Pibul was building up his own power base by modernising and expanding the army. At first Pibul might have done so in good faith, but later he was corrupted by the power he was accustomed to having. The militaristic-nationalism which helped him dominate Thai domestic politics was soon translated into pan-Thai irredentism which Pibul himself could not control. Even so, Pibul felt obliged to support it for domestic consumption (see Chapters V - VII).

The same observer notes that Pibul "erred in trying to revive old Siam by military means, with too much reliance on external support..."⁽⁴²⁾ This forced him to become pro-Japanese. The objective of Pibul's policy was thus for his own good domestically, and probably internationally as well, and not for the good of the nation. By depending on the Japanese, Pibul's fate, and unfortunately Thailand's, as Pibul was virtually a dictator, was dictated by Japan when she was still powerful, and collapsed when Tokyo became powerless and was vanquished.

Meanwhile, the liberals' foreign policy, which has "beneficial" national interests as its main objective, has proved, time and again, to be successful as well as useful, though sometimes not spectacular, such as the revision of Treaties in 1937.

Therefore, the optimal objective of a good foreign policy should be for the good of the country, and not to serve the interest of any decision-maker in particular. Whenever a foreign policy is only a response and/or a means to further domestic domination, that policy may be successfully executed, but, it is unlikely to be beneficial, if not disastrous, to the nation as a whole. Thus a good foreign policy-maker should think nationally, recognise national attributes and form a righteous reactive policy according to the changing international environment or situation.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

1. See Morgenthau's "Power Politics", in Morgenthau, 1961.
2. Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin: "Decision-making as an approach to the study of international politics", in Snyder et.al. (eds.), 1962.
3. Jones, 1970, p.153.
4. Snyder et.al. (eds.), 1962, p.90.
5. Andriole, Wilkenfeld, and Hopple, 1975.
6. For details, see Sprout, 1957.
7. Frankel, 1973, p.66.
8. Frankel, 1963.
9. Brecher, Steinberg, and Stein, 1969, p.77.
10. *Ibid*, pp.75-101, and later in Brecher, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1974(a), 1974(b).
11. Brecher, 1973, p.75.
12. *Ibid*, pp.73-102.
13. Brecher, 1974(a).
14. Brecher, 1972.
15. Allison, 1969.
16. Allison, 1971.
17. See for instance Allison and Halperin, in Tanter and Ullman (eds.), 1972.
18. Cornford, 1974.
19. Allison, 1971, p.6.
20. *Ibid*, p.5.

21. O'Leary, in Rosenau, 1974, pp.55-70.
22. Jervis, 1968.
23. See Spanier, 1972, p.473.
24. *Ibid*, p.474.
25. Cornford, 1974, p.232.
26. Coplin, McGowan, and O'Leary, 1974, pp.146-147, for example.
27. Cornford, 1974, p.231.
28. Rosenau, 1971, pp.95-149.
29. Rosenau, 1966; *ibid*, pp.108-109.
30. *Ibid*, p.109.
31. Smith, 1978, p.36.
32. Rosenau and Hoggard: "Foreign Policy Behaviour in Dyadic Relationship: Testing a Pre-Theoretical Extension", in Rosenau, 1974.
33. Russett, 1967.
34. Rosenau, 1966, in Rosenau, 1971, p.120.
35. *Ibid*, pp.127-128.
36. Rosenau, 1966(a).
37. *Ibid*, in Rosenau, 1971, p.309.
38. *Ibid*, p.314.
39. *Ibid*, p.318.
40. *Ibid*, p.319.
41. *Ibid*, p.320.
42. *Loc.cit*.
43. Frankel, 1973, p.43.
44. See Rosenau, 1966(a) in Rosenau, 1971, p.325.
45. *Ibid*, p.324.
46. *Ibid*, p.326.
47. *Ibid*, p.327-330.
48. *Ibid*, p.330.
49. *Loc.cit*.
50. Rosenau, 1971(a).
51. *Ibid*, in Wildenfeld (ed.), 1973, p.25.
52. *Ibid*, p.31.
53. *Ibid*, p.33.
54. *Ibid*, p.35.
55. *Ibid*, p.36.
56. *Ibid*, p.38.

57. *Loc.cit.*
58. *Ibid*, p.45.
59. in Rosenau, 1969, Chapters 4-12.
60. Rosenau, 1971(a), in Wilkenfeld (ed.), 1973, p.49.
61. *Ibid*, p.51.
62. Rosenau, 1965: Published in Rosenau, 1967, and Rosenau, 1971.
63. Rosenau, 1965, in Rosenau, 1971, p.402.
64. *Ibid*, p.403, footnote 1.
65. See *ibid*, p.405.
66. *Ibid*, p.406.
67. *Ibid*, p.410.
68. *Ibid*, p.412.
69. *Ibid*, p.439.
70. Rosenau, 1966.
71. *Ibid*, in Rosenau, 1971, p.133.
72. *Ibid*, p.139.
73. *Ibid*, p.141.
74. *Loc.cit.*
75. Jervis, 1968, p.461.
76. *Ibid*, pp.455-465.
77. Boulding, 1959.
78. *Ibid*, in Rosenau, 1969(a), p.424.
79. *Ibid*, pp.424-425.
80. *Ibid*, pp.425-426.
81. *Ibid*, p.430.
82. See for instance Burgess, 1967; Frankel, 1963.
83. Frankel, 1973, pp.72-73.
84. *Ibid*, p.73.
85. Boulding, 1959, in Rosenau, 1969(a), p.423.
86. *Loc.cit.*
87. Frankel, 1973, p.77.
88. Robinson and Snyder, 1965, in Kelman, 1965, p.447.
89. Smith, 1978, p.23.
90. Holsti, 1970: "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy"
91. *Ibid*, p.238.
92. Smith, 1978, p.26.

93. Holsti, 1970, pp.244-245
94. *Ibid*, pp.260-271.
95. *Ibid*, p.306.
96. Backman, 1970: "Role Theory and International Relations: A Commentary and Extension".
97. Smith, 1978, p.15.
98. Rosenau, 1971, p.239.
99. Frankel, 1970.
100. Frankel, 1973, p.78.
102. *Ibid*, p.977.
103. *Loc.cit.*
104. *Loc.cit.*
105. *Ibid*, p.979.
106. *Ibid*, p.982.
107. Rosenau, 1967(a): "Compatibility and Consensus And An Emerging Political Science of Adaptation".
108. *Ibid*, p.984.
109. *Ibid*.
110. Smith, 1978, p.69.
111. *Ibid*, p.74.
112. *Ibid*, pp.65-66.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

1. Hall, 1955; Anumanrajadhon, 1966.
2. For examples, see Purcell, 1951; Skinner, 1951, 1957, 1958.
3. Darling, 1961, p.29.
4. Hall, 1955, p.470.
5. Chula Chakrabongse, 1956, pp.40-41.
6. Wood, 1924, p.195.
7. See for instance Government Publication, 1930; Frankfurter, 1954; Thompson, 1941, pp.267-268; Moffat, 1961.
8. Vella, 1955, p.334; See also Chula Chakrabongse, 1956, Chapter 3.
9. D.A. Wilson in Kahin, 1959, p.11.
10. *Ibid*, p.10; See also Darling, 1961, pp.37-38.
11. Hall, 1955, p.806.
12. *Ibid*, p.807.
13. Wilson, in Kahin, 1959, p.14.
14. Skinner, 1957, pp.164-165.
15. Darling, 1961, p.49.
16. Hall, 1955, pp.807-808.
17. *Ibid*, p.808.
18. Darling, 1961, p.54.
19. *Loc.cit.*
20. *Loc.cit.*
21. *Ibid*, p.97.
22. *Ibid*, pp.89-93.

23. Vella, 1955, p.362.
24. Darling, 1961, p.93.
25. *Ibid*, p.67.
26. Wilson, in Kahin, 1959, p.13.
27. Tjoa Hock Guan, in Khoo Kay Kim, 1977, pp.166-175.
28. For the Foreign Office use, by F.C. Jones, Foreign Research and Press Service Balliol College, Oxford, dated February 9, 1943. Documented in F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982 p.8.
29. *Loc.cit*.
30. Darling, 1961, p.30.
31. F.C.Jones, in F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982, p.8.
32. *Ibid*, p.7.
33. *Loc.cit*.
34. Chula Chakrabongse, 1956, p.55: F.C.Jones rightly added the state of Kedah as well, see F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982, p.8.
35. Chula Chakrabongse, 1956, p.57.
36. Hall, 1955, p.808.
37. Lyon, 1969, p.19.
38. *Ibid*, p.34.
39. F1078/1078/40 in Vol.FO371/16260, p.224.
40. *Loc.cit*.
41. A letter to Mr Orde, the Head of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, dated May 18, 1932. F4260/4260/40 in Vol.FO371/16261, p.45.
42. The advent of Constantine Phaulkon, or Chao Phya Vichayentra, could be cited as an example here. For details, see Hall, 1955, pp.365-367, and Nuechterlein, 1965, p.7, for instance.
43. F.C.Jones, in F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982, p.7.
44. Cady, 1966, p.92.
45. *Ibid*, p.107.
46. Chula Chakrabongse, 1956, p.41.
47. Nuechterlein, 1965, p.16.
48. F.C.Jones, in F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982, p.7.
49. Hall 1955, p.684.
50. *Ibid*, p.686; The detailed account of this episode was told with a little difference in Chula Chakrabongse, 1956, p.53.
51. Hall, 1955, p.693.

52. *Ibid*, p.695.
53. *Ibid*, p.696.
54. *Ibid*, p.698.
55. *Loc.cit*.
56. F.C.Jones, in F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982, p.8.
57. Cady, 1966, p.128.
58. F1078/1078/40 in Vol.FO371/16260, p.225.
59. Darling, 1961, p.97.
60. F.C.Jones, in F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982, p.8
61. For details, see Darling, 1961, pp.83-87.
62. *Ibid*, p.87.
63. *Ibid*; see also Zimmerman, 1931.
64. Dormer to FO. F1078/1078/40 in Vol.FO371/16260, p.226.
65. *Loc.cit*.
66. Darling, 1961, p.97.
67. *Ibid*, p.81. quoting Reverend John H. Freeman: *An Oriental Land of the Free*, p.109
68. Darling, *ibid*, p.89.
69. *Ibid*, p.91, quoting "A Tabloid in Bangkok", *Asia*, August, 1930, p.559
70. Chula Chakrabongse, 1956, p.55.
71. Vella, 1955, p.353.
72. F1078/1078/40 in Vol.FO371/16260, p.226.
73. *Loc.cit*.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

1. Mokarapong, 1972, p.105.
2. To FO, dated June 25, 1932. F5090/4260/40 in Vol.FO371/16261, p.89.
3. F5110/4260/40 in *ibid*, p.93.
4. To FO, dated September 8, 1932. F7290/4260/40 in *ibid*, p.239.
5. Mokarapong, 1972, p.109.
6. F7009/4260/40 in Vol.FO371/16261.
7. F691/42/40 in Vol.FO371/16261.
8. Minute by Mr Mackillop, an officer in the Far Eastern Dept., dated August 6, 1932. F5920/4260/40 in Vol.FO371/16261, p.163.
9. For details, see Patamasukhon, 1974, (in Thai), pp.1-78.
10. *Ibid*, p.95.
11. F6564/4260/40 in Vol. FO371/16261, p.204.
12. London, 1941, p.90.
13. F7475/7475/40 in Vol.FO371/16262, p.207.
14. Darling, 1961, p.144.
15. Annual Report, 1932. F1078/1078/40 in Vol.FO371/16260, p.225.
16. According to a letter of December 20, 1933 from Penang, from HSH Prince Vipulya Svastivong, the late Private Secretary to the King of Siam, to Mr Anderson of the FO. F515/21/40 in Vol.FO371/18206 p.118.
17. F5036/4260/40 in Vol.FO371/16261, p.82.
18. F5413/4260/40 in *ibid*, pp.109-111.

19. F7668/4260/40 in Vol.FO371/16262, pp.19-22.
20. *Ibid*, pp.23-24.
21. F7732/4260/40 in *ibid*, p.33.
22. *Ibid*, pp.37-38.
23. Flood, 1967, p.54.
24. *Ibid*; Dormer also reported this same view in F7922/42/40 in Vol.FO371/17176, pp.212-213.
25. Dated August 4, 1933. F7281/42/40 in Vol.FO371/17376, pp.112-118.
26. Minute attached, *ibid*, p.117.
27. Dated October 10, 1933, in *ibid*, p.110.
28. F7426/42/40 in *ibid*, p.145.
29. F7670/42/40 in *ibid*, p.190.
30. Flood, 1967, p.48.
31. Landon, 1939, p.58.
32. Flood, 1967, p.26.
33. For details, see *ibid*, p.28.
34. *Ibid*, p.53; see also F1691/40 in Vol.FO371/18210.
35. Flood, 1967, p.54.
36. F6723/42/40 in Vol.FO371/17176, pp.48-49.
37. Flood, 1967, p.59.
38. For details, see *ibid*, pp.59-65.
39. For details, see *ibid*, pp.65-70.
40. Dormer's telegram, dated December 9, 1933. F7670/42/40 in Vol. FO371/17176, p.190.
41. Flood, 1967, p.72-73.
42. Dated November 13, 1934. F6575/3035/40 in Vol.FO371/18210, p.193.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

1. For details, see Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.232-279; also Premruthai, 1978.
2. Annual Report dated March 21, 1937. F1067/1067/40 in Vol.FO371/21053, p.97.
3. Thompson, 1941, pp.306-7.
4. Ritharom, 1976, pp.97-103.
5. Letter dated December 3, 1936. F155/155/40 in Vol.FO371/21050, p.364.
6. *Ibid*, pp.14-15 of the letter.
7. F394/394/40 in Vol.FO371/20300, p.190.
8. See *Ras Tribune*, No.6, Wednesday, June 21, 1933.
9. Stebbins, 1956, p.15.
10. For details, see Jones, 1954.
11. This is the title of his article in *Siam Today*, an Illustrated Review, issued by the Government Publicity Bureau, July, 1936.
12. *Bangkok Times*, June 6, 1938.
13. Blanchard, 1958, p.238.
14. "Penal Code, 1908", in Lailak (ed.), 1934.
15. For details, see Nathabanja, 1924; see also Suthiwart*Narupeput, 1956.
16. Coast, 1953, p.9.
17. Thai Foreign Ministry (FM) Archives: Treaty Files; Treaty with the US Section, File No.1.

18. *Ibid*, File No.2.
19. *Siam Review*, Vol.1 No.24, Saturday, June 6, 1936.
20. Translated from Thai FM Archives: Treaty Files; Treaty with the US Section, File No.2, Document No.3.
21. Patamasukhon, 1974, p.213.
22. F1072/216/40 in Vol.FO371/20199, p.84.
23. F5783/296/40 in Vol.FO371/19377, p.197, quoting *Bangkok Times*, August 2, 1935; see also Patamasukhon, 1974, p.196.
24. Sanit Charoenrath's speech at his Korat Constituency on December 2, 1935. F394/394/40 in Vol.FO371/20300 quoting *The Nation*, December 27-31, 1935.
25. Nagazumi, 1976, p.54.
26. F1523/100/40 in Vol.FO371/20297, p.29, quoting *Thai Mai*, February 29, 1936.
27. Annual Report for 1936, p.14, dated January 21, 1937. F1067/1067/40 in Vol.FO371/21053.
28. Confidential report dated September 25, 1936. F6776/4837/40 in Vol.FO371/20303, p.46.
29. F155/155/40 in Vol.FO371/21050, p.5 & p.13.
30. For example, see Crosby's letter to Eden, dated September 3, 1936. F6054/4837/40 in Vol.FO371/20303, pp.4-8.
31. F7529/4837/40 in *ibid*, p.161.
32. *Loc.cit.*
33. F6776/4837/40 in *Ibid*, p.46.
34. *Loc.cit.*
35. See F0371/21047 and 21048.
36. Very confidential letter to Eden, dated October 17, 1937. F8405/32/40 in Vol.FO371/21048, p.207.
37. Crosby's letter to Luang Pradist (Pridi), the Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated October 16, 1937, in *ibid*, p.212.
38. F10437/32/40 in Vol.FO371/21049, p.48.
39. Confidential letter to Eden, dated April 6, 1937. F2143/164/40 in Vol.FO371/21052, pp.26-27.
40. Adul's evidence, p.2.
41. F4837/4837/40 in Vol.FO371/20303, p.2.
42. F6054/4837/40 in *ibid*, p.5.
43. *Ibid*, pp.4-5.

44. *Ibid*, p.5.
45. *Loc.cit*.
46. *Ibid*, p.7.
47. *Ibid*, pp.7-8.
48. *Ibid*, p.8.
49. F6314/4837/40 in *ibid*, p.12.
50. F6054/4837/40 in *ibid*, p.8.
51. See Thai FM Archives: Treaty Files; Treaty with the US Section, 1936-1937, File No.6.
52. Coast, 1953, pp.10-11.
53. Pibul's speech to the armed forces on February 11, 1936. F1654/100/40 in Vol.FO371/20297, p.47.
54. F1734/113/40 in Vol.FO371/2207, p.28.
55. Coast, 1953, pp. 9-10.
56. F3037/21/40 in Vol.FO371/18206, p.276; see also Riggs, 1966, p.412.
57. Ritharom, 1976, p.100.
58. F3502/216/40 in Vol.FO371/20299.
59. Landon, 1939, p.54; see also Vol.FO371/20299.
60. F1067/1067/40 in Vol.FO371/21053, p.94.
61. *Ibid*, pp.99-100.
62. F3301/1494/40 in *ibid*. pp.228-9.
63. See Boristhi, 1965, pp.127-134; see also Patamasukhon, 1974, pp. 279-280.
64. Crosby, 1945, p.63.
65. Pepper, 1941, p.49.
66. Varenne, 1938, p.168.
67. Ishimaru, 1936, p.219.
68. See for instance F7000/42/40 in Vol.FO371/17176, p.73.
69. F6575/3035/40 in Vol.FO371/18210, pp.208-210.
70. Crosby's letter introducing Adams' note, in *ibid*, p.202.
71. See Crosby, 1945, pp.63-64; Coast, 1953, p.10; and Vol.FO371/18211 and Vol.FO371/19374 for more details.
72. *Bangkok Times*, July 2, 1935.
73. F7890/22/40 in Vol.FO371/19374, p.221.
74. See F163/159/40 in Vol.FO371/21051.
75. F1067/1067/40 in Vol.FO371/21053, p.99.

76. Dated April 29, 1937. F3301/1494/40 in *ibid*, pp.229-230.
77. For instance, see Crosby's report of his conversation to Prince Aditya, the President of the Council of Regency in F10432/1321/40 in Vol.FO371/22214, pp.43-44.
78. Confidential letter dated October 27, 1938. F11680/1321/40 in *ibid*, p.49.
79. For examples, see F7621 & 8522/714/40 in Vol.FO371/22213.
80. Minute by Mr M.J.R. Talbot, an officer in the FE Dept., dated June 22, 1938. F6618/2113/40 in Vol.FO371/22215, p.161.
81. Secret letter to FO, dated July 2, 1938. F8525/2113/40 in *ibid*, p.176.
82. Coast, 1953, p.10.
83. Crosby, 1945, p.64.
84. Gunther, 1939, p.425.
85. Crosby, 1945, p.97.
86. Zimmerman, 1931.
87. See Thompson, 1940, pp.243-4.
88. *Ibid*, p.244.
89. Darling, 1961, p.134.
90. See Landon, 1941, pp.156-180.
91. Cohen, 1972, p.17.
92. In a letter dated August 2, 1933, from Mr Bailey, the Charge d'Affaires in Bangkok, to FO. F6035/42/40 in Vol.FO371/17175, p.198.
93. Extract in F6733/42/40 in Vol.FO371/17176, p.52.
94. Crosby, 1945, p.111.
95. Levy, in Levy & Roth, 1941, p.65.
96. *Bangkok Times*, February 15, 1935.
97. Levy, in Levy & Roth, 1941, p.65; see also F2828/216/40 in Vol. FO371/20299.
98. Levy, in Levy & Roth, 1941, p.65.
99. In "memorandum on the present-day attitude of Siam towards the Western Powers, and towards Britain in particular", dated August 10, 1938. F10000/1321/40 in Vol.FO371/22214, p.5.
100. *Ibid*, pp.4-5.
101. Dr Tjoa Hock Guan, in Kim (ed.), 1977, p.181.
102. Coast, 1953, pp.15-16.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

1. Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.279-280.
2. Personal interview with Pridi in April 1980. See also Crosby's letter dated December 22, 1938, in F64/43/40 in Vol.FO371/23586.
3. See *Bangkok Times*, November 11, 1938; Pibulsongkhram, 1975, Vol.1, pp.261-265; and various despatches from Crosby, such as F11954, F11994, F12317, F12642, F13132, and F13615/714/40 in Vol.FO371/22213.
4. Chula Chakrabongse, 1960, p.294.
5. See "Thai Noi; 1966, pp.297-301.
6. Thompson, 1941, p.100.
7. Coast, 1953, p.11.
8. See the debate in *Bangkok Times*, February 3, 1939.
9. For details, see "Thai Noi", 1966, pp.302-305.
10. F1658/43/40 in Vol.FO371/23586, p.55.
11. For example, see "Vithesgorani", 1960, which describes fabricated evidence and suborned witnesses, without substantiating the sources.
12. *Bangkok Times*, December 2, 1939.
13. Thompson, 1941, pp.98-99.
14. *Bangkok Times*, September 12, 1938.
15. *Ibid*, December 28, 1938; and Thompson, 1941, p.100.
16. *Bangkok Times*, February 3, 1939.
17. *Ibid*, October 13, 1939.
18. Nuechterlein, 1965, p.44.

19. F1926/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750, p.320.
20. See the debate in Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.324-326; see also F4974/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24751, p.234.
21. Nuechterlein, 1965, p.44. 'Pibun' is the same as 'Pibul'.
22. For arrest of coupists, see "Vithesgorani", 1960, especially Chapter 11.
23. Chula Chakrabongse, 1943, p.303.
24. Chaloemtiarana, 1978, p.20.
25. Chula Chakrabongse, 1960, p.327. While Prince Paribatra concurred, Prince Aditya believed both the ex-King and Prince Paribatra to be involved, and that Prince Rangsit "was involved up to the hilt". See F2866 and F12637/43/40 in Vol.FO371/23586 for these accounts.
26. F1540/43/40 in *ibid*.
27. F12638/43/40 in *ibid*, pp.192-194.
28. Thompson, 1941, p.100.
29. F2695/403/40 in Vol.FO371/23593 & F4062/61/40 in Vol.FO371/23586.
30. Landon, 1941, p.100.
31. See Queen Ramphai's account in Chaloemtiarana, 1978, pp.19-20.
32. Crosby, 1945, p.103.
33. Annual Report (Economic), dated April 5, 1939. F4790/251/40 in Vol.FO371/23592, pp.360-361.
34. See F4039/242/40 in Vol.FO371/23590, p.123; Thompson, 1940, pp. 244-5.
35. *Ibid*, p.247.
36. *Ibid*, p.245.
37. *Loc.cit*.
38. Annual Report, dated April 5, 1939. F4790/251/40 in Vol.FO371/23592, pp.359-360.
39. Flood, 1967, p.214.
40. Letter dated August 8, 1939. F11020/251/40 in Vol.FO371/23593.
41. Flood, 1967, p.223.
42. Jayanama, 1966, pp.160-161.
43. Flood, 1967, pp.188-189.
44. See F1070 & F1671/75/40 in Vol.FO371/24751.
45. Flood, 1967, p.189.

46. Letter dated December 18, 1939. F114/75/40 in Vol.FO371/24751.
47. Jayanama, 1966, p.148.
48. F7248/242/40 in Vol.FO371/23590.
49. Jayanama, 1966, p.9
50. See Mr Dolbeare's memorandum, in Thai FM Archives: WW2 Files; Vol.WW2/1:3, File No.1, Document No.4.
51. Quoted in Thai FM Archives: Adviser's Files; No.14/1.
52. Thai FM Archives: WW2 Files; Vol.WW2/1:3, File No.4, Document Nos. 2, 5, and 6.
53. *Ibid*, Document Nos. 7, 19, and 21.
54. *Ibid*, the whole of Vol.WW2/1:3 was on the consideration of Thai neutrality. See also Adviser's Files; No. 14/3.
55. F1933/123/40 in Vol.FO371/24753, p.63.
56. Thai FM Archives: WW2 Files; Vol.WW2/1:3, File No.20.
57. Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Papers, No.41/216.
58. Crosby's confidential letter, dated September 7, 1939. F10316/1860/40 in Vol.FO371/23595, p.232.
59. The name was changed from "Siam" to "Thailand" when passed as a legislation by the Assembly on September 28, 1939. Royal assent was not given until October 3, 1939. (See Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.302-305.) Some observers believed falsely that it was changed on June 24, 1939, when Pibul issued to that effect in a Rathaniyom or Decree, which was not the law of the land at all.
60. Jayanama, 1966, p.43.
61. See Crosby, 1945, pp.117-118.
62. F11516/1860/40 in Vol.FO371/23596, p.29.
63. Personal and confidential letter to Mr Howe, the Head of the FE Dept. F324/324/40 in Vol.FO371/24754, pp.80-81.
64. F19/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750, p.4.
65. *Loc.cit*.
66. *Ibid*, p.1, dated January 2, 1940.
67. *Ibid*, p.2.
68. *Ibid*, dated January 4, 1940.
69. Dated January 6, 1940. F476/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750, p.88.
70. *Loc.cit*.
71. Telegram from Paris to FO, dated January 24, 1940. F593/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750, p.111. HMG here signifies the British

Government.

72. Dated February 7, 1940. In *ibid*, pp.115-117.
73. F710/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750, p.121.
74. Dated January 31, 1940. In *ibid*, pp.120.
75. For examples, see F476, F710, and F1347/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750.
76. F1347/19/40 in *ibid*, p.205.
77. Jayanama, 1966, p.44.
78. *Loc.cit*.
79. Crosby's confidential letter to FO, dated May 12, 1940. F3236/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24751, p.80.
80. *Ibid*, p.76.
81. *Ibid*, p.77-78.
82. Jayanama, 1966, pp.45-47.
83. *Ibid*, p.47.
84. *Ibid*, p.47-48.
85. Crosby's secret letter, dated May 9, 1940. F3326/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24751, p.94.
86. Dated May 20, 1940. In *ibid*, p.99.
87. *Ibid*, p.97.
88. Jayanama, 1966, pp.49-50.
89. Text can be seen in various documents including *Ibid*, pp.769-783; and League of Nations: Treaty Series; Vol.CCIII, 1940-1941, No. 4782, pp.422-423 for Anglo-Thai Pact, and Vol.CCIV, 1941-1943, No.4791, pp.132-133 for Japan-Thai Pact.
90. League of Nations: Treaty Series; Vol.CCIII, No.4782, 1940-1941, pp.422-423.
91. See Jayanama, 1966, Appendix 1 pp.773-776, for the attached letters.
92. League of Nations: Treaty Series; Vol.CCIV, No.4791, 1941-1943, pp.132-133.
93. F3395/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24751, p.149, quoting *Bangkok Times*, June 12, 1940.
94. Reuter's news from Tokyo dated June 12, 1940. In *ibid*, p.120.
95. *Ibid*, p.153.
96. F4011/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.92.
97. Personal interview with Pridi in April 1980.
98. Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Papers, Document No.4/190.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX

1. Jayanama, 1966, p.60.
2. Roth, 1941, in Levy and Roth, 1941, pp.155-156.
3. Varenne, 1938, p.165.
4. See Jones, 1954, p.224.
5. Jayanama, 1966, pp.61-62.
6. See Jones, 1954, p.229; Andrus and Greene, 1944, in Robequain, 1944, p.361.
7. Confidential letter to Lord Halifax, dated June 30, 1940. F3690/3268 /40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.25.
8. Thai FM Archives: Miscellaneous and WW2 Files; Vol.WW2/1:8, War in Europe Section, Document No.3.
9. See Flood, 1969, p.312.
10. Coast, 1953, p.16.
11. Yooyen, Col. T, a pamphlet, Undated: "Summary of territories lost within Ratanakosin Era" (or since 1882).
12. Vadhakarn, 1941, for his attitude; also in his various plays.
13. Flood, 1969, p.306.
14. Jayanama, 1966, pp.56-58.
15. F.C. Jones: "Siam (Thailand) Part A: Political", dated February 9, 1943, for FO use. F1010/1010/40 in Vol.FO371/35982.
16. For official details, see Thai FM Archives: Adviser's Files, File11/5.
17. Darling, 1961, p.128.
18. Nuechterlein, 1965, p.45.

19. Adul's evidence, p.82.
20. *Ibid*, pp.41-42.
21. Flood, 1969, p.313, footnote 35.
22. Adul's evidence, p.4; and also Crosby's corresponding view in F4854/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.257. Here Crosby stated that "inconsistency lies with Luang Pibul whose unstable temperament is known to you."
23. Adul's evidence, pp.68-69.
24. Nuechterlein, 1965, p.44.
25. Flood, 1969, p.307.
26. Confidential letter, dated November 12, 1940. F5324/3268/40 in FO371/24757, p.101.
27. *Ibid*, p.102.
28. Reported in F11033/11033/40 in Vol.FO371/23598, p.321.
29. F1083/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750, p.170.
30. Most secret letter, dated February 25, 1939. F3399/403/40 in Vol.FO371/23593, p.37.
31. Telegram dated September 19, 1940. F4281/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.131.
32. *Loc.cit*.
33. Letter dated September 21, 1940. F4949/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757, pp.11-12.
34. From "The Frontier of Siam and Indo-China", a restrictedly circulated FO memorandum. F5117/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54383.
35. Confidential letter dated November 12, 1940. F5324/3268/40 in Vol. FO371/24757, p.102.
36. Jayanama, 1966, p.85.
37. *Publicity News*, Vol.3 No.7, October, 1940, p.1557.
38. Telegram from Sir N. Blad of the British Legation to the Netherlands to FO, dated October 15, 1940. F4729/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756.
39. Telegram dated September 28, 1940. F4471/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.149.
40. To War Office, dated October 1, 1940. F5076/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757, pp.48-55.
41. *Publicity News*, Vol.3 No.8, November, 1940, p.2002.
42. Thai FM Archives: Adviser's Files; Changes in Tradition and Culture Section, Vol.11/3.
43. F4342/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.134.

44. F682/217/40 in Vol.FO371/24753, p.151.
45. Telegram dated October 23, 1940. F4854/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756 p.257.
46. *Loc.cit.*; for full text, see Jayanama, 1966, pp.88-103.
47. Telegram dated August 16, 1940. F3894/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.70; see also Thai FM's document of October 2, 1940, in F4471/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.155.
48. F3894/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.70.
49. Confidential letter dated June 30, 1940. F3690/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.25.
50. Personal interview with Pridi in April, 1980.
51. Telegram dated October 8, 1940. F4625/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.193.
52. Telegram dated October 19, 1940. F4819/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.237.
53. *Loc.cit.*
54. F3690/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.25.
55. Dated November 15, 1940. F5151/116/40 in Vol.FO371/24752, p.216
56. Lyon, 1969, p.34.
57. Jayanama, 1966, pp.59-60.
58. *Ibid*. Vol.2, pp.773-776.
59. *Ibid*, Vol.1, p.63.
60. *Loc.cit.*
61. Crosby's telegram to CIC, china and Saigon, dated July 3, 1940. F3268/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.11.
62. Telegram to FO, dated July 7, 1940. In *ibid*, p.12.
63. *Ibid*, p.2.
64. Jayanama, 1966, pp.66-67.
65. *Ibid*, pp.67-73.
66. Dated August 16, 1940. F3894/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.70.
67. Jayanama, 1966, p.70; Andrus and Greene, 1944, in Robequain, 1944, p.361.
68. *Ibid*, p.360; Jayanama, 1966, pp.75-76; see also F4956/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757 for the text of the Thai reply.
69. *New York Times*, September 15, 1940.
70. Andrus and Greene, in Robequain, 1944, p.360; Jayanama, 1966, pp.78-79.

71. *Ibid*, pp.80-82.
72. See Various telegrams in F4281/3268/40 in vol.FO371/24756.
73. Personal interview with Pridi in April, 1980.
74. Flood, 1969, p.325; see also F4342 & 4468/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756.
75. Comment by Ashley Clarke, dated July 7, 1940. F3268/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.2.
76. Comment by Ashley Clarke, dated July 8, 1940. in *ibid*, p.3.
77. Comment by B.E.F. Gage, dated July 5, 1940. in *ibid*, p.2.
78. R.E. Craig (a private individual)'s letter, dated August 2, 1940, addressing Mr Jebb, the Private Secretary to the Permanent Under Secretary of State of the FO. F3878/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.64.
79. Reply dated August 27, 1940, unreadable officer's signature. *Ibid*, p.61.
80. See Acting Head of the FE Dept., Sterndale Bennett's memorandum, dated September 22, 1940. F4342/3268/40 in FO371/24756, p.133.
81. Most secret letter to FO, dated February 25, 1939. F3399/403/40 in Vol.FO371/23593, p.39.
82. Flood, 1969, p.311; see also telegram dated June 4, 1940 in F3326/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24751.
83. Flood, 1969, p.311.
84. Jones, 1954, p.226.
85. *Loc.cit*.
86. Jayanama, 1966, pp.77-78.
87. Flood, 1969, pp.318-319.
88. *Ibid*, p.319.
89. Flood, 1967, p.348; Jayanama, 1966, p.74.
90. *Ibid*, pp.75-76.
91. *Supra*, see note 68.
92. Flood, 1969, pp.321-322.
93. Jayanama, 1966, pp.80-82.
94. Jayanama, 1966, pp.67-69; see also F5021/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757.
95. Telegram from FO to Sir Stafford Cripps, the Ambassador in Moscow, dated November 18, 1940. F4729/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.234.

96. *Loc.cit.*
97. Signed "Butler", dated December 11, 1940. F5483/3268/40 in FO371/24757, p.176.
98. Jayanama, 1966, pp.71 & 77
99. *New York Herald Tribune*, September 24, 1940.
100. Telegram dated November 10, 1940. F5064/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757, p.42.
101. Telegram dated October 2, 1940. F4471/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.152.
102. F4819/3268/40 in *ibid*, p.235.
103. *New York Times*, October 11, 1940; see also Jones, 1954, p.235.
104. Telegram No.2433, from Washington to FO, dated October 26, 1940. F4931/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.262.
105. Flood, 1967, pp.191-195.
106. F1925/19/40 in Vol.FO371/24750, pp.310-314.
107. F3878/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.61; see also Jayanama, 1966, pp.60-63.
108. For further details, see Jones, 1954, p.234.
109. Confidential letter to FO, dated May 12, 1940. F3236/19/40 in Vol. FO371/24751, pp.76-81.
110. F120/116/40 in Vol.FO371/24752, p.179, quoting *Bangkok Times*, December 20, 1939.
111. F4959/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757, pp.17-18.
112. Jayanama, 1966, pp.69-70.
113. F4072/4072/40 in Vol.FO371/24757.
114. See Crosby's secret telegram, dated August 4, 1940. F3706/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.30.
115. Secret telegram, dated August 6, 1940. *Ibid*, p.33.
116. Flood, 1969, p.314.
117. *Ibid*, p.320.
118. *Ibid*, p.324.
119. *Loc.cit.*
120. Flood, 1967, p.323.
121. Telegram No.58, dated December 15, 1940, from FO to COIS Singapore for Crosby on arrival at Singapore, and was to be burnt after perusal. F5566/116/40 in Vol.FO371/24752, p.230.
122. Immediate telegram, dated November 20, 1940. F5236/3269/40 in

- Vol.FO371/24757, p.93.
123. F5035/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757, p.36.
 124. Confidential letter to FO, dated June 30, 1940. F3690/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24756, p.26.
 125. Flood, 1969, p.325.
 126. Crosby, 1945, p.119.
 127. For accounts of the armed conflicts, see Thompson, 1942, p.220; Roth, 1941, in Levy and Roth, 1941, pp.184-185; Jayanama, 1966, pp.106-108; and various despatches from Bangkok such as F5345, 5371, 5401, in File 3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757, and also File 5/40 in Vols.FO371/28108-28111.
 128. Crosby's letter dated March 6, 1941, in F3369/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28111, compared to various items in *Bangkok Times*, January 20-24, 1941.
 129. *Ibid*, November 18, 1940.
 130. Khemayothin, 1967, p.72.
 131. See Reports in *Bangkok Times*, December 17-18, 1940.
 132. See F5568/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757; and also Roth, 1941, p.185.
 133. F430/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28109, p.41, and F1572/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110, p.101.
 134. F5537/3268/40 in Vol.FO371/24757, p.190.
 135. Telegram No.59, dated January 14, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie, British Ambassador to Japan, to FO. F194/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28108, p.110.
 136. Telegram dated February 19, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie in Tokyo to FO. F1126/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28109, p.161.
 137. Crosby's telegram, dated January 19, 1941. F227/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28108, p.139.
 138. Telegram dated December 30, 1940. F79/5/40 in *ibid*, p.9.
 139. FO's telegram to British Embassy in Washington, dated January 4, 1941, in *ibid*, p.20; see also Crosby's advice "to refrain from thrusting our hand into a Hornets' nest" when Decoux refused the cessions, in F306/5/40 in *ibid*, p.149.
 140. Secret telegram dated January 18, 1941, from Governor of Straits Settlements to London, in F328/5/40 in *ibid*, p.171; see also F79/5/40 in the same volume.

141. Most secret telegram dated January 22, 1941, from CIC, China to the Admiralty. F306/5/40 in *ibid*, p.150.
142. Flood, 1967, p.419.
143. See for examples, *ibid*, p.416; and various reports by Crosby.
144. Personal interview with Pridi in April, 1980.
145. Flood, 1967, p.422.
146. Christian and Ike, 1942, p.214; also Jayanama, 1966, pp.114-115.
147. Important telegram No.157, dated January 29, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO. F457/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28109, p.51.
148. Flood, 1967, p.434.
149. See Jayanama, 1966, p.115; and also Crosby's immediate telegram dated January 25, 1941. F396/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28109, p.5.
150. Immediate telegram dated January 26, 1941 in *ibid*, p.13.
151. Telegrams dated January 31, and February 1, 1941. F478/5/40 in *ibid*, pp.110-111.
152. For full list, see Jayanama, 1966, pp.116-117.
153. Most confidential telegram No.174, dated February 1, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO. F521/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28109, p.122.
154. Important telegram No.243, dated February 14, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO, in F931/5/40 in *ibid*, p.153; see also Khemayothin, 1967, pp.133-134.
155. See F792 & 913/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28109, and F1131 & 1132/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110 for instance.
156. Flood, 1967, pp.485-492.
157. Telegram dated January 14, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO. F194/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28108, p.110.
158. Khemayothin, 1967, pp.137-138.
159. Most immediate telegram No.129, dated February 24, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO. F1453/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110, p.69.
160. F1470/5/40 in *ibid*, p.72; see also Flood, 1967, pp.500-501.
161. For details, see secret telegram No.382, dated March 6, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO. F1685/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110, pp.112-113.
162. Flood, 1967, p.517.
163. Crosby's most immediate telegram No.129, dated February 24, 1941. F1453/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110, p.69.
164. Flood, 1967, p.523.
165. Decypher telegram No.169, dated March 7, 1941. F1724/5/40 in

Vol.FO371/28110, p.120.

166. Thai Minister in Tokyo told Sir R. Craigie, in a confidential telegram No.380, dated March 5, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO.F1675/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110, p.109.
167. Flood, 1967, p.523.
168. Telegram enclair No.167, from Crosby to FO, dated March 7, 1941. F1691/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110, p.116.
169. Flood, 1967, p.541.
170. For details, see Jayanama, 1966, pp.117-123 and Appendix 4, in Vol.2, pp.784-807; Thai FM Archives: Adviser's Files; Vols.23/9 and 27/2; F1868/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28110; and Flood, 1967, p.553.
171. Crosby, 1945, p.120.
172. Telegram No.447, dated March 15, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO. F1965/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28121, p.3.
173. For Thai Assembly's reaction, see Crosby's telegram No.409, dated June 23, 1941. F5523/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28122, p.77.
174. Khemayothin, 1967, pp.148-153.
175. Intelligence Report No.119, dated May 20, 1941, in F4641/32/40 in Vol.FO371/28133; see also F3171, 3233, and 3434/32/40 in the same volume.
176. Translation from Japanese Press, dated March 18, 1941. F3730/5/40 in Vol.FO371/28111, pp.69-70.
177. Khemayothin, 1967, p.153.
178. Dated March 2, 1941, in F1451/438/40 in Vol.FO371/28135, p.27.
179. Minute, dated February 11, 1941, in F710/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28120 p.52.
180. Confidential letter No.75, dated March 17, 1941. F3371/3371/40 in Vol.FO371/28156, p.3.
181. Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Papers: Cabinet Meeting Report, 10/1941, February 26, 1941, pp.30-31.
182. Personal interview with Seni on January 3, 1979.
183. *Washington Post*, January 30, 1941, reporting the speech at the Lions Club of Washington.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Jayanama, 1966, pp.148-149.
2. "Very Secret" message from Mr Doll to the Treasury, in Crosby's telegram No.517, to FO, dated August 1, 1941. F7175/32/40 in Vol. FO371/28113, p.95.
3. For details, see *ibid*, pp.95-96; see also Jayanama, 1966, pp.149-150.
4. F7175/32/40 in Vol.FO371/28113, p.96.
5. Telegram No.534, dated August 7, 1941 in F7506/32/40 in *ibid*, p.105.
6. Doll's message, dated August 1, 1941, in F7175/32/40 in *ibid*, pp.96 -97.
7. Doll's message to the Treasury, in Crosby's telegram No.521 to FO, dated August 2, 1941. F7207/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28123, p.80.
8. Telegram No.587, dated August 20, 1941, in F8044/210/40 in Vol. FO371/28124, p.91; see also telegram No.576, dated August 17, 1941 in F7897/210/40 in *ibid*, p.80.
9. Telegram No.590 dated August 20, 1941, in F8084/210/40 in *ibid*, p.93; see also *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1941, Vol.5 p.283.
10. Doll's message to the Treasury and the Bank of England, in Crosby's telegram No.592, dated August 21, 1941. F8132/210/40 in Vol.FO371 /28124, p.100.
11. Jayanama, 1966, p.151.
12. Telegram No.297, dated May 12, 1941, in F3965/210/40 in Vol.FO371

- /28121, p.125; and Mr Sterndale Bennett's memorandum dated May 1, 1941, in F6759/438/40 in Vol.FO371/28135, p.106.
13. See Vol.FO371/28149.
 14. See Vol.FO371/28147.
 15. For example, see F1296/32/40 in Vol.FO371/28113.
 16. For example, see F14107/112/40 in Vol.FO371/28116.
 17. See Kirby, 1969, Vol.5, pp.385-386.
 18. *Loc.cit.*; see also Woodward, 1971, Vol.2, p.140.
 19. Cypher telegram No.509, dated July 29, 1941. F7085/210/40 in Vol. FO371/28123, p.66.
 20. CIC, FE's most secret Cypher telegram to War Office, dated July 25, 1941, in F7318/246/40 in Vol.FO371/28134; see also Mr Eden's confidential letter to Mr William Nunn, MP, dated July 29, 1941, in F7118/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28123, p.68.
 21. Telegram No.513, dated July 30, 1941. F7099/210/40 in *ibid*, p.64.
 22. See F7027, 7085 and 7626/210/40 in *ibid*.
 23. CIC, FE's most secret cypher telegram to Bangkok and War Office, dated July 30, 1941. F7221/7221/40 in Vol.FO371/28158.
 24. For military view, see F7708/1281/40 in Vol.FO371/28145; for FO view. see F7626/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28124; for field officers' view, see F969/969/40 in Vol.FO371/28134, p.76.
 26. *Loc.cit.*
 27. Jayanama, 1966, p.179.
 28. Joint Planning Staff Report, dated November 24, 1941. F11468/9789/40 in Vol.FO371/28162, p.128.
 29. Telegram No.893, dated 4.15 a.m., December 7, 1941. F13332/9789/40 in Vol.FO371/28163, p.116.
 30. Secret telegram No.812, dated November 14, 1941. F12282/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28126, p.129.
 31. Telegram No.540, dated November 15, 1941, in *ibid*, p.131.
 32. Telegram No.171, dated October 31, 1941, from Sir R. Craigie to FO. F11630/114/40 in Vol.FO371/28118, p.56.
 33. See Flood, 1967, pp.658-660.
 34. See Colgrove, 1941; see also Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Papers: File No.5/178, about Japanese foreign policy.
 35. Medlicott, 1968, p.168.
 36. For American refusal, see memorandum of conversation to the

- Minister of Thailand, by Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, on August 4, 1941, in *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.251; for British refusal, see F7313/114/40 in Vol.FO371/28117, p.32.
37. Telegram No.513, dated July 30, 1941. F7099/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28123, p.64.
 38. Very secret telegram No.520, dated August 2, 1941. F7206/210/40 in *ibid*, p.73.
 39. FO's telegram No.369 to Crosby, dated August 10, 1941. F7316/210/40 in *ibid*, p.108.
 40. See F7248/210/40 in *ibid*, pp.81-83.
 41. See F5342/1281/40 in Vol.FO371/28142, p.141.
 42. For example, see Cordell Hull's memorandum, dated June 3, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, pp.165-166.
 43. Minister Grant's telegram to Washington, dated July 28, 1941 in *ibid*, pp.236-237.
 44. Martin, Jr., 1963, p.458.
 45. *Loc.cit*.
 46. Memorandum dated August 18, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, pp.276-277.
 47. Telegram dated August 13, 1941. F7767/281/40 in Vol.FO371/28145, p.97.
 48. For example, see Dominions Office's telegram to the Dominions, dated August 21, 1941. F8205/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28124, p.102.
 49. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, pp.151 and 269-270.
 50. Most secret letter from Mr H.M.G. Jebb of the Ministry of Economic Warfare, to Sir A. Cadogan, Superintendent of the FE Dept. of the FO, dated August 7, 1941. F7487/246/40 in Vol.FO371/28134, p.37.
 51. FO's most secret answer to Mr Jebb, dated August 17, 1941, in *ibid*, p.40.
 52. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.284; F7037 & 8464/3069/40 in Vol.FO371/28159; Patamasukhon, 1974, p.374.
 53. Dated October 4, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, pp.306-309.
 54. *Ibid*, pp.320-322 and 325-327.
 55. Telegram dated October 29, 1941 in *ibid*, p.330; see also pp.335-337 and 342-343.
 56. Memorandum to Under Secretary of State, Mr Sumner Welles, dated October 28, 1941, in *ibid*, pp.327-329.

57. Hull's telegram to Peck, dated November 22, 1941, in *ibid*, pp.345-346.
58. *Ibid*, pp.347-348; and Pibul's remark to Direk in Jayanama, 1966, p.179.
59. Peck's telegram to Washington, dated December 4, 1941, in *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.370; and Crosby's telegram No.886 to FO, dated December 4, 1941, in F13243/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, p.52.
60. Hull's telegram to Peck, dated December 6, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5 p.372.
61. Most immediate and secret telegram No.6762. F13329/9789/40 in Vol.FO371/28163, p.109.
62. Dominions Office's most secret and immediate telegram to the Dominions, dated December 7, 1941, in F13441/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, p.63; and also in F13329/9789/40 in Vol.FO371/28163. Unfortunately, no records from American source could be found.
63. FO's most immediate and most secret telegram No.595 to Crosby, despatched at 1.40 p.m. on December 7, 1941. F13329/9789/40 in Vol.FO371/28163, p.113.
64. CIC,FE's most secret telegram to FO, dated May 28, 1941. F4848/554/40 in Vol.FO371/28136, p.39.
65. FO's secret telegram No.443 to Crosby, dated September 17, 1941. F2579/4370/40 in *ibid*, p.69.
66. For the camera issue, see F6906/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28123, pp.42-45; for the tourist issue, see F11058 & 11312/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28126, pp.12, and 19-20; for the embassy issue, see F14077/114/40 in Vol. FO371/28118, p.92.
67. Telegram No.456, dated July 9, 1941. F6252/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28123, pp.21-22.
68. Telegram No.577, dated August 16, 1941. F7872/114/40 in Vol.FO 371/28117, p.73.
69. Peck's telegram to Washington, dated November 15, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.342.
70. Secret letter dated August 27, 1941, from Mr Ashley Clarke of the FO to Mr. J. de la Valette of the Ministry of Information. F8761/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28125, p.24.
71. F3814/554/40 in Vol.FO371/28136, p.12.
72. F5816/554/40 in *ibid*, p.52.

73. Such as *Siang Thai*, in most secret telegram dated June 2, 1941. F4729/554/40 in *ibid*, p.35.
74. *New York Times*, July 25, 1941.
75. F7571/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28123, p.138.
76. Secret letter dated August 23, 1941. F9437/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28125, p.61.
77. Peck's telegram to Washington, dated October 15, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.321.
78. Telegrams Nos. 773 & 774, dated October 31, 1941. F11629/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28126, pp.47-51.
79. Flood, 1967, p.639.
80. Peck's telegram to Washington, dated November 15, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.342.
81. Telegram from Mr Duff Cooper of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Far East Mission at the Straits Settlements to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, distributed as most secret circulation. F9313/1281/40 in Vol.FO371/28147, p.54.
82. Dated May 5, 1941. F3568/246/40 in Vol.FO371/28132, p.34.
83. Pibul's speech to Thai representatives going to take over ceded territories, in telegram from Crosby to FO dated July 25, 1941. F6759/438/40 in Vol.FO371/28135, p.104.
84. F7096/438/40 in *ibid*, p.116; see also Christian and Ike, 1942, pp. 215-6.
85. F8770 & 8869/8770/40 in Vol.FO371/28160, pp.3 & 5; text on pp.8-13.
86. Text in Chaloemtiarana (ed.), 1978, pp.448-450; for reason given in Thai Assembly, see Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.359-361.
87. F10720/7211/40 in Vol.FO371/28158, p.55.
88. Telegram No.274, dated April 30, 1941, in F3568/246/40 in Vol.FO371/28132, p.35; see also Adul's evidence, p.15.
89. From the *Bangkok Chronicle*, September 30, 1941; see also F11767/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28126, pp.68-70.
90. Peck's telegram to Washington, dated October 15, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.321.
91. Kasetsiri, 1974, p.51.
92. Vichitr Vadhakarn, 1940. It appears that Luang Vichitr was the only one to have written in it. It is to be noticed too that it was published

by the Dept. of Fine Arts, of which Vichitr was the Director.

93. *Ibid*, pp.27-28.
94. *Ibid*, p.26.
95. *Ibid*, p.29.
96. Memorandum by Mr Smyth, Assistant Chief of the Division of the Far Eastern Affairs of the S/D, dated November 28, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.357.
97. Seni Pramoj: "Thai-American Relations during WW2", in Pramoj, 1966, p.10.
98. Pramoj, 1943, p.205.
99. Personal interview
100. Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Papers: Cabinet Meeting Report 10/1941, February 26, 1941, p.28.
101. *Ibid*, Cabinet (Special) Meeting, November 26, 1941, p.3.
102. Detailed accounts of the event could be seen in various sources, such as *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, pp.375 and 377-380; Crosby, 1945, Chapter 21; Numnonda, 1978, Chapter 1; Jayanama, 1966, pp.192-201; Adul's evidence, pp.6-12.; Thawee Bunyakert's evidence, pp.3-4; Kasetsiri, 1974, pp.52-55; Woodward, 1971, Vol.2, pp.175-176; and F13492/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, pp.64-66.
103. See Thawee's recollection in Jayanama, 1966, pp.355-356. Thawee was, then, Secretary to the Cabinet.
104. Banomyong, 1978, p.37; see also F14195/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, p.113.
105. Dated December 9, 1941, in F13522/40 in Vol.FO371/21864, p.11; for Pibul's oral assurance, see F13492/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, p.66.
106. As wrongly believed by J. Coast, see Coast, 1954, p.18.
107. See Minute of the Cabinet Meeting, December 7-8, 1941, as quoted in full in Banomyong (ed.), 1978, pp.10-37.
108. Viscount Halifax's most immediate telegram to FO, from Washington, No.5692, dated December 9, 1941, at 3.55 a.m. quoting Crosby's telegram No.900, dated December 8, 1941. F13430/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, p.61.
109. Christian and Ike, 1942, p.196. According to Woodward, 1971, Vol.2, p.174, on December 1, 1941, Crosby had urged the Thais not to attempt physical resistance, but to follow Denmark's example.

Woodward himself believed, in retrospect, that to ask the Thais to resist would amount to a proposal “to accept the virtual certainty of partial extinction in order to ensure their ultimate independence”. (p.172).

110. “Japan’s Relations with Thailand, 1928-41.
111. Telegram No.893. F13332/9789/40 in Vol.FO371/28163, p.116.
112. Thawee Bunyaket’s account in ray, 1972, p.77.
113. Pibul’s notes, prepared for his own defence as a War criminal in the War Criminal Trial, which never took place. Part of this was incorporated in a series of books by his son, Anant Pibulsongkhram. See Pibulsongkhram, 1975-1977, Vol.4.
114. See Minute of the Cabinet Meeting, December 7-8, 1941, as quoted in Banomyong (ed.), 1978, p.23.
115. Crosby, 1945, footnote, pp.133-134.
116. Pibulsongkhram, 1975-1977, Vol.4, p.312.
117. Patamasukhon, 1974, p.375.
118. Pibulsongkhram, Vol.4, p.190.
119. Jayanama, 1966, p.192.
120. Dated January 28, 1942. F1085/1083/40 in Vol.FO371/31860, p.7.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Vichitr Vadhakarn, 1960, p.151.
2. Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet; Minute of the Cabinet (Special) Meeting, December 11, 1941, p.2.
3. Adul's evidence, p.16.
4. Pibulsongkhram, 1975-77, Vol.2, pp.317-318; see also Flood, 1967, p.720.
5. Smith and Clark, 1954, p.265.
6. Pibulsongkhram, 1975-77, Vol.2, p.328.
7. Thai FM Archives: WW2 Files; Vol.WW2/2:2, Joint Committee Section, File No.8; see also Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Papers, No.26/143.
8. Text in Chaloemtiarana (ed.), 1978, pp.450-452; and also in F14195/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, p.114.
9. Thai FM Archives: WW2 Files; Vol.WW2/2:3, on the Revision of Friendship Treaty with Japan, File No.3.
10. Dated December 19, 1941. F14195/210/40 in Vol.FO371/28127, p.112.
11. Thawee's account in Jayanama, 1966, pp.357-358. Thawee alleged that this happened between December 10-12, 1941.
12. Adul's evidence, pp.16-17; see also Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.380-381.
13. Jayanama, 1966, p.201.
14. Adul's evidence, pp.19-20.

15. Jayanama, 1966, pp.212-215.
16. Adul's evidence, p.20.
17. *Ibid*, p.18.
18. Numnonda, 1978, pp.10-11, quoting Assembly Proceedings (Special Meeting) 4/2484-2485: Second Session, No.3, December 23, 1941, Vol.35-36, pp.63-65.
19. *Ibid*, p.68.
20. *FRUS*, 1942, Vol.1, p.915; Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.384-387.
21. Telegram No.606/2485 in Thai FM Archives: Miscellaneous and WW2 Files; File 8/9 on various memoranda on WW2, political.
22. Numnonda, 1978, pp.13 and 28.
23. Jayanama, 1966, p.289.
24. Adul's evidence, pp.21-22.
25. Thawee Bunyakert's account in Jayanama, 1966, pp.361-362.
26. Prince Aditya's evidence, p.2.
27. Personal interview with Pridi in April, 1980; also documented in a draft libel case: Pridi Banomyong vs Rong Sayamanon, April 11, 1978, Case No.Black 4226/2521, p.17.
28. Prince Aditya's evidence, pp.1-2.
29. Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.186-187.
30. Numnonda, 1978, p.26.
31. *Ibid*, p.27.
32. See Jayanama, 1966, pp.275-279, and 289.
33. Thai FM Archives: Miscellaneous and WW2 Files; Vol.9, File No.4, on WW2: various memoranda.
34. Jones, 1954, p.347; see also report by Mr Chapman, the former Second Secretary of US Legation in Thailand, in *FRUS*, 1942, Vol. 1, p.919.
35. By Mr Chapman, *loc.cit*; for its inception and objectives, see Office of the Secretariat to the Cabinet Papers, No.2/43.
36. Jones, 1954, p.348.
37. Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.391-397.
38. Direk related his own part in it, in Jayanama, 1966, pp.265-275.
39. For text, see Kasetsiri, 1974, pp.79-86; see also Thai FM Archives: Adviser's Files; File No.22/3, WW2 Files; Vol. WW2/2:4, Files 1&2, see also Direk's account in Jayanama, 1966, pp.284-285.
40. See Thai FM Archives: Miscellaneous and WW2 Files; File No.9/7,

on various memoranda on WW2.

41. Patamasukhon, 1974, p.409; see also Khemayothin, 1967, pp.249-251 & 254
42. Thai FM Archives: WW2 Files; Vol.WW2/2:2, File No.8.
43. Chapman's account, dated August 18, 1942. *FRUS*, 1942, Vol.1, pp.919-20.
44. Jones, 1954, pp.334-337; Jayanama, 1966, pp.247-261.
45. Jones, 1954, p.350.
46. Text in Kasetsiri, 1954, pp.87-88.
47. Numnonda, 1978, pp.85-86.
48. Thai FM Archives: WW2 Files, Greater East Asia War; Vol.WW2/2:5, File 2.
49. Thirawongseri, 1980, pp.95-96.
50. Jayanama, 1966, pp.298-299; Patamasukhon, 1974, p.426.
51. For more details, see Numnonda, 1978, pp.31-38; also Kasetsiri, 1974, p.38.
52. See Thawee Bunyakert's account in Ray, 1972, p.75; Adul's evidence, pp.28-29; Numnonda, 1978, pp.43-49.
53. Kasetsiri, 1974, p.57, footnote 64; Numnonda, 1978, pp.50-58; Coast, 1953, pp.25-26.
54. Pibulsongkhram, 1975-77, as quoted in Numnonda, 1978, pp.72-73.
55. Thepayasuwan, 1973, p.88.
56. Ingram, 1971, p.164; see also *Bangkok Times*, June 25, 1942.
57. Numnonda, 1978, pp.141-154.
58. *Ibid*, pp.156-158; Jones, 1954, p.348; *Bangkok Times*, May 9, 1942.
59. Khemayothin, 1967, p.262.
60. Thawee's evidence, October 20, 1945, on "The Resignation of the Field Marshal", 15 pages. See corresponding accounts in Adul's evidence, pp.30-31; and Prince Aditya's account, pp.3-5.
61. Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.420-421; Adul's evidence, p.57.
62. *Ibid*, p.58; see also Pridi's account in Phungsunthorn (ed.), 1972, pp.61-62.
63. Adul's evidence, pp.65-66.
64. *Ibid*, pp.33 & 58-64; see also Patamasukhon, 1974, p.417.
65. *Ibid*, p.430; and Batson, 1974, p.98.
66. Adul's evidence, pp.33-34.
67. See Pridi's account in Phungsunthorn, 1972, p.66.

68. Batson, 1974, p.104.
69. For details, see Thawee's short account in an introduction to Khe-mayothin, 1967, pp.4-9; Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.431-436; Numnonda, 1978, pp.86-99; Batson, 1974, pp.98-107.
70. Why Pibul actually resigned is still controversial. For example, see Batson, 1974, pp.107-108 and references thereof.
71. *Ibid*, p.108.
72. Adul's evidence, p.37; Prince Aditya's evidence, p.6; Patamasukhon, 1974, p.437; Pridi's account in Phungsunthorn, 1972, pp.67-70.
73. Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.441-442; Adul's evidence, pp.40-56; Batson, 1974, pp.111-112.
74. *Ibid*, pp.117-118; Numnonda, 1978, pp.74-76.
75. Patamasukhon, 1974, p.440.
76. Batson, 1974, pp.114-116.
77. Pridi's account in Phungsunthorn, 1972, p.69.
78. Kasetsiri, 1974, p.38.
79. In F13558/210/40 in vol.F0371/28127, pp.74-75.
80. Secret telegram from Rangoon to Secretary of State for Burma, dated December 16, 1941. F13853/210/40 in *ibid*, p.82.
81. F13522/13522/40 in Vol.FO371/21864, pp.14, 26 & 45.
82. FO's immediate telegram No.7183, dated December 23, 1941, to Washington (British Embassy). F14143/13522/40 in *ibid*, p.83.
83. British Embassy's Aide-Memoire to D/S, dated December 24, 1941, in *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, pp.392-393.
84. FO's memorandum, dated January 8, 1942. F396/396/40 in Vol. FO371/31856, p.3.
85. See F6092/1599/40 in Vol.FO371/41848; and also F2073/2073/40 in Vol.FO371/63916.
86. Hull's memorandum, on December 8, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.376.
87. *Ibid*, pp.377-378.
88. D/S's Aide-Memoire to the British Embassy, dated December 18, 1941. *Ibid*, p.387.
89. *Loc.cit.*; see also F13788/13788/40 in Vol.FO371/28165, p.3.
90. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.388.
91. *Ibid*, p.387; F13948/13788/40 in Vol.FO371/28165, p.7; for the result, see Aide-Memoire dated January 19, 1942, in *FRUS*, 1942,

Vol.1 p.914.

92. Dated December 21, 1941, and handed in three days later. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, pp.389-390.
93. D/S's Aide-Memoire to the British Embassy, dated February 7, 1942. *FRUS*, 1942, Vol.1, p.916.
94. Chiang's disclosure to Pridi after the War, in an official conversation on November 5, 1946. See p.3 of Document No.10, attached to the draft libel case Pridi vs Rong, Case No. Black 4226/2521, p.61.
95. Chiang's telegram dated January 27, 1942, to Chinese Embassy in Washington which was shown to S/D, *FRUS*, 1942, Vol.1, p.95; and conversation on January 29, 1942, between Dr Chen, Councillor to the Chinese Embassy in London, and Mr Sterndale Bennett, of the FO, in Vol.FO371/31856, p.41.
96. Communication from Chinese Embassy to FO, dated April 10, 1942. F2878/2878/40 in Vol.FO371/31866, p.4.
97. Lord Halifax's telegram No.2719, dated May 11, 1942, communicating American view to the FO, in *ibid*, p.9.
98. FO's telegram No.3213 to Lord Halifax, dated May 19, 1942, in *ibid*, p.9; and PM Office's secret letter to the FO, dated May 21, 1942, in F4097/2879/40 in Vol.FO371/31867, p.4.
99. See Annex B of the memorandum by the FO, dated April 27, 1945. Prepared for the War Cabinet Far Eastern Committee. F2684/1197/40 in Vol.FO371/46567, pp.20-21.
100. See Report of the Far Eastern Committee, dated July 14, 1945, Section L(c), on attitude of the US towards Siam. F4298/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46545, p.87.
101. F881/23/40 in Vol.FO371/41844, p.42
102. D/S statement to British Embassy, dated March 21, 1944, in Annex 6: on "Policy towards Siam", paragraph 11. F1055/738/40 in Vol. FO371/46560, p.44; see also F1486/23/40 in Vol.FO371/41844, p.87.
103. FO's telegram to Lord Halifax, dated March 23, 1944. F1399/23/40 in *ibid*, p.72.
104. Lord Halifax's telegram No.2939 to FO, dated June 2, 1944. F2670/23/40 in *ibid*, p.153.
105. FO's telegram to SACSEA, dated July 26, 1944. F3260/23/40 in

- Vol.FO371/41845, p.17.
106. For example, see Alsop & Braden, 1946; Gilchrist, 1970; Kemp, 1961; Smith & Clarke, 1954; Martin Jr., 1963; Jayanama, 1966; Khemayothin, 1957; Nai Chanthana (pseud.), 1946; and Numnonda, 1978, etc.
 107. Based mostly on personal interviews with Pridi in April-May, 1980.
 108. Banomyong, 1979, p.15.
 109. *Ibid*, p.16.
 110. For British appreciation of the Resistance Movement, see "Panic" Report by Brigadier Jaques who led the mission. Appendix C of the Report in F3490/738/40 in Vol.FO371/46562, pp.67-69.
 111. Personal interview with Gen Netr, January 2, 1979; see also Khemayothin, 1957.
 112. See "Panic" Report by Brigadier Jaques, Appendix F: "Impressions and Recommendations". F3490/738/40 in Vol.FO371/46562, pp.73-76.
 113. Snow: "Secrets From Siam". *Saturday Evening Post*, January 12, 1946.
 114. Mr Ashley Clarke, Asst Head of the FE Dept. when visiting Sir J. Walton of the Burma Office, on December 21, 1942. F5605/5605/40 in Vol.FO371/31869, p.12.
 115. Martin Jr., 1963, pp.465-467; see also President Truman's telegram to US Ambassador in China, dated August 1, 1945. *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.2, p.1321.
 116. Banomyong, 1979, pp.18-19.
 117. *Ibid*, p.19; for text, see Report of Government Section, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers: "Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948", p.442, as quoted in *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.6, p.1275.
 118. F5004/169/40 in Vol.FO371/35977, pp.186-187.
 119. Nai Chanthana, 1945, pp.46-47; and gist of the broadcast in F13788/13788/40 in Vol.FO371/28165.
 120. Nai Chanthana, 1945, pp.48-49.
 121. *Ibid*, pp.58-59.
 122. Ashley Clarke's memorandum of November 5, 1942, about Doll's visit to the FO. F7578/396/40 in Vol.FO371/31856, p.99.
 123. Personal interview with Pridi in April, 1980.

124. *Loc.cit.*; see also Nai Chanthana, 1945, pp.50-51 & 57-58.
125. Chamkad's own diary, dated February 27, 1943, in *ibid*, p.83.
126. For details, see *ibid*; and British accounts in Vol.FO371/35977.
127. From Chamkad's diary, in Nai Chanthana, 1945, pp.76-79; and also notes on British Ambassador's conversation with Chamkad on August 6, 1943, in F4478/169/40 in Vol.FO371/35977, especially pp.138-139.
128. Secret telegram No.370, from FO to British Embassy in Chungking, dated April 20, 1943, in F2015/169/40 in *ibid*, p.56.
129. Chamkad's most secret letter to Prince Svasti, alias 'Major Arun' of the British Army, dated August 26, 1943. F5632/169/40 in Vol. FO371/35978, pp.27-28.
130. Details in Nai Chanthana, 1945, pp.159, 187-226.
131. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.387.
132. F4260/1341/40 in Vol.FO371/31862, p.89; for cautions attitude, see FO's telegram No. 7183 to Washington, dated December 23, 1941, in F14143/13522/40 in Vol.FO371/28164, p.62.
133. Martin Jr., 1963, p.460.
134. *Ibid*, p.461, for instance.
135. See Banomyong, 1979, pp.11-13.
136. *FRUS*, 1942, Vol.1, pp.914-915.
137. Berle's memorandum, December 30, 1941. *FRUS*, 1941, Vol.5, p.396.
138. For further details, see Vol.FO371/31862; see also Puey's account in Jayanama, 1966, pp.380-384; and F978/978/40 in Vol.FO371/31859, p.2.
139. Puey's account in Jayanama, 1966, pp.385-386.
140. F5006/1341/40 in vol.FO371/31862, pp.149-150.
141. Nai Chanthana, 1945, pp.128-130.
142. *Ibid*, pp.145-147.
143. *Ibid*, p.247; see also Adul's evidence, pp.85-111, for some details of how Adul encountered these FTM infiltrators.
144. *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.6, p.1269.
145. Dated May 28, 1945, in *ibid*, pp.1269-1270.
146. 'Ruth' 's message, dated May 21, 1945, in *ibid*, p.1269.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER NINE

1. For a detailed and well-documented account of the formulation of British policy towards Thailand, see Tarling, 1978.
2. Martin Jr., 1963, p.465, footnote 102.
3. Chiang's statement to the National Defence Council and Central Executive Committee, on August 24, 1945. F6542/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46549, p.16.
4. For example, see A. Gilchrist's letter to Mr Brain, Denning's deputy, dated March 27, 1945, in F2145/738/40 in Vol.FO371/46560, pp.252-255; for British and American divergence, see F3804/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46545, and also Thompson, 1946, p.329.
5. Jayanama, 1966, pp.322-323. Puey, and two of his friends, had been the first of the Thai contingent from Britain, or from anywhere abroad for that matter, to successfully infiltrate into Thailand.
6. This was Mr Chunkeng or Patpong Rinthakul. And this passage is based on personal interviews with him March-April, 1980, and in his own unpublished written account of the journey. See also Jayanama, 1966, pp.325-326.
7. Its importance was such that Mr Suni Thepraksa, a Thai FM officer who was flown from Thailand carrying Ruth's message, joined Seni and Sanguan Tularak, the nominated President of the proposed Liberation Committee, in visiting the S/D on February 19, 1945, to present their view. See Fine, 1965, p.68.
8. Joint memorandum by FO and SOE, dated February 16, 1945. F1055/

- 738/40 in Vol.FO371/46560, pp.35-38. This was embodied in War Cabinet: "Top Secret" Paper on "Policy Towards Siam".
9. D/S's note, dated March 15, 1945, in Lord Halifax's telegram No.1729 to FO, dated March 19, 1945. F1709/738/40 in *ibid*, pp. 205-206.
 10. "Top Secret" FO's brief, dated April 3, 1945. F2262/738/40 in Vol. FO371/46561, p.4.
 11. War Cabinet's "Top Secret" Paper on "Policy Towards Siam", WP(45) 243, dated April 13, 1945, a memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. F2379/738/40 in *ibid*, pp.38-40.
 12. *Ibid*, p.40.
 13. Personal interview with Pridi in April, 1980.
 14. Personal interview with Seni on January 3, 1979.
 15. This passage is based on Phra Pisan's own account in Jayanama, 1966, pp.436-457.
 16. By Kumut Chandruang and Chun Prabha, who wrote about Pridi being 'Ruth'. See Chandruang and Prabha, 1945, pp.530-533.
 17. Puey's account in Jayanama, 1966, pp.431-432.
 18. A.C.S. Adams' comment, dated July 25, 1945. F4532/738/40 in Vol. FO371/46562, pp.137-138.
 19. Based on "Top Secret" personal letter to Mr Sterndale Bennett, dated August 3, 1945. F5336/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46546, p.79.
 20. Dated August 2, 1945. F5337/296/40 in *ibid*, pp.82-85.
 21. Memorandum in F5115/296/40 in *ibid*, pp.7-8; see also "Most Immediate, Top Secret & Personal" telegram from Dominions Office to Dominions PMs, dated August 14, 1945, in *ibid*, pp.9-10.
 22. See Banomyong, 1979, pp.52-54; Chaloeontiarana, 1978, pp.459-460; and F5521/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46547.
 23. Denning's "Top Secret" telegram No.364 to FO, dated August 17, 1945. F5290/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46546, p.57.
 24. Denning's "Top Secret" telegram to FO, dated August 22, 1945. F5550/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46547, p.6.
 25. Patamasukhon, 1974, p.467.
 26. "Top Secret" telegram from Washington to FO, dated August 17, 1945. F5294/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46546, p.65.
 27. Sterndale Bennett's note, dated August 18, 1945, to Sir A. Cadogan who initialled his agreement. *Ibid*, p.64.

28. Personal interviews with Pridi and Seni.
29. See Banomyong, 1974; also Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.472-473.
30. F9790/7596/40 in Vol.O371/46584, p.7.
31. For text, see Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.478-480.
32. *Ibid*, p.478.
33. Personal interview with Pridi in April-May, 1980.
34. For example, Point No.8 of the draft '21 article' agreement, in Jayanama, 1966, p.490.
35. Patamasukhon, 1974, pp.488-489.
36. As quoted in Martin Jr., 1963, p.467; for the whole statement, see Jayanama, 1966, pp.484-487.
37. Extract in F6542/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46549, p.16.
38. Paragraphs 6 & 7, in FE Official Committee's draft telegram to Washington, Secret F.E. (0) (45) 23, dated September 5, 1945. F6195/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46548, pp.38-39.
39. FO's "Top Secret" Cypher telegram to Washington, dated August 18, 1945, in F5485/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46546, p.116 which also contains Heads of Agreement and the Annex. For text of Draft Military Agreement, see F6058/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46547, pp. 126-129.
40. Byrnes's letter to US Ambassador, Mr Winant, in London, dated August 15, 1945, in *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.6, p.1279; see also Fine, 1965, pp.70-71.
41. F6065/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46547, p.132.
42. D/S's Aide-Memoire to British Embassy, dated September 1, 1945. F6195/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46548, pp.17-24.
43. *Ibid*, p.39, paragraphs 8-10.
44. These two paragraphs are based mainly on Denning's 'Top Secret' letter to Sterndale Bennett, dated September 7, 1945, in F6867/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46550, pp.23-24. For the '21 clauses' agreement, see Peterson, 1946, pp.367-369. For the two Military Agreements, see F6362/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46548, pp.199-211.
45. Thawee Bunyaket's account in Ray, 1972, p.109; Jayanama, 1966, pp.494-5; for Thai readiness to sign, see F6561/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46549, p.19.
46. See *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.6, p.1305; Khemayothin, 1967(a), Vol.2, pp. 647-712; see also Denning's opinion in F6415/296/40 in Vol.FO371/

46548, p.247.

47. Sterndale Bennett's memorandum, dated September 7, 1945, in F6645/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46549, p.79; Denning's letter to Sterndale Bennett, dated September 7, *op.cit.*; and record of the conversation at No.10, Downing Street in F6875/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46550, pp.3-4.
48. For instance, see F6341/291/40 in Vol.FO371/46548, p.185, para. 15 & 16. For text of agreement, see F6644/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46549, p.77.
49. Text in F6647/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46549, pp.91-93. For Denning's disagreement, see *ibid*, p.64.
50. Denning's telegram No.527 to FO, dated September 24, 1945. F7438 /296/40 in Vol.FO371/46551, p.29.
51. FO's memorandum, dated February 23, 1946. F2986/4/40 in Vol.FO371/54357, paragraph 5.
52. Jayanama, 1966, p.500.
53. F6587/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46549.
54. Denning's most immediate telegram No.551 to FO, dated September 29, 1945. F7630/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46551, p.117.
55. Jayanama, 1966, p.501.
56. F7852/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46552, p.22.
57. Dated October 16, 1945. F9241/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46553, p.36.
58. Byrnes' telegram to Ambassador Winant, dated August 15, 1945. FRUS, 1945, Vol.6, p.1279.
59. D/S's Aide-Memoires to British Embassy, dated October 25, and November 29, 1945, in F9034/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46553 and F10983/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46554; see also Fine, 1965, pp.65-82.
60. *Ibid*, p.80; for further details, see Vol.FO371/46553.
61. Fine, 1965, pp.74-75.
62. Crosby, 1943.
63. F9926/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46553, p.175.
64. See Articles 7 & 9 of the Annex in Chaloeontarana, 1978, p.485.
65. Dated November 2, 1945. F9366/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46553, pp. 57-58.
66. Report dated November 24, 1945 in "Top Secret" telegram SAC175 to War Office, November 29, 1945. F10990/1349/40 in Vol.FO371/46570, pp.163-166.

67. Letter dated November 28, 1945, from Mr Chetaway of the Board of Trade to Mr Adams of the FO. F10922/9876/40 in Vol.FO371/46587, pp.12-13.
68. "Top Secret" telegram No.7788 to Secretary of State for India, dated September 5, 1945. F7089/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46550, p.77.
69. Based on "Secret" telegram No.815, from Denning to FO, dated November 30, 1945. F10929/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46554, p.108.
70. FO Minutes, dated November 21, 1945. F8517/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46552, p.186.
71. F4973/4/40 in Vol.FO371/54359.
72. Jayanama, 1966, pp.501-503.
73. Fine, 1965, p.80.
74. Jayanama, 1966, p.505.
75. Personal interview with Seni on January 3, 1979.
76. New Delhi telegram to Secretary of State for India, dated December 7, 1945, as quoted in Denning's telegram No.886 to FO, dated December 10, 1945. F11538/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46555, pp.64-66.
77. Denning's telegram to FO, dated December 12, 1945. F11614/296/40 in *ibid*, p.93.
78. See Denning's telegram to FO, dated December 14, 1945. F11710/296/40 in *ibid*, pp.119-121.
79. Denning's telegram No.887, from Singapore to FO, dated December 12, 1945. F11463/296/40 in *ibid*, pp.27-28.
80. FO's telegram No.1206, to SACSEA, dated December 10, 1945. *Ibid*, p.30.
81. FO's telegram No.1225, to SACSEA, dated December 11, 1945. *Ibid*, pp.34-35.
82. Peterson, 1946, pp.370-371, giving a defensive British account of the episode.
83. "Secret" telegram No.2271, from Dominions Office to Dominions Governments, dated December 20, 1945. F9926/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46553, p.171.
84. *Loc.cit*.
85. Based on Fine, 1965, pp.81-82.
86. Denning's telegram No.984 to FO. F12211/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46557, p.33.
87. Banomyong, 1979, pp.60-61; also F7140/7140/40 in Vol.FO371/

- 46582, p.4.
88. Jayanama, 1966, pp.535-536; also Thompson, 1946, p.331.
 89. For text, see Jayanama, 1966, pp.887-903.
 90. FO Research Dept.'s memorandum: "The Frontier of Siam and Indo-China" dated March, 1946. Document No.RR8(b)/10/i in F5117/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54383.
 91. See Similar view in Sterndale Bennett's memorandum: "Policy in Indo-China and Toward Siam", dated September 14, 1945. F6961/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46550, p.37.
 92. Thompson, 1946, p.330.
 93. "Secret" FO memorandum dated September 1, 1945, for FE Official Committee of the Cabinet, in F6250/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46548, p.140; see also F6172/296/40 in Vol.FO371/46547, p.147.
 94. FO memorandum, dated September 1, 1945, *op.cit.*, p.139.
 95. Jayanama, 1966, pp.600-601.
 96. *Ibid*, pp.605-608.
 97. *Ibid*, pp.613-614; and File 88, in F8088/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54385.
 98. F8015/10/40 in *ibid*; also Jayanama, 1966, p.615.
 99. Telegram No.660, dated May 29, 1946. F8034/10/40 in *ibid*, File 84.
 100. F8054 & 8087/10/40 in *ibid*, Files 86 & 87.
 101. Minute1 CM(46)52nd Conclusion. F8104/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54385.
 102. Mr Duff Cooper's telegram No.272, from Paris to FO, dated May 28, 1946. F8015/10/40 in *ibid*, File 81.
 103. Letter dated June 11, 1946, from Mr J.M. Allison of the US Embassy to Mr I. Wilson-Young of the FO. F8768/10/40 in Vol. FO371/54386, File 113.
 104. Jayanama, 1966, pp.616-617 & 671; there is a slight difference about the date in F10149/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54388; see also F9418/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54387.
 105. Cypher telegram No.857, dated June 27, 1946. F9644/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54387, File133.
 106. Cypher telegram No.2439, dated July 20, 1946, from Sir M. Peterson in Moscow to FO. F10598/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54388.
 107. For example, see F10027 & 10096/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54388.
 108. Telegram No.4582 from Lord Inverchapel in Washington to FO,

- dated July 16, 1946. F10345/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54388, File 152.
109. Ashley Clarke's telegram from Paris to FO, No.366, dated July 22, 1946. F10652/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54388, File 160.
110. Telegram No.218, dated July 30, 1946, from British Consul Miklereid to FO, in F11130/10/40 in *ibid*, File 172, reporting his conversation with M. Clarac, a member of the French negotiating team.
111. F11280/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54389, File 175.
112. Telegram No.1100, dated August 9, 1946. F11566/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54389.
113. Jayanama, 1966, p.624; and F11280/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54389, File 175.
114. Detail of recommendation in Jayanama, 1966, pp.618-621.
115. *Ibid*, pp.621-635.
116. Letter from the US Acting Secretary of State to the French Ambassador in Washington, dated October 25, 1946. F15593/14/40 in Vol.FO371/54391, File 266.
117. Detail in a memorandum from the Siamese Delegation to D/S, with further clarification in memorandum of Siamese oral statement. *Loc.cit*.
118. For text, see F16568/10/40 in Vol.FO371/54393; and Jayanama, 1966, pp.939-960.
119. For details, see *ibid*, pp.667-677.
120. "Note on Status of Siam in WW2", prepared by G. Gabell of the Library of the FO, dated February 12, 1947. F2073/2073/40 in Vol. FO371/63916.
121. Jayanama, 1966, pp.677-678.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER TEN

1. Their biographies can be seen in many works, for example: Woodman, 1948; Pibulsongkhram, 1975-77; Ritharom, 1976; Coast, 1953; Crosby, 1945.
2. Woodman, 1948, pp.12-13.
3. Ritharom, 1976, pp.99-100.
4. Adul's evidence, p.82.
5. *Ibid*, pp.3-4.
6. Pamornmontri, 1975. Obviously he did not say so, but readers can easily get this impression when reading it through.
7. Numnonda, 1978, p.46.
8. *Ibid*, pp.46-49.
9. Coast, 1953, p.3.
10. For details, see Jones, 1954.
11. Woodman, 1948, p.11.
12. Adul's evidence, p.72.
13. See Girling, 1981, pp.19-45, for more details.
14. Andriole, Wilkenfeld and Hopple, 1975, p.173.
15. Jervis, 1968, pp.455-459.
16. Smith, 1978, pp.14-15.
17. Manning, 1976, p.275.
18. Christopherson, 1968, p.54.
19. Bjøl, 1968, p.157.
20. Girling, 1981, p.43.

21. Kesboonchoo, 1973, p.49.
22. Varavarn, 1963, p.2.
23. Kesboonchoo, 1973, p.51. For a summary of these four patterns see pp.50-51.
24. de Jouvenal, 1963, p.207.
25. *Ibid*, p.189.
26. Crosby, 1943, p.420.
27. See also Darling, 1963, pp.88-102.
28. Chula Chakrabongse, 1943, p.391.
29. Handel, 1981, p.52.
30. *Ibid*, p.48.
31. Vital, 1971, p.3.
32. Handel, 1981, p.3.
33. Singer, 1976, p.289.
34. *Loc.cit*.
35. See the case of Denmark in Hansen, 1974, pp.145-146.
36. Handel, 1981, p.175.
37. *Ibid*, pp.86-87.
38. *Ibid*, p.185.
39. *Ibid*, p.186.
40. Ray, 1972, pp.148-149.
41. Kasetsiri, 1974, p.391.
42. *Ibid*, p.63.



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“PRIDI BANOMYONG”

by Suriya Tebsattra

55 x 71 cm.

PENCIL ON PAPER

Visual Art Exhibition Project for the National Celebration
on the Occasion of the Centennial Anniversary of
Pridi Banomyong, Senior Statesman

14 - 28 January 2000

At the National Gallery Bangkok

Appendix

Statement by Professor Dr Wichian Watanakun*

at the UNESCO Executive Board Meeting, Paris, 11 October 1999

11 October 1999

Thailand (Wichian Watanakun)

Item 9.6

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,

I would like first of all to thank you, Sir, in giving me the floor to address this august body.

In fact, Thailand has proposed to UNESCO the nomination of the two eminent personages to the list of Anniversaries of Great Personalities and Historic Events 2000-2001. The first name is the most revered Somdet Phra Srinagarindhra the Princess Mother, the second is Professor Dr Pridi Banomyong, the educator and humanist. We are gratified to note that our first proposal, the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Somdet Phra Srinagarindhra was included in the list of requests considered admissible by

*Chairman of the Sub-committee on the Nomination of Professor Dr Pridi Banomyong to UNESCO

the Director General as appeared in Document 157 EX/34. However, it is at the same time deplorable that our second proposal i.e. the nomination for Professor Dr Pridi Banomyong was not included in the list.

It is understandable that it is the first time new criteria and procedure initiated by the Executive Board has been put into effect. Our people at home could hardly follow and realise how important is the new submission form to be filled by the National Commission for UNESCO. The criteria for the selection of anniversaries and the procedure by which the role of the Intersectoral Committee is so dominant have not been given proper attention. Moreover, the procedure was not totally followed as the document containing the list of requests which has been judged by the Director General to meet the criteria was not sent to Member States and to the Members of the Executive Board in good time before the opening of the session of the Executive Board as laid down in the procedure. You might notice also that document 157 EX/34 was dated 4 October 1999, one day only before the opening of this session. Therefore, Thailand would like to request the Secretariat to prepare a list of requests by the Member States whose requests have not been included in the list with the reasons thereof, in time for distribution to the Member States at the General Conference.

With your permission, Mr Chairman, may I present to this Board our appeal that the name of Professor Dr Pridi Banomyong should be added to the list.

First, I would like to present Pridi Banomyong as an able and farsighted educator. He founded in Bangkok in 1934 the University of Moral and Political Sciences as an Open University giving higher education to the large part of population both in the cities and upcountry and consequently became its first rector. The University later changed its name to Thammasat University and has been a leading institution in helping to promote and protect democracy, social justice, and human rights in Thailand. There have been exchanges of professors and students with foreign universities. Students from neighbouring countries also



attend courses at Thammasat which has become one of the two most prestigious universities in the country. I might add however that the Thai representative in this competent body, Professor Dr Aduan Wichiencharoen was a former student and a graduate from this University, he later became Professor and one of the top administrators of the University. In presenting an appeal to this Board on the case of the founder and former rector of this University, Professor Wichiencharoen for this reason chose to leave it to his alternate instead.

Secondly, as a humanist, Pridi Banomyong advocated peace and non-violence. At the same time, he did not succumb to power from outside. He led national resistance and rallied the nation to oppose invasion and occupation during World War II. That is why he was respected internationally and was the first Thai to be honoured by the Smithsonian Institution by naming a species of bird found in Thailand in 1954 after him as a symbol for peace. The combination of Pridi's relentless efforts to strive for social justice and to establish a meaningful democracy in Thailand was reflected in the constitution he was the architect. Universal suffrage to both men and women was thereby guaranteed as well as human rights were firmly recognised and upheld.

The third and final point I would like to mention is Pridi Banomyong was a man whose ideals were well taken and appreciated throughout the region. He furthermore supported self-determination and independence for all people. He even contemplated creating a Southeast Asian league among neighbouring nations. But a military coup forced Pridi to go into exile in 1947. His vision of a league of Southeast Asian nations lives on and has become a reality in what is now ASEAN. Pridi spent his later years in Paris and died here at 83. He would be 100 years old in the year 2000. His centenary celebration, already prepared on the national level, will take place next year.

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,

The ideals and achievements of Pridi Banomyong could largely be linked to UNESCO's ideals and missions in the field of education,

social and human sciences. It would be regrettable that a centenary celebration of a personage so eminent as Pridi Banomyong is to be ignored by UNESCO. In the light of what I have just said, the Intersectoral Committee might see that it is appropriate to reconvene and reconsider its decision. May I humbly submit to the Executive Board that the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Pridi Banomyong be added to the list of celebrations of anniversaries as proposed to the Executive Board in Document 157 EX/34.

PRIDI BANOMYONG
(Luang Pradist Manudharm)
1900-1983

**A Great Thai Commoner:
For Peace, Democracy
and Social Justice**

CABINET RESOLUTION

Subject: The submission of Pridi Banomyong's name to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for its anniversaries of great personalities and historic events calendar.

The Cabinet officially sanctions the Ministry of Education's submission of Pridi Banomyong's name to UNESCO for its anniversaries of great personalities and historic events calendar. This official decision is also made pursuant to the centennial commemoration of Pridi Banomyong, the senior statesman, that is being held by the University of Moral and Political Science (Thammasat University). Pridi was the University's founder.

11 May 2000 will mark the centennial anniversary of Pridi. He had devoted the bulk of his life to the betterment of his country and society. Pridi had played a vital role in promoting and developing public awareness of issues of peace, democracy, and education. He was a moral conscience for the Thai people, and, more importantly, for humanity. Pridi stands tall as a sociopolitical icon. He had displayed, by any standards, considerable degree of honesty, loyalty, courage and sacrifice throughout his long career as Regent, Senior Statesman, Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance, and as the first Secretary General of Parliament. It is most appropriate that the Thai people look up to Pridi as a leading model.

Thai Cabinet meeting, 13 May 1997

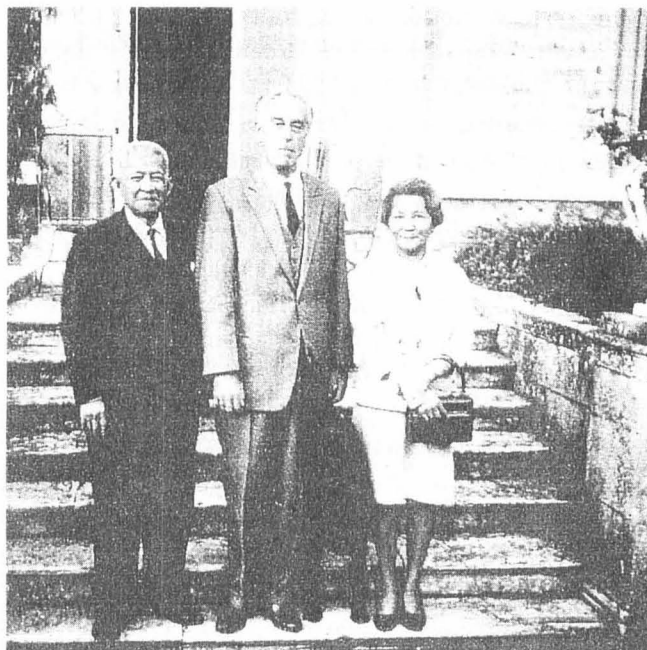
Pridi Banomyong was one of the greatest Thais of this century. Great, that is, in strength of character, vision, achievement, and nobility of purposes. Like all great personalities in history, Pridi continues to live posthumously. Many of his ideas, because they are embedded in universal values, are still very relevant today, inspiring many in the younger generation. The Thais often find themselves returning to or rediscovering Pridi's ideas and vision of a better society, especially when they had initially rejected them.

THE UPBRINGING

Pridi Banomyong was born on 11 May 1900 in a boathouse off the southern bank of Muang Canal in Ayudhya, the former capital of Thailand. He was the eldest son of a relatively well-to-do farming family. At the age of 14, he completed his secondary education. Too young to enrol in any institution for higher education, Pridi stayed with his family for an extra two years, helping them in rice farming before darting off to law school in 1917. Two years later, he became a barrister-at-law and was simultaneously awarded a scholarship by the Ministry of Justice to study law in France. In 1924, he obtained his "*Bachelier en Droit*", "*Licencié en Droit*" from *Université de Caen* and in 1926 a "*Doctorat d'Etat*" and "*Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures d'Economie Politique*" from *Université de Paris*. Pridi was the first Thai to earn this appellation. In November 1928, a year after returning to Siam, Pridi married Miss Phoonsuk na Pombhejara. They had six children.



**Signing Ceremony with Minister Edwin Neville of U.S.A.
10 October 1937**



**Visiting Broadlands, England
September 1970
as invited guests of Lord Louis Mountbatten**

THE BEGINNING OF A POLITICAL LIFE

In February 1927, while still in Paris, Pridi and six other Thai students and civil servants, later to become the core of the People's Party, held a historic meeting. They vowed to transform the Thai system of governance from absolute monarchy to a constitutional one. The group elected Pridi as their provisional leader. As their guiding stars, the People's Party laid down the so-called "Six Principles" to put Thailand on the road to spiritual and material progress:

1. "To maintain absolute national independence in all aspects, including political, judicial, and economic;
2. To maintain national cohesion and security;
3. To promote economic well-being by creating full employment and by launching a national economic plan;
4. To guarantee equality to all;
5. To grant complete liberty and freedom to the people, provided that this does not contradict the aforementioned principles; and
6. To provide education to the people."

Later in 1927, Pridi returned to Thailand and joined the Ministry of Justice where he served as judge and subsequently as assistant secretary to the Juridical Department. Meanwhile he found time to run a printing house where he published many law documents and books. He also became a lecturer at the Ministry's law school. However the hope for progressive socio-political and economic changes in Thailand never faded from Pridi's mind. The 1932 Revolution opened the avenue for Pridi to realise his vision of a better, more just society.

At dawn on 24 June 1932, the People's Party, consisting of government officials, military officers, and ordinary civilians rapidly and



bloodlessly took control of the government, changing it from absolute to democratic, constitutional monarchy and installing the 1932 provisional constitution as the supreme law of the land. Pridi, the civilian leader of the People's Party, was the progenitor of this provisional constitution.

The 1932 provisional constitution served as a solid and fertile foundation for the growth and development of democracy in Thailand. It introduced two fundamental, hitherto unknown ingredients to Thai society and political culture: 1) the supreme power rests with all Siamese people; and 2) there must be a clear separation of legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Together, these two unprecedented principles brought about a complete transformation in the nation's power structure, planting the seeds of democracy in Thailand.

FOR PEACE, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Between 1933 and 1947 Pridi held many major political positions, including Minister of Interior, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance, Regent and Prime Minister. King Rama VIII officially appointed him "Senior Statesman" for life. Throughout these years as government official and leader, Pridi assiduously worked to realise the "Six Principles." Among his notable accomplishments, some of them having long-term impacts, are: the drafting of the nation's first economic plan; the founding of the University of Moral and Political Science (Thammasat University); the 1933 Municipality Act which allowed the people to elect their own local governments; the revocation of unequal treaties that Thailand had been forced to sign with foreign powers; the reformation of the unfair tax system; the compilation of the country's first revenue code; and the founding of what ultimately became the Bank of Thailand.

During the Second World War, once the Japanese had invaded and occupied Thailand, even as Regent, Pridi clandestinely led the Free Thai Movement to resist such action. In recognition of the brave cooperation and assistance rendered by this movement, the United States government subsequently recognised Thailand as an independent country that had been under Japanese military occupation as opposed to a belligerent state subject to postwar Allied control.

On 16 August 1945, at the advice of Lord Louis Mountbatten (the Allied South East Asia Commander), as Regent and Leader of the Free Thai Movement, Pridi declared null and void the Pibulsonggram Government's declaration of war on the Allied as it was against the will of the Thai people. Through the good work of the Free Thai Movement, Thailand had thus worked its passage to peace and pre-war status. Fifty years later, in 1995, the Thai cabinet gave belated recognition and declared 16 August the "Thai Peace Day".

Throughout these turbulent years, Pridi never lost sight of what 'democracy as a way of life' meant. He never tired of nurturing and protecting the infantile Thai democracy gurgling in its cradle. Unlike most of his genteel contemporaries, Pridi never related to the masses with distrust and trepidation. On the contrary, he had great faith in them. In the essay (1973) "Which Direction Should Thailand Take in the Future," Pridi vividly and passionately reiterated his conception of participatory democracy, one that guided him all his life. He wrote, "Any system favoring a small section of a community will not last. In any community the majority must shape its future. [Here the majority includes] the deprived people, poor farmers, low-budget entrepreneurs, and patriotic capitalists who place the public interest above their own... and who want a new social system which provides a better living standard to the majority of people... social injustice [must be] abolished or reduced."

Pridi realised that a society is more democratic to the extent that fewer people are denied human rights and opportunities. He knew that political freedom without socioeconomic opportunities is a devil's gift.



He tried to reduce and eventually to remove hierarchies of reward, status, and power in order to improve society. He wanted to foster solidarity and compassion among his compatriots, enabling them to develop themselves, come to care about, promote, and benefit from one another's well-being as opposed to embarking on a cutthroat competition — a complete waste of energy. Pridi envisioned a society where all citizens helped contribute to the enrichment of the lives of all.

As Pridi neatly put it, “A society exists because of the participation of its members, and a social system which enables most people to legally influence decisions and move society forward is a democracy.” He added that since every society has political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions, it is essential for a democratic society to not only promote political democracy but also “economic democracy” (e.g., fewer people are being denied economic opportunities) and democratic thinking (e.g., compassion).

For instance, to promote economic well-being, Pridi advocated the creation of local cooperatives to undertake economic activities for the benefits of their members. The people should have direct control over their livelihood rather being dependent on the ruling circles' charity or philanthropy, he believed. Not infrequently, magnificent philanthropy masks brutal economic exploitation and charity becomes a pretext for maintaining laws and social practices which ought to be changed in the interest of justice and fair play, Pridi implied.

Pridi and his colleagues deemed it necessary for the people to fully understand the system of democratic governance and to be aware of their new rights and, hence, responsibilities under the newly-found system. As a result, in 1934 Pridi, then Minister of Interior, founded the University of Moral and Political Science. He was also appointed its first rector. The University was designed as an open institution offering numerous courses, including law, economics, human and social sciences. Reflecting his ideals, Pridi, in the speech made at the University's opening, declared “...A university is, figuratively, an oasis that quenches the thirst of those

who are in pursuit of knowledge. The opportunity to acquire higher education rightly belongs to every citizen under the principle of freedom of education... Now that our country is governed by a democratic constitution, it is particularly essential to establish a university which will allow the people, and hence the public, to develop to their utmost capability. It will open up an opportunity for ordinary citizens to conveniently and freely acquire higher education for their own benefits and for the development of our country..." Indeed Thammasat University has been a leading institution in helping to promote and protect democracy in Thailand.

Pridi also firmly advocated international peace. As a minister in Field Marshal Pibulsonggram's government, Pridi consistently expressed his disagreement with the government's irredentism: the plan and aggression Thailand embarked on to reclaim former territories in Indochina from France while Paris was lying prostrate under German occupation during the Second World War. Another evidence worth citing is his effort to tell the international community the uselessness of international violence through the English-dubbed film he produced, *The King of the White Elephant*.

Not surprisingly, Pridi supported self-determination and independence for all colonial peoples. This was particularly apparent when he served as prime minister. Such a foreign policy was merely the international counterpart of his domestic, democratic reforms. After all, they attempted to empower the people, granting them with the essential freedoms and rights necessary to manage their own destiny. He even contemplated creating a South East Asian League (SEAL) among neighbouring nations.

Again, Pridi was the architect of the 1946 constitution, one of the most democratic in Thai history. The adoption of this constitution reflected the culmination of Pridi's relentless efforts to strive for social justice and establish a meaningful, as opposed to nominal, democracy in Thailand. The constitution guaranteed universal suffrage to both men



and women and enabled the people to elect members of parliament in both the upper and lower houses. Human rights were well recognised and upheld in this constitution.

IN EXILE

On 9 June 1946, the young King Ananda Mahidol or Rama VIII was found mysteriously dead in his chamber with a bullet in his forehead. After visiting the palace and the scene and having consulted with leading members of the Royal Family, as prime minister, Pridi publicly declared this an “accident.” Intending to undermine his popularity and power, Pridi’s political opponent opportunistically trumpeted that the late King was murdered and that Pridi was involved in the regicide.

On the night of 8 November 1947, a group of military leaders and civilians staged a coup d’etat, using the regicide as one of the pretexts to destroy Pridi. (Numerous court decisions had since proven Pridi innocent.) Their tanks stormed Pridi’s residence in Bangkok, forcing him to flee to Singapore. On 26 February 1949, Pridi, aided by a number of naval officers and Thais who favoured a democratic government, unsuccessfully staged a counter-coup. Once again, he was banished from Thailand — this time never to return. Between 1949 and 1970, Pridi resided in China. He then lived an ordinary life, joined by his wife and daughters in the suburb of Paris. There he died peacefully on 2 May 1983.

While in exile, he wrote profusely and gave numerous speeches, continuing to share with later generations his conceptions of democracy, peace and social justice. The seeds of democracy that Pridi planted in Thailand more than six decades ago are beginning to sprout. Whether or not his tree of liberty will continue to grow and branch out, to some extent, depends on how the Thais apply and learn from his vision.

For more information and donation, please contact:-

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- Committees on the Project for the National Celebration on the Occasion
of the Centennial Anniversary of Pridi Banomyong, Senior Statesman
(private sector) E-mail : pridi@ffc.or.th, www.pridi.or.th



Series to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the birth of Pridi Banomyong, Senior Statesman

THAI FOREIGN POLICY 1932-1946

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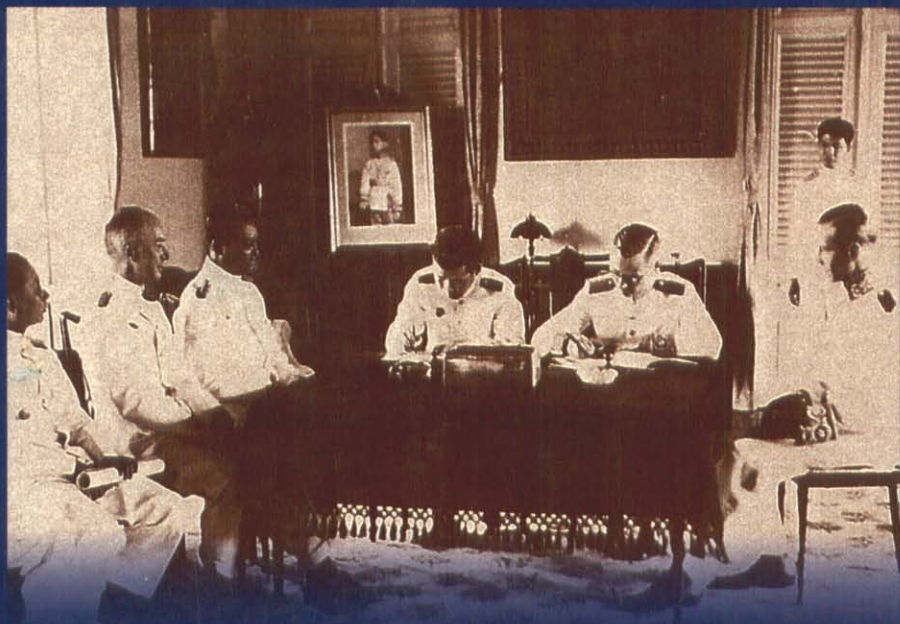
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As time passed, Pridi became Regent and he exploited this position to the advantage of the movement by consulting on any political matters with politicians without the Japanese being able to accuse him of hatching a plot against them. As his revered position was highly respected by and, consequently, politically immune from the Japanese troops, Pridi was able to summon his experience, gained during the 1932 Revolution, to set up successfully an underground resistance movement under the Japanese noses.

To celebrate the centennial anniversary
of Pridi Banomyong

(11 May 1900 - 11 May 2000)

and on the occasion that UNESCO has included Pridi
Banomyong in the calendar of Anniversaries of great
personalities and historic events (2000-2001).

Thai Foreign Policy
1932-1946

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