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THE ROLE PERFORMANCE OF PRIME MINISTERS

IN THE THAI POLITICAL SYSTEM:

STYLES OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN RULE 1932-1983

by

Montri Supaporn

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

.Thesis Advisor: Dr. Vincent E. McHale

Department of Political Science

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

May, 1984

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDIES

We hereby approve the thesis of

MONTRI SUPAPORN

candidate for the____Ph.D._____

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Signed: _Vincent E. McHale_____
(Chairman)

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Date February 10, 1984
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ABSTRACT

After the 1932 revolution in Thailand, the military leadership occupied the Office of the Prime Minister repeatedly, and served ten times longer than the civilian leaders. This experience raises a number of theoretical and substantive questions about the cchuparative dynamics of the Thai military and civilian rulers, in terms of their similarities and differences in performance and administrative styles.

This study investigates the role performance of the Thai national leadership from 1932-1983 by dividing it into two categories: civilian and military regimes. The social backgrounds, administrative styles, and political, economic, and social performance of each leadership category has been analyzed by several established criteria. The study discovered similar patterns of social backgrounds and administrative styles among the military Prime Ministers as well as the civilian ones. Both types of Prime Ministers shared some common personal backgrounds. They differed greatly, however, in their recruitment patterns and administrative styles.

In reviewing social backgrounds and performance of the Thai Prime Ministers, there are several factors that

can be interpreted in supporting either military or civilian rule. This study suggests that the military leaders intervened into politics largely because of the performance failure of the civilian governments, and the need for changes in the society, as well as to protect their corporate interests. At the same time the civilian Prime Ministers required strong personalities in order to survive in the Thai leadership system.

An important finding emerging from this study is the inverse relationship among the political, economic, and social performance criteria when the two leadership categories are compared. This study suggests that the military Prime Ministers, although their political performance were rated in negative fashion, possessed a positive economic and social performance which appeared necessary in order for modernization to progress.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Problem Definition

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1.1   Problem Definition

    There have been a number of studies on political

elites and their performance particularly in the third

world. Many of these studies have focussed on the role of

the military where it has intervened in the political

system.   Military regimes by their nature are less

democratic than civilian regimes. Those situations where

the military leaders conduct a coup d'etat and then assume

positions of political leadership is known as the process

of military intervention.[1]

    This study is intended to investigate the role

performance of the leaders of these regimes with parti-

cular reference to the case of Thailand.   The point of

departure for this comparative analysis is the military-

civilian revolution of 1932 which brought an end to the

absolute monarchy, and the form of the government was

changed to one of constitutional monarchy with ministerial

responsibility.

    After the 1932 revolution the military (the Army in

particular) came to play a significant role as an arbiter

of Thai politics. The military leadership has assumed political power frequently, and as an actor has come to control those institutions of the civilian order such as the Assembly and the political parties.

During the last five decades, Thailand has experienced forty four governments. These governments were divided equally between the military and civilian elements, although the time span in office differed greatly for each one. Eight prime ministers came from the military and were in power repeatedly over a forty year period. There were eight civilian prime ministers who were in power for a total of ten years.

The Thai experience raises a number of questions about the comparative dynamics of military and civilian rule from the vantage point of system performance and leadership style. The purpose of this study is twofold. First, it is to provide information on the Thai military and civilian political leaders or the "Prime Ministers" since 1932 in order to determine the role performance and other characteristics that differentiate them from one another. Second, an attempt will be made to correlate the leadership styles, both military and civilian, and their role performance in social, political, and economic domains in order to compare and analyze the policy outcomes of these regimes. Broadly speaking, we are interested in a comparative analysis of the political and

policy behavior of the civilian and military elites who had positiöns of power during the post-coup 1932 period in Thailand. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on selected dimensions of performance, including leadership styles, political and economic managements, and the impact of government on the social conditions and environment.

Although some case studies exist on the subject of the consequences of military rule and social change in the third world,[2] there is no major comparative and longitudinal analysis of the performance of the military and civilian leadership in the Thai context[3]. In order to appraise the role performance of these Prime Ministers, This study will attempt to address several theoretical and substantive questions by specifically comparing and contrasting the background and leadership styles of the military and civilian Prime Ministers and their impacts on the functioning of the Thai political system.

While there have been abundant cross-national studies employing a generalized approach to the dynamics of regime performance in Third World countries,[4] such studies often neglect important variables of a country specific nature which are the product of culture, levels of development, and even location. In contrast, the strategy of this study is to utilize several general theories regarding elite background, policy preference, and regime performance based upon selected criteria appropriate to the Thai expe-

rience. Performance will be evaluated by examining govern-
mental policy and outcomes against the explicitly stated
goals of the civilian and military elites in an attempt to
relate the sources of these goals and values to the
varying socioeconomic and organizational backgrounds of
the political decision-makers.

Thailand has been chosen for three reasons:
(1) Thailand offers a unique case because it is the only
country in Southeast Asia that lacks the colonial expe-
rience. The Thai political system has existed without the
outside force for centuries. There is no other variable
that so directly affects the condition of the system.
Thailand had suffered a number of coups as a result of
internal rather than external factors. The Thai political
system is an indigenous development. It has had an oppor-
tunity to develop traditions and customs of its own. (2)
The government has remained uninterrupted, whereas in ex-
colonies there was the transfer from colonial rule to
political sovereignty. Thailand was thus assured a rela-
tively high level of physical and economic security.
(3) The specific cultural characteristics of the Thai
Buddhist society also had a great impact on political
behavior such as the deference to authority, the
unquestioning acceptance of existing rules of conduct, and
the belief that an individual's position in life is the
5
result of good deeds and good deeds and good luck.

1.2 Research Design and Methodology

The performance of political systems in terms of generalized goal attainment has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years as scholars have sought to give substance and empirical meaning to these vague concepts. Research into the dynamics of political instability in third world countries has singled out governmental perfor- mance as one of the key theoretical variables in this process. Performance, or governmental output, has been measured in many ways. It has been treated as: (1) eco- nomic development; (2) societal adaptation to social and economic change; and (3) extractive capability. It is clearly a multi-dimensional concept.

Performance, however, cannot be treated in a vacuum. It must be seen in relation to goals, objectives, and policy preferences of that society which often vary from country to country, and among different sets of elites within the same country. For each country, major goals or policy objectives reflect both a general and specific pattern. In the Thai context, the following objectives are assumed: (1) political institutionalization; (2) economic development; and (3) social and economic adaptation.

For each of these objectives, various empirical indi- cators of performance can be employed in this study to chart the Thai experience over the past fifty years. This study will also attempt to assess the impact of these

performance criteria on various sectors of Thai society both geographically and vertically according to major elements of the social structure. Empirical evidence will be drawn from various statistical publications of the Thai government as well as private sources to tap the most important features of output or performance. An analysis will be made of their intercorrelations with other features of the Thai system. However, due to the nature of the research, it must be assumed that certain errors exist in the data, but hopefully that such errors are not systematic in a way that would bias the analysis.

The next key element in performance is the recruitment function and the subsequent styles of rule and administration. This study assumes that policy preferences, and the means to attain them are heavily influenced by the personal background characteristics and organizational experience of the Thai elites. Furthermore, while we can assume that a consensus among the elites may exist on certain general objectives system-wide, their order of priority may vary considerably because of personality attributes and the organizational milieu of the leader. In the case of Thailand, we shall consider the following questions: What have been the similarities and differences between the top military and civilian elites in terms of social backgrounds, role performances, pattern of recruitment and behavior? How different have been their

leadership styles as reflected in their authority struc-
tures, political skills and professionalism, particularly
in governmental organization and the decision-making
process? What factors in the Thai context have facili-
tated military intervention in the political system? What
factors have supported civilian rule? What has been the
impact of public opinion in the Thai political system?
What role has it played in leadership recruitment and
performance?

In evaluating the role performance of the Thai
military and civilian Prime Ministers, five variables have
been identified as follows: social personal background and
career patterns; administrative styles; political
performance; economic performance; and social performance.

In order to compare the Prime Ministers, the measure-
ment of these variables will be made and accomplished by
several established criteria, the criteria for Prime
Minister's personal background and career patterns are:
age at the time in office; father's occupation; family
economic status; place of origin; education; former
career; and political background.

The administrative styles will be measured by the
following criteria: activeness; enjoyment; decision-
making; leadership skills; popularity; political
expertise; organization; rules; and legitimacy.

The performance of the Prime Ministers in political, economic, and social areas will be compared differently. The political performance will be evaluated through various political patterns and institutions. The criteria for economic performance will be focused on economic activities such as agricultural base, industrialization, investment, economic growth rate, and economic development schemes of each Prime Minister. The social performance will be also evaluated through and examination of the social problems which each government faced at different times, such as the problems of integration, minorities, social services, and urban-rural disparities.

The questions raised in this study will be addressed by using both descriptive historical and quantitative methods. The investigation of the events and biographies of the Thai prime ministers will rely on material available from existing government publications, institutional reports, periodicals, books, and other previous studies of the subject. Social and economic data relating to system performance will be gathered from standard statistical sources. Other data will include a biographical survey for each Prime Minister, and a comparative analysis of their respective impacts on the Thai political system, societal modernization, and system stability.

In quantitative terms, patterns of elite character-
istics will be generated from available biographical data
using various clustering techniques. Additional analysis
will be attempted to correlate leadership styles with
developmental and performance indicators over time in Thai
society.

1. The concept of military intervention assumes that the military behaves as if it were outside the social system or society of which it is a part. This is rather a description than an analytical concept. The fact is that the military should be seen as an integral part of the system. See George Andrew Kourvetaris, "Professional Self-Images and Political Perspectives in Greek Military," in American Sociological Review, Vol.36, (Dec., 1971), p. 1044

2. The following are examples of case studies: E. Be'eri, Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society, (New York, Praeger, 1970); A. Stepan, The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1971); R. Luckham, The Nigerian Military, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971); Donald Rothchild, "Military Regime Performance: An Appraisal of the Ghana Experience, 1972-1978," Comparative Politics, July, 1980, pp. 459-479

3. Three dissertations exist which deal specifically with the elites and elite attitudes in Thailand. They are as follows: (1) Dhiravegin Likit, Political Attitudes of the Bureaucratic Elite and Modernization in Thailand, Brown University, Ph.D. 1973; (2) Suthasasna Arong, Ruling Elite, Higher Education, and Thai Society, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Ph.D. 1973; (3) Wongyai Prasan, Elites and Power structure in Thailand, The Florida State University, Ph.D., 1974.

4. Examples of these general studies are: Eric A. Nordlinger, "Soldiers in Mufti: The Impact of Military Rule Upon Economic and Social Change in the Non-Western States", American Political Science Review, Vol.64, December 1970, pp. 1131-1148; A. R. Willner, "Perspectives on Military Elites as Rulers and Wielders of Power," Journal of Comparative Administration, 2 (November, 1970), pp. 261-276; E. Feit, "Pen, Sword and People," World Politics, 25 (January, 1973), pp. 251-273; R. D. McKinlay and A. S. Cohan," Performance and instability in Military and Nonmilitary Regime Systems", APSR, Vol.70, 1976, pp. 850-864; Robert W. Jackman, "Politicians in Uniform: Military Governments and Social Change in the Third World," APSR, Vol.70, 1976, pp. 1078-1098; Gary Zuk and William R. Thompson, "The Post-Coup Military Spending Question," APSR, Vol.76, 1982, pp. 60-71

5. Moshe Lissak, <u>Military Roles in Modernization: Civil-Military Relations in Thailand and Burma</u>, (Beverly Hills, California, Sage Publications, 1976), p. 235

Chapter 2

The Historical and Geographical Context

of Thailand

The political elite of Thailand is unique for many
reasons as we have mentioned in the first chapter.
Thailand was the only Southeast Asian society to retain
its political independence during the colonial period.
Both Thai economic and political development have taken
place within an unbroken cultural tradition, and thus
provide a favorable situation for the study of Thai
politics as it affects processes of social interaction.
In addition, political leadership in Thailand is the most
important factor of development, and an understanding of
its characteristics is of central importance to the expla-
nation of the political changes that have happened in Thai
society. In order to place the findings of this study in a
larger context, we will begin with a brief introduction to
the geography of Thailand and then proceed to outline Thai
political history.

Thailand is situated in the heart of the southeast
Asian mainland. It is bordered on the east by Laos and
Kampuchia (formerly Cambodia), on the west by Burma, and
on the south by Malaysia. The capital city of the country
is Bangkok which is also a major center of industry and a
deep water port. Thailand has a long history of .OP

administrative centralization which can be traced back
over a thousand years. The ancient Thai kings tended to
draw all economic and political activities into the capi-
tal and to discourage the development of other cultural
centers or polls of attraction in the kingdom. These
tendencies were intensified in the modern period when the
kings extended their control of the periphery of the
kingdom in order to counter western colonialism. The
result has been an extraordinary concentration of urban
population in Bangkok[1] amounting to over five million in
recent years, about ten percent of the total population at
present.

2.1 The Thai History Prior to 1932

The ancient history of Thailand dates back to 4,500
years ago beginning in the northwestern Szechuan of China.
The Thai race was first mentioned in the Chinese history
in the reign of Emperor Dai Yu in B.C. 2208.[2] Many histo-
rians have considered the Thai pepple as a very ancient
race. Dr. William Clifford[3] writes:

> Long before Moses was born or Troy or Athens founded,
> not to mention the founding of Rome some eight hundred
> years later, the Ai-Lao (as the Thai were the known)
> were spread over the length and breadth of China north
> of the Yangtze.

Before the Christian era, the Thais were settled in
south east of China. The Thais came under Chinese
suzerainty early in the Christian era. After many strug-
gles for independence in the year 78 A.D., the Thai began

their migration southward and established the Thai kingdom
of Nanchao in Yunnan. Nanchao settled the Thai-Chinese
conflict by concluding a treaty of friendship with China.
This treaty lasted until 750 A.D., when a Thai king
successfully invaded China. Subsequent invasions of China
had taken place several times in 863, 870, and 875 A.D.,
but were unsuccessful.[4] In the year 1253, Kublai Khan
conquered Nanchao and put an end to the Thai Kingdom
resulting in a large scale migration that took place
southward toward the Southeast Asian peninsula. Here the
Thai founded a capital of their own called "Sukhothai
Kingdom.[5]

Sukhothai Kingdom

Sukhothai became the first integrated Thai Kingdom
and came to its peak during the reign of King Ram
Khamhaeng (1276-1317). King Ram Khamhaeng had invented the
Thai alphabets, though there were some changes as the
language evolved. They have been widely used throughout
the kingdom until the present time. During his reign, the
country had expanded to the north, east, and south. The
political system was paternalistic. The system was
conducted in family-like affairs. There was some trading
with other states. The economy was very prosperous and the
people enjoyed happiness and general well-being.[6] The king
assumed all the important governmental and administrative

roles including organizing the people for warfare. There was no separation of civil and military roles. The king also had a number of assistants to whom certain functions were designated.[7] At this time the positions of the officials and the recruitment patterns were not institutionalized.

Ayuthaya Kingdom

Sukhothai kingdom lasted until 1350. It was replaced by Ayuthaya kingdom, founded by King Ramathibodi. Since then the country has been called "Siam."[8] The political and administrative systems in this new kingdom were not much different from Sukhothai but the officials who assisted the king in the governmental and administrative functions became institutionalized. The people, particularly every male, were subject to military conscription.

King Trilok (1448-1488) had laid the foundations of the bureaucratic system similar to the Khmer system. This system was called "Chatu-Sdom" which divided the official responsibility into four departments namely: city, palace, treasury, and agricultural land. In his reign, the more sophisticated Khmer and Indian cultures had begun to penetrate the social system. The theory of divine kingship was introduced by the Brahmanized Khmer and the concept of the king as the "Lord of Lives" emerged as well as a dignity-mark system called "sakdina."[9]

Sakdina literally means "status in terms of land"

counted in "rai" (approximately 1 acre = 2.5 rai). Sakdina
was given by the king to noble men in accordance with
their respective ranks. For example, a head of an impor-
tant department might possess a sakdina of 10,000 rai,
which implied his control of 10,000 rai of land at a
specified area. The commoner had a sakdina of 25 rai,
while the prince who headed one of the major governmental
agencies might have a sakdina as high as 100,000 rai.[10]
Officials of sakdina 400 rai and above were nobles and
performed the role of masters.[11] Thus, number of sakdina
became an empirical indicator of class in the Thai
society. The system was abolished after the revolution of
1932.

Ayuthaya had engaged in wars with Burma, the neigh-
boring state over a hundred times in four centuries. After
33 kings had ruled continuously, Ayuthaya fell to the
invading Burmese and was wholely destroyed in 1767.[12]
Then Thailand's capital city had been moved to Thonburi
and later Bangkok in 1785 by King Rama I, who was the
founder of the present Chakri dynasty.

Bangkok Period

Though Bangkok emerged as a new capital city, the
basic structure of King Trilok's political and adminis-
trative system was still employed. The system had been
modified, new agencies had been added, but the intrinsic

structure remained intact. Thailand's relations with its
environment began to change when the king had to be
concerned with internal and external trades, monetary
matters, taxation,[13] and the most important was the impact
from the western world. Vella[14] portrayed the western
impact into two broad streams: political and economic
forces, particularly the British and French imperialism
that jeopardized the kingdom through military force and by
undermining its fiscal integrity; and a cultural influence
pattern consisting of knowledge, technology, and perspec-
tives on the nature of reality. The two most eminent kings
who had faced the western impact and managed with their
talents and skills were King Mongkut or Rama IV (1851-
1868), and King Chulalongkorn or Rama V (1868-1910).

King Mongkut's Reign

King Mongkut ascended the throne in 1851. Under his
reign, Thailand passed from medieval to modern times.
Before he came to be the king, he had devoted himself to
the study of modern science including the histories and
contemporary characteristics of the major western
countries. After he became king, he had already known the
full extent of the European imperialism. He knew that the
only way to deal with the western nations was to accede to
their demands while at the same time attempt to modernize
and strengthen the kingdom.[15] In several treaties with the
Europeans, he agreed to give up the royal monopoly of

foreign trade, to limit import duties and to permit extra-territorial rights. He gave up territory to both the French and the British. He also had his children educated in English. They were the first generation of Thais to be educated in a foreign culture. In modernizing the country, King Mongkut had begun various reforms along the western lines.[16] They served as a foundation stone for his successor, King Chulalongkorn to develop further.

King Chulalongkorn's Reign

King Chulalongkorn was the first king to admit that his duty was to rule not for himself but in the interest of his people, thus reuniting the Khmer ideals of absolute kingship with the old Thai tradition of the sovereign as father of his country.[17] Although Thai society had begun to undergo some modern changes by the beginning of his reign, they were extremely limited in scope.[18] In the first two decades of his reign, King Chulalongkorn had made various political and administrative reforms in several areas such as administration, communication, education, and fiscal reforms.[19] However, the major problem for the government remained the inability of the central authority to exert its control over the provincial administration.[20]

In 1892 King Chulalongkorn launched a "silent revolution" which some writers call "Chakri reformation"

and "the great administrative reform"[21] that put an end to quasi-autobomous, quasi-feudal provincial administrations.[22] This brought about a centralized governmental system by developing a hierarchy of regional, provincial, and district jurisdictions similar to the western style of administration. King Chulalongkorn fundamentally changed the structure of the kingdom. He revived royal authority as against that of the old nobility, directed a thorough-going formalization arfd depersonalization of the administration, and created a new class of civil servants whose status was legitimized by education and by function within a hierarchical bureaucracy. This reduced the power of local ruling families in the provinces and of the noble families in the capital. However, the stability and effectiveness of government still rested heavily on the king's personal control over the bureaucracy.[23]

In the reign of King Chulalongkorn, Thailand became modernized and the same time retained its cultural integrity. Slavery, which had existed from Ayuthaya period, was gradually abolished between 1874 and 1905[24] and monetary reward for service was substituted. Educational opportunity was opened to commoners. Schools became the responsibility of the government which recognized that only by having a literate populace able to participate in nation-building could the country develop and prosper. An infrastructure of public roads, water works, electricity

and hospitals was constructed on a national scale along western lines.[25] The king expanded his Council of Ministers, the predecessor of the modern cabinet. He revised the bureaucracy to make it more efficient and employed foreign advisors. The advisors suggested alterations in government organization to take place at a pace consistent with national needs and objectives, as well as to strengthen the country against outside interference.[26]

Recognizing a need to develop a competent government, King Chulalongkorn sent bright young Thai men to overseas universities and military institutes for training and education to broaden their horizons and absorb ideas which could be useful at home. Thus, by the 1920s, most western advisers had been replaced by native Thais and Thais were administering policy by themselves.[27]

King Chulalongkorn was faced with increasing pressures from external political forces. He was involved in the delicate balancing of his relationships with Great Britain in Malaya and Burma in one hand and with an increasingly aggressive France in Indo-China on the other. France had taken control of Vietnam and was moving against the Thai tributory provinces of Cambodia and Laos along the MeKong river. In 1886, Thailand signed a treaty with France, giving France all the Thai territory east of the Mekong River except that of the Laos state of Luang Prabang. But France was not satisfied and continued to

apply pressure to gain control over the Cambodian
provinces west of the Mekong and the remaining Laos terri-
tory. In 1893 France sent a gunboat up the Chao Praya
river to Bangkok and on the way exchanged shots with a
Thai shore battery. Demanding redress, France landed
troops to occupy Chantaburi, a province of southeast
Thailand. Thailand turned to Britain for help, but was
advised to move cautiously while the two great European
powers worked out their own rivalries throughout the
world.[28]

The dispute between France and Thailand continued
until 1904 when French troops finally left Chantaburi, and
in turn, Thailand was forced to cede Luang Prabang and
Vientiane to France. At about the same time France and
Britain agreed to guarantee Thailand's border and the
kingdom became a buffer between the empires of the two
European powers. Three year later Thailand gave up to
France the Cambodian provinces of Battembang, Siemrap, and
Srisophon, in return for which France gave up extra-
territorial rights over French Asian subjects, but not
over Frenchmen. Finally, in 1909, Thailand gave control
of the Malay states of Kedah, Klantan, Trengganu, and
Perlis to Britain in return for the same right with regard
to British Asian subjects.[29]   At the end of King
Chulalongkorn's reign, Thailand was smaller than at the
beginning. But of great importance then and in the future

Thailand, unlike its neighbors in Indo-China, Burma, and Malaya, it was still not under European control and the only country in Southeast Asia to remain fully independent.

King Vajiravudh's Reign

Upon King Chulalongkorn's death, King Vajiravudh succeeded to the throne. King Vajiravudh was educated at Oxford University in England. He was one of the most famous Thai writers and actors. He wrote more than 200 pieces, which ranged from translations of Shakespeare to political essays. The king was the nation's most vocal advocate of cultural nationalism, its most effective propagandist, and the creator of several organizations: the Wild Tiger Corps (an adult paramilitary organization), the Boy Scouts, the Royal Navy, and others.[30]

However, King Vajiravudh's Wild Tiger Corps became a political concern. It was assumed to be his private army, and it sorely antagonized other groups, especially the regular army. An early reaction against King Vajiravudh came in 1912 when a group of junior military officers planned a coup against the king. They claimed to have been reacting against the incomplete modernization of the administration, and against the degree to which personal relationships still governed administrative acts. Their ideas had been shaped by a sense of their own national identity and a sense of shame in comparing their country

with more advanced Asian and Western nations. They planned
to carry out a revolution at the annual oath of allegiance
ceremony in April 1912. Their activities were, however,
uncovered in February, and ninety-one men were given
prison sentences ranging from twelve years to life.[31]

It was possible that another military coup would have
been staged in 1917 but there was a wave of arrests in the
army at the time Thailand entered World War I on the side
of the Allies. The cause of unrest disappeared until
fifteen years later (1925) when King Vajiravudh died
without an heir. The throne passed to his younger brother,
King Prajadhipok or Rama VII (1925-1935).

King Prajadhipok's Reign

King Prajadhipok reigned in time of difficulty. The
country was hit hard by the post-war world economic
depression. The government soon found itself encountering
serious economic difficulties. Conditions became worse
when the government decided to remain on the gold standard
until May 11, 1932, while many other countries, especially
those in the sterling area which were Thailand's major
buyers of rice, had already abandoned it. This made Thai
rice, the main export product, too expensive in the
sterling market, and accordingly, government revenues were
further reduced.[32]   As a result of a large deficit, the
king had to make a drastic reduction of government expen-

ditures. The advisor suggested that the government's expenditures should be cut by 25 percent. This advice was accepted. The king voluntarily reduced the allowance for royal expenses from six to five million baht in 1931, and to three million baht in 1932. As a result of this drastic change, a large number of officials both civilian and military were terminated from the service.[33] This accentuated the discontent of the people and raised a storm of criticism against the king.

However, the king had a strong sense of political responsibility. It had been his desire to grant a constitution to the Thai people, who would be allowed to vote for their own representatives in the parliament. The king appointed a committee to make a study of a constitution that would best suit the needs of Thai people. The committee concluded that an immediate grant of parliamentary suffrage without first instructing the people as to the objective of the suffrage and familiarizing them with the parliamentary system, would not yield proper results. There should be a period of transition during which the people might be taught the true meaning of parliamentary suffrage. It was suggested that an existing law on municipality should be extended throughout the country to enable the people to familiarize themselves with the method of voting and with the principle of parliamentary system. In the meantime a sort of temporary

House of Representatives should be set up.[34]

The king agreed to the plan. He then assigned selected officials to be Privy Councilors designated to become the nucleus of the temporary House of Representatives. The king indicated that the representative government might be inaugurated on April 6, 1932, the date of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Chakri Dynasty. Unfortunately the plan had to be postponed in order to make a further study of the matter.[35] The plan never materialized due to a coup d'etat which occurred on June 24, of the same year.

2.2 The Beginning of Constitution Monarchy

The revolution of 1932 is significant in Thai history because it marked the end of its traditional absolute monarchy and the introduction of a constitutional monarchy, the form of government which has continued up to the present time.

The coup was well timed. The king was away at his Hua Hin seaside palace, the head of the navy was at sea, and the Chief of Staff was touring the northern provinces.[36] Early that day the government in Bangkok was seized by a group consisting of both civilian and military officials. The group was led by twenty-seven men who called themselves the "promoters" of the coup and of "People's Party."[37] One faction consisted primarily of young men educated in Europe. Among them were Pridi Bhanomyong, a

bright young lawyer trained in France, and Lt. Pibul
Songkhram, a young army officer, who had military
training also in France. Although these two men were the
original planners of the revolution, the revolution was
made a reality with the support of a senior faction of
ranking military officers and one of the main participants
was Praya Pahol Polpayuhasena.[38] Later on these three men
became Prime Ministers of Thailand.

The coup passed off quietly, with only two victims
being executed. One of them was an officer who was killed
defending the palace gates. All the leading members of
the government were taken into custody.[39] On that day a
manifesto was distributed throughout the city by the
People's Party justifying their action and outlining a
six-point proposal, detailing what they had set out to
accomplish for the new democratic regime:[40]

(1) to assure national sovereignty by preserving
freedom in political, judicial, and economic actions with-
out foreign interference;

(2) to provide popular security by maintaining inter-
nal peace and order;

(3) to provide economic well-being and work for all
by means of economic planning;

(4) to provide equality of citizen's privilege;

(5) to provide liberty in personal living, speech,
publication but not conflicting with the foregoing; and

(6) to provide education for all.

The coup group handed an ultimatum to the king demanding he become a constitutional monarch under the leadership of the promoters. However, the king had already been inclined to favor a democratic government. He accepted the ultimatum and returned to Bangkok. The king signed the first provisional constitution prepared by Pridi on June 26th 1932. He also granted pardon to the coup group. On June 27, the provisional constitution was promulgated[41] and thus put an end to the 700-year absolute monarchy.

The First Constitution

In the provisional constitution the sovereign power was divided and shared by four bodies: the king, the National Assembly, the People's Committee, and the court.[42] The constitution provided for the establishment of a National Assembly and a People's Committee. The National Assembly was to be the highest organ of the state with legislative authority, including the rights to deliberate on general national affairs and to dismiss any government officials deemed necessary. The People's Committee was to be chosen from the assembly and responsible to it.[43]

Article I of the constitution stated that "The supreme power of the country belongs to the people." The

king was recognized to be "the highest person in the country" but he had few powers. Every political action of the king had to be countersigned by at least one member of the people's committee, otherwise it would be null and void. The king could ask the National Assembly to reconsider acts, but the assembly could again disapprove by a simple majority. Moreover, whereas the previous king had been inviolable, now in certain circumstances he could be subject to trial by the assembly.[44]

The constitution stated that the fully democratic form of government was to be made in three stages:[45] (1) the National Assembly composed of 71 members representing 71 provinces, were to act on behalf of the people temporarily for six months; (2) national elections would be held afterward, but the assembly members would be equally divided into two categories, the elected and the appointed members; and (3) either after ten year or when half of the population had completed primary education, the assembly would become fully elected.

The First Democratic Government

The new National Assembly, composed of seventy one appointed members met on June 28, to choose the president and fifteen members of the People's Committee, who would function as a temporary government.[46] Praya Manopakorn Nitithada was voted to be president of the People's Committee, the first democratic government of Thailand.

On December 10, 1932 the permanent constitution was
promulgated. Under the permanent constitution the king
was once again made sacrosanct and inviolable and thus no
longer subject to suit.[47]   The king was given more poli-
tical powers. He was declared to be the Chief of State,
head of the Thai military forces and upholder of the
religion. The king could issue royal decrees, proclaim
martial law, declare war, conclude treaties with foreign
states and had the right to grant amnesty. He. could
appoint members of the state council, the new executive
body, as well as second category member of the National
Assembly. He could convoke and prorogue the regular
session of the assembly, and he also had the right to
dissolve it.[48]

However, these political powers were more apparent
than real and represented an attempt to restore the
dignity of the monarchy more than any real power. Article
2 of the constitution stipulated that the king was to
exercise sovereign power "in conformity with the provision
of this constitution." Article 57 provided that every
law, royal script and royal command relating to affairs of
state must be countersigned by a member of the state
council, who would thereby assume responsibility.[49]   The
permanent constitution also declared members of the royal
family from and above the rank of Mom Chao (Serene
Highness) to be above politics and ineligible for elec-

tion. However, they were permitted now to act as advisers
and hold diplomatic posts.[50]

The permanent constitution declared certain rights of
the people. All people were equal by law. Every citizen
was to be guaranteed religious freedom and full liberty of
person, abode, property, speech, writing, publication,
education, public meeting, association, or vocation.[51]

According to the permanent constitution, the charac-
ter of the legislative body remained basically unaltered.
But the executive body, the People's Committee, was
changed to be the State Council and took charge of all
ministries.

After the permanent constitution came into force, the
members of the People's Committee resigned to form the
State Council. Praya Manopakorn was appointed to be the
president of the State Council or the first Prime Minister
of Thailand. This council was composed of nineteen more
cabinet members, including fifteen former members of the
People's Committee. The National Assembly at that time
consisted of 156 members, half of whom were elected and
the other half nominated by the king on the government
advice.

However, Praya Mano's cabinet did not satisfy the
coup promoter who really wanted to see changes in the
economic system. Pridi, a coup promoter, proposed an eco-
nomic plan which would have the government expropriate all

farm land in exchange for bonds according to their values. In turn all farmers then would have been employed by the government for farming. The production and sale of farm products were to be taken over by the government.[54] Although the plan was supported by most of the members of the National Assembly, Praya Mano and his cabinet members strongly opposed the plan and labelled it as communist. Upon his influence, the king appointed a special committee to find out whether the plan was indeed communistic. Despite the opposition of the conservative members, the committee ended it report fovoring the plan.[55]

It became apparent to the government that strong measures had to be made to keep Pridi's economic plan from being passed in the Assembly. On April 1st, 1933 the king issued a royal decree to dissolve the National Assembly and the cabinet by recommendation of the government. A new government was formed by Praya Mano as Prime Minister again.[56] Pridi then was forced to flee to Europe in exile.

After this incident, the third government of Praya Mano became dictatorial, and government censorship of the press was imposed. Several newspapers were closed down. A communist law was promulgated as a crime punishment.[57] The government now faced more opposition and political difficulties.

On June 20, 1933 a second coup d'etat was staged by the military officers, "the promoters" of the first coup, headed by Colonel Praya Pahol. The coup group forced Praya Mano to resign. Praya Pahol also sent a telegram to King Prajadhipok who was on vacation at Hua Hin, explaining that it had become necessary to impose martial law on the country in order to convene the National Assembly in accordance with the constitution. The king agreed and came back to Bangkok. On June 22, the assembly was reopened. A law was passed that the coup was legitimate,[58] and Praya Pahol was chosen to be the new Prime Minister.

After waiting for three months, Pridi was allowed to return home. He was sent to a special committee to investigate the communist charge. The committee finally dropped the charge after Pridi declared his willingness to abandon his controversial economic program. Pridi was then appointed Minister of Interior in Praya Pahol's cabinet.

Nevertheless Pridi's return had triggered a further difficulty. Prince Boworadej, a former king's Minister of Defense and the king's cousin, organized a group of military officers in Korat, 200 kilometers northeast of Bangkok. On October 11, their troops attacked and seized Ayuthaya, the old capital city. As the troops moved further south, they successfully seized Don-Muang military air base near Bangkok. Praya Pahol was given an ultimatum, demanding immediate resignation. He was accused of having

an intention to establish a communist regime and of hatred toward the king. The proof was Pridi's reappearance in the government.

Praya Pahol sent troops under control of Colonel Pibul Songkhram to resist the rebels. The government offensive forced Prince Boworadej's troops to withdraw. After heavy fighting, Pibul recaptured the whole area within three weeks. The rebel leader escaped to Saigon and the revolt collapsed.[59]

The consequence of this attempted coup was the weakening position of the king. During the time the coup was conducted, the king was at his seaside palace in Hua Hin. Once he heard of the coup, he immediately left Hua Hin to Songkla, a southmost province by a royal ship. After the incident, the king was requested to return to the capital. Although the king did not know of the plan, the government estimated that the king had tacitly supported the coup, or at least he did nothing to prevent it.[60]

The first general elections were held on November 15, 1933 to fill 78 seats in the National Assembly. The electoral college method was used. Voters were to vote for sub-district colleges, and the colleges in turn voted for the assembly members in their provinces. Being the first election, only 24.5 percent of the voters cast ballots. There were 78 more appointed members in the Assembly

called "second category members," consisting primarily of military officers. Praya Pahol once again was elected to be the Prime Minister on December 12, 1933.[61]

Praya Prahol's cabinet lasted into the next year. When the assembly members did not approve a government's bill, Praya Pahol's cabinet resigned. However, the National Assembly again selected Praya Pahol to stay on as Prime Minister.[62]

The King's Abdication

On January 12, 1933 after the openning of the National Assembly and a new cabinet was set up, the king left for England for medical treatment and did not come back until he abdicated on March 2, 1935. Apparently, the king was resentful of the government which seemed to him not to be a truly democratic form.[63]

According to constitutional procedures, all the draft acts were submitted to the king for signing before being promulgated into law. In September 1934 the assembly received three draft acts which the king refused to approve. These bills were then reconsidered by the assembly and reaffirmed almost unanimously, thereby becoming law. These draft acts concerned amendments to the penal code and criminal procedure. The central amendment cited that the courts should be empowered to pass the sentence without the king's signature being required.

The king retained the power to grant amnesty.

However, the king felt that these amendments had been

formulated by the government in order to deal ruthlessly

with political prisoners who had been arrested for their

participation in the armed rebellion 1933. He was

resentful of the government which appeared to him to be

exercising autocratic power and of his increasingly

formalistic role in the government. During the time in

England he sent a memorandum to Praya Pahol's government

to reconsider several political actions which he felt had

been taken against him. His memorandum took the form of

controversy over the issue of the constitution. The king

demanded a larger voice in the government, that his formal

authority such as his right to grant pardon and to appoint

second category members of the National Assembly be

enlarge. In addition, the king proposed that the assembly

automatically be dissolved if any of its bills were

rejected by the king. This proposal, he wrote, was made

not because of his desire to seek power, but because of

his consideration of the fact that the new regime was in

no sense a truly democratic government and so long as the

people were not given a real voice in government affairs.

The government had no reason to prevent him from having a

share in the rule making process. The king had made it

clear that he would be willing to perform merely cere-

monial functions only when the regime was truly
                              64
democratic.

The king also asked that the act of protecting the constitution be reviewed in order to prevent the government from manipulating it to suppress the opposition group, that political prisoners be granted amnesty or their terms be reduced, and the royal palace guards regiment be strengthened and become as fully armed as other regular military units. Finally, the government was asked to allow for the formation of other political parties, for the king became dissatisfied with the fact that the political arena was now completely dominated by men of whom he did not approve.

The king made it clear that unless these proposals were accepted, he would abdicate. This put the government in a difficult position. These demands would weaken the power of the constitution, but the king's abdication might lessen public respect and confidence in the government.[65]

Nevertheless the king's demands were refused. The Pahol government disapproved his proposal and confirmed that the government was doing the right and democratic ways. Consequently the king felt he had no recourse but to abdicate the throne. On March 2, 1935, the king signed a formal act of abdication in England. The king said he gave up his throne with "sad relief"; the government and the National Assembly accepted his abdication with "profound regret."[66]   Then the government selected his ten year old

nephew, Prince Ananda Mahidol, to become king. As Prince
Ananda was a boy living with his family in Switzerland, a
Council of Regency was appointed to rule until he came of
age.

After King Prajadhipok's abdication, in June 1937
Pahol resigned because he was defeated in a vote in the
Assembly concerning the sale of royal properties, but the
Assembly reappointed him. Praya Pahol was in office for
one more time after the second elections in November,
1937. His regime lasted until September 1938 when there
was a vote of confidence in the assembly and he was
defeated by a secret vote. Praya Pahol then announced the
dissolution of the National Assembly.[67]

The third general elections came in November 1938.
After the elections, Praya Pahol informed the People's
Party that he would not accept the post again. He proposed
Colonel Pibul as the new Prime Minister and the party
agreed. Since most of the second category members in the
Assembly had been appointed by the party, Colonel Pibul
was easily elected to be the next Prime Minister.

Pibul's First Regime

Pibul formed his cabinet with twenty four members.
During his first rule, constitutional process in the
legislative field practically came to a standstill. Since
he was one of the prominent promoters of the 1932 coup and

the military leader against the rebellion in 1933, he was
respected and feared by most of the Assembly members. He
was able to control a huge majority in the Assembly.
However, Pibul had many secret opponents who envied his
rapid progression. There were several assassination
attempts on him but all of them failed. Pibul reacted by
arresting 45 conspirators, mostly high ranking military
and civilian officials, and 21 of them were executed.[68]   As
a result, his regime became more politically stable.

During his regime, several major programs had been
developed to modernize the country politically and eco-
nomically. Nationalism was one of guiding values. It was
Pibul who had changed the country's name from Siam to
Thailand by the constitutional amendment of 1939 in order
to increase nationalist feeling. One major nationalistic
event was the incident of 1893, when the French gun boat
blockaded the river near Bangkok and demanded the Thai
territories. The king's compliance with the French demands
resulted in a bitter memory for the Thai people for many
decades. This sentiment reached its climax after the fall
of France in June 1940 when Pibul began demanding the
"lost provinces" in Cambodia be returned. The French
refused.[69]

Pibul then responded by launching several attacks
against the French in Cambodia. After several battles with
the French, the Japanese came on the scene as the media-

tor, and Thailand regained some of the lost provinces in

Cambodia. Undoubtedly, his regime was strongly supported

by the legislature and people until the Japanese invasion.

On December 7, 1941, while the Japanese attacked

Pearl Harbor, the Thai government was given an ultimatum

by Japan to allow Japanese troops to cross Thai soil to

the Malay peninsula. At the same time the Japanese began

their attack in many seaside provinces, particularly the

military bases. While the decision had not been made, the

Thai military resisted the Japanese with heavy casualties.

The government sent a message requesting British assis-

tance from Singapore. The British military suggested that
70
the Thai government should fight alone.   After a deli-

berate calculation, Pibul decided to cooperate with Japan.

Japanese troops were allowed to pass and remain in

Thailand. This allowed the government to maintain control

over the administration.

During this time, Pibul launched many programs call-

ing for patriotic nationalism and fascism. A tightening of

political and cultural ties between Thailand and Japan

made the regime's militaristic character increasingly

pronounced. Pridi was ousted from the minister's post

because of his pro-Allies attitude. Although he was named

in a higher position of regent, Pridi headed the under-

ground Free Thai Movement that worked closely with the
71
American military.

In June 1941 Pibul declared war on the United States,
Great Britain, and Australia. Great Britain and Australia
responded by declaring war on Thailand but the United
States did not. The American reaction was probably in
sympathy and appreciation of the Thai Ambassador to
Washington, Seni Pramoj, who contended the declaration of
war was unconstitutional because it had been made without
any approval by the National Assembly.

The permission for the Japanese to stay on Thai soil
and the declaration of war had shaken Pibul's position.
He had lost some political support from the assembly and
there was confusion in the cabinet. Pibul felt the need to
change some of his cabinet members. He resigned on March
6, 1942 and later returned with the new cabinet.

However, his position was still in question when the
Japanese lost many battles in Pacific front during 1944.
Pridi and Khuang suggested that he resign before the
complete Allied victory.[72] The pressure from Pridi's group
in the National Assembly also gave Pibul opportunity to
relinquish his post. When Pibul proposed to move the
capital city to the north and to construct a religious
city, the Assembly disapproved. After Pibul's resignation,
the National Assembly selected Khuang Abhaiwongs to be the
next Prime Minister.

First Period of Civilian Regimes

Khuang became Prime Minister with little surprise. He was a prominent civilian, one of the original promoters of the 1932 revolution. He was a born orator and humorist. During his rule, the members of the assembly became engaged in more lively debates and criticism. But Khuang was in the position for only one year. After World War II ended, he stepped down to allow the Free Thai Movement to take over from him and to improve Thailand's position in international politics.

Tawee Bunyaketu was selected to be an interim Prime Minister waiting for Seni Pramoj, the Thai ambassador to Washington and head of the Free Thais in the United States to return 16 days later. When Seni arrived in Bangkok on September 16, 1945, Tawee resigned. Seni was then appointed to be Prime Minister for the confidence and recognition of the Allies's super powers, particularly the United States and Great Britain.;

Once Seni became the Prime Minister, the United States gave full support to the Thai government's roles after the war. Seni signed a peace treaty with Great Britain in which he returned to Great Britain the annexed territory in Malaya that had been given to Thailand by the Japanese during the war, and which included war reparations consisting primarily of its rice surplus. In return, Great Britain supported Thailand's request for membership

in the United Nations.[73]

Since the National Assembly had functioned for over ten years, Seni desired to set up a truly democratic system by elections. He first announced the dissolution of the National Assembly. And the fourth general elections were held on January 6, 1946. This time Khuang, as a leader of Democratic Party won a majority in the assembly, and was selected to be Prime Minister.

In his first job, Khuang revised the constitution to get rid of the appointed members of the National Assembly. However, Khuang was in position only 45 days. When his government lost in a vote of confidence over an expenditure control bill, Khuang resigned.[74] The National Assembly selected Pridi to be the Prime Minister on March 21, 1946.

Although Pridi had once proposed the controversial economic program, his government received almost full vote of confidence from the assembly's members. Pridi continued the revision of the constitution as proposed by Khuang's government. The new constitution abolished the second category member or the appointed member of the assembly, but created a second house known as the Senate or Upper House.[75] When the new constitution became effective and the Senate members were elected, Pridi resigned. But the Assembly appointed him once again on June 8, 1946.

On June 9, the next day after the inauguration of

Pridi, a serious incident happened. King Ananda Mahidol was found shot to death in his bed.[76] Pridi immediately resigned from his post. However, his supporters in the Assembly voted for him to be back for the third time on June 11, three days after the king's death. This time, Pridi ran his administration with difficulties. Since the king's mysterious death, the investigation had been slow. The government could not find clear evidence of how the king died. People became suspicious. Speculations grew that the king was murdered. Pridi was the focal point of criticism everywhere in the country. In his position just one month, Pridi decided to resign on August 23.

Luang Thamrong Nawaswat, one of the 1932 coup promoters, was selected to be the next Prime Minister. Luang Thamrong was supported largely by Pridi's group in the assembly and Pridi was behind his government.[77] Thamrong's government had been criticized for many reasons: the king's mysterious death still had not been solved; the anti-communist law was abolished; the post-war economic recession; the corruptions of the government; and the inability of the government to run the country efficiently. Finally the assembly initiated a vote of confidence in the cabinet. Though Thamrong received its confidence, he resigned to rearrange the cabinet and returned on May 29, 1947. Thamrong could stay on only a few more months. His regime was terminated by the third military coup d'etat.

Military Regimes

The military coup occurred bloodlessly on November 8, 1947. The people were told that the military could not tolerate the corrupt, inefficient regime which had done much damage to Thailand's international reputation. In order to remedy this situation, strong measures had to be used. The coup group dissolved the National Assembly, including the Senate, and declared a new provisional constitution of 1947. This coup put an end to the People's Party.[78] Pridi left Thailand ten days after the coup, and with him ended the hope of any organized resistance.

Since Pibul was still respected by most of the military officers, he was requested to join the coup. Despite his influence in the military, he could not take over the government immediately because of his past failure in dealing with the Japan. The coup group then asked for Khuang, the Democratic Party leader who opposed Thamrong's government, to be the next Prime Minister. Khuang accepted and formed his cabinet on November 10, 1947.

Under the new provisional constitution, a hundred new Senate members had been appointed by Khuang's government, In January 29, 1948 the elections were held. The Democratic Party won the elections. Khuang, the party leader, stayed in power for another term. However, no members of the coup group had been appointed to the cabinet and the new Senate.

In April, 1948 the coup group was informed that there
was a plan to counter the coup. An investigation revealed
that weapons were being stored in the house of a former
member of Thamrong's cabinet.[79] The coup group felt it
necessary to take over the government. By April 8, four
military officers went to see Khuang at his office telling
him to resign within 24 hours. Khuang complied. Pibul then
was appointed Prime Minister.

Pibul's Second Regime

Pibul assumed the office of the Prime Minister on
April 8, 1947. Since Pibul himself was strongly anti-
communist. Pibul's government was recognized by western
governments within a few days of assuming power.

Unlike his previous rule, Pibul's power this time was
less complete. The 1947 coup was actually planned and
executed by a group of relatively unknown reserve Army
officers led by General Phin Chunhawan, Colonel Luang Kach
Songkram, and Colonel Phao Sriyanon. These reserve
officers were not active in the Army but had successfully
recruited an active officer, Colonel Sarit Thanarat, who
commanded the infantry regiment in Bangkok to join them.[80]
Pibul undoubtedly knew of the plan for the coup, but he
did not take a direct part in its execution. Having
realized that they were relatively unknown, the coup
leaders chose Pibul as their candidate.

After the coup was carried out, the period of diffi-

culties began. There was competition among General Phin, Luang Kach, and Pibul within the coup group. Though Phin and Pibul could negotiate, Luang Kach was forced into exile. The Army itself was divided between pro-coup and pro-Pridi elements. The Navy was resentful of the Army's power in politics and consequently the Navy tended to be sympathetic toward the Democratic Party and other civilian opposition groups. This factionalism led to several crises. On October 1, 1948, a group of Army general staff officers, the anti-coup and Pridi supporter group, were arrested. They were convicted of plotting a revolt against the government. Four months later, the navy, which favored Pridi staged another coup, but it failed. The battle between the government and the navy resulted in the death of hundreds of civilians and soldiers.[81] General Sarit succeeded in seizing the rebel's headquarters, but the coup leaders managed to escape.

On March 23, 1949, the government announced a new constitution which consisted of amendments to the 1947 constitution. This constitution did not change the structure of the National Assembly but enlarged it by adding 71 more elected members. The Senate remained the same but its term was expanded to 6 years. The elections for the increased members were held in 19 provinces on June 5, 1949. However, after the new National Assembly convened, there was a feeling of communist influence in the assem-

bly. Although there were appointed Senate members, these
members were appointed by the former Khuang's government.
Pibul or the coup group could not control or influence
them in any way.

On June 24, 1949, General Phin, with the agreement of
Pibul staged another coup which dissolved the assembly.
The coup group returned to the 1932 provisional constitu-
tion for its legal base. Then the coup leaders appointed
most of military officers who participated in the coup as
members of the Assembly.

In June, 1951, the navy attempted another coup during
the ceremony while a United States ship, the Manhattan,
was being transferred to Thailand. Naval officers held
Pibul as hostage on the Manhattan and demanded the govern-
ment resign. Despite Pibul on the ship, the government
responded with air attacks. Pibul was able to swim to
safety. The three days of fighting resulted in heavy
casualties. This coup finally failed.[82] The Manhattan
coup, as it was called, further weakened Pibul's position.
It became apparent that the real power was in control of
the coup group, particularly the two men, General Phao,
the Director-General of Police and General Sarit, the
Commander of the First Army.

Although most of the opposition groups were elimi-
nated, those in the assembly remained. So, on November 29,
1951, the national radio announced another coup, staged by

Pibul himself. He suspended the constitution, dissolved the National Assembly, and banned all political parties. Pibul formed his temporary cabinet on the same day to carry on the government functions. This cabinet lasted only a week, when the government announced the reestablishment of the December 1932 constitution on December 6, 1951. Pibul then formed another cabinet. This time, most of the military officers from the battalion level were appointed to be the second category members of the National Assembly.[83]

Later the existing constitution was amended and became the new constitution of 1952, proclaimed on March 23. New general elections were held in April 1952, and the Army and police were successful in filling the assembly with government supporters.[84] During this period, Phao and Sarit's powers became consolidated. By maintaining a delicate balance between the two factions, Pibul was able to remain in power.

Thereafter the government's internal and foreign policy centered on anti-communism. Most of the anti-communist activities were directed against Chinese communities and opposition politicians. Many writers, intelligentsia, young military officers and Chinese nationals were arrested on charges of involvement in a communist conspiracy. This period of anti-communism also resulted in the expansion and modernization of the Armed Forces, most

of which was done with the United States assistance to the
military and the police forces. Ties with the United
States became closer. The United States began several
programs for economic and military assistance to Thailand.
The Border Patrol Police was established and a system of
security police was developed in Thailand, not only to
fight communism but also as an instrument of politics.[85]

From April to June, 1955, Pibul made a trip through
Europe and the United States. As a result of this trip,
Pibul made symbolic gestures toward democratizing the
regime. Pibul's policies changed drastically whether by
the result of a new vision of democracy for Thailand or
because of the need to rally popular support to weaken
Phao and Sarit power.

Pibul ordered a series of political reforms. Press
censorship was lifted and political parties were allowed
to function. The public was encouraged to participate in
politics, and cabinet members were compelled to attend
press conferences. Furthermore Pibul declared that mili-
tary and police interference in politics was "undemocra-
tic." When the ban was lifted, about 25 new political
parties were formed. However, the most predominant among
them were the Government Party (Seri Manangkhasila) headed
by Pibul and Phao, the National Democratic Party which
supported Sarit, and the Democratic Party led by Khuang.

Pibul ordered new elections to be held in February

1957. They were preceded by lively debate and scathing attacks on the Pibul government. Although Pibul's party won the election and maintained Pibul in power for another term, he and Phao were accused of having used dirty tricks against the other parties. It was estimated that at least 20 million baht were spent in campaigning, about 10 times as much as any of the other parties. Moreover, as the government party, the candidates called upon the government officials to campaign for them. Despite massive efforts, this party won by only a slim victory.[86]

Although Sarit and Phao were opposed to one another. Pibul appointed both of them to his cabinet. Sarit became Minister of Defense and retained the post of Army Commander. Phao was the Minister of Interior and the Director General of Police Department.

Sarit's Regime

During the election campaigns, Sarit remained quietly in the background. After the elections, a group of students demonstrated against the government showing their resentment of the election. The demonstrators marched to see Sarit and called for his action. Sarit publicly proclaimed the election to have been "filthy" on all sides. He also disclaimed any association with the government party. His statement was widely appreciated by the public and gained popular support. Hence Sarit openly broke with

Pibul and Phao. Moreover, Sarit led other high-ranking military officers who were members of the cabinet to resign from their posts and called for the resignation of Pibul and Phao.[87] Pibul's refusal caused increased dissatisfaction among the Army officers.

On September 16, 1957 Sarit led a coup d'etat. Martial law was declared, the constitution was suspended, and the parliament was dissolved. Pibul fled the country. Phao was forced into exile. Sarit did not assume control of the government immediately as he was quite ill with cirrhosis of the liver. Pote Sarasin, a prominent civilian and non-party man, was appointed prime minister pending new elections.

The elections were held on December 26, 1957. The election resulted in 45 seats for Sahapoom, the new party which Sarit had just formed, 35 seats for the Democratic Party, 15 seats for Socialist Parties, and 61 seats for various independents. The elections thus ended Pote's government. On new year's eve of 1958 General Thanom Kittikachorn, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Sarit's trusted follower, became Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. General Prapas Charusthien, the First Army Commander, was appointed Minister of Interior. Then Sarit reorganized his party and changed its name to National Socialist Party (Puk Chat Sangkom).

During January 1958, Sarit left Thailand to undergo

surgery in the United States, leaving Thanom to cope with both the factional rivalry that broke out immediately after his departure and the political crises in the assembly. During his medical convalescence, he continuously followed the situation of Thanom's government. When the fighting among the Assembly members increased, Sarit made a sudden return to Thailand on October 19, 1958. Thanom, realizing his situation, led all the cabinet members to resign from the government the next day.[88]

On that evening Sarit staged another coup. He abolished the existing constitution, dissolved the National Assembly and the cabinet, and declared the coup headquarters to be the temporary supreme administrative body under his leadership. Sarit explained that his actions were necessitated by internal deterioration, increased external threat and the danger of communist subversion.[89] Two months later, he announced the establishment of the provisional constitution of 1959 containing only twenty articles. He used the document for the next four years. Simultaneously he assumed the position of Prime Minister.

This provisional constitution provided for an appointed Assembly to draft a new constitution. Article 17 provided for the full authority of the Prime Minister to do what he deemed necessary in order to protect the security of the nation. Therefore, Sarit possessed a supreme dictatorial power to rule the country, and he used

it effectively during the next four years. Sarit initiated several economic and social programs with full support from the intelligentsia of the country. He was considered to be one of the most prominent leaders of Thailand in modern times. Sarit remained in power until his death due to illness on December 8, 1963.

Thanom's Regime

Following Sarit's death, General Thanom succeeded as Prime Minister. General Prapas was appointed Minister of Interior and the Army Commander-in-Chief. This period of Thanom's regime was one of the longest governments of Thailand. By using Sarit's provisional constitution, Thanom ruled the country with ease and stability for ten years. Thanom's major internal problem was the expansion of communist infiltration in the north and northeast. But the military could control this effectively in most of the cases.

Thanom's regime was fully supported by the United States. With the escalation of the Vietnam conflict in 1964, the United States' role in Thailand increased by establishing military bases throughout the country. In return, the United States had given assistance to several of the development programs in the rural areas, modernized the Thai military and police, and provided direct economic aid.
90

Until 1968, political parties and worker's unions

were banned and the press was strictly censored. After a
long drafting period a new constitution was finally pro-
mulgated on June 21st, 1968. The constitution provided for
general elections to be held within eight months after its
promulgation. In January 1965, general elections were held
in which Saha Pracha Thai Party, the government's party,
won the elections. Thanom remained in power for another
term.

On March 7, 1965, Thanom appointed General Prapas to
be Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. Twenty
seven other cabinet members were also appointed. This time
Thanom faced many difficulties. The communist terrorists
increased their activities in the north, the northeast,
and the south. Hundreds of military and police officials
were killed as a result of the government's communist
suppression programs.[91] Corruption in government and
communist activities had caused considerable public criti-
cism centering on Thanom and Prapas as inefficient and
spoiled leaders. When the political crisis over the
government's fiscal budget threatened, Thanom decided to
stage a coup against his own government.

On November 17, 1971, the coup leaders announced the
failure of the "constitutional experiment," and then
declared martial law. They dissolved the National
Assembly, and banned all political parties. Thanom and
other coup leaders asserted their control of the country

and ruled as a military junta for two more years.

Student Crisis in 1973

After the coup, the political stability experienced by Thanom's long regime began to crumble. First there was resentment among the high ranking officers and politicians as it became apparent that Thanom and Prapas were grooming Colonel Narong Kittikachorn, their son and son-in-law respectively, for the position of prime minister after their retirement. He was expected to continue a family dynasty. Discontent quickly spread to the people, including a student group called the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT). After it was formed in 1968, this group secretly began an anti-military regime movement. The NSCT was supported by several groups of intellectuals and included certain university educators, technocrats, news publishers and columnists, western-educated bureaucrats and businessmen, and the politicians who lost power during the coup.[92]

At that time there was an economic depression from the world energy crisis. The depression resulted in a high rate of inflation in Thailand, and this widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The standard of living of the Thai people began to deteriorate after a long period of sustained growth in the past decades. People who experienced economic problems also put the blame for mis-

management of the economy directly on Thanom's government.

Meanwhile, the National Student Center began to organize itself with less political orientation. First the student groups demonstrated against university corruption, and later against the government itself. Occasionally the government manipulated the student groups on occasion for its own purposes.[93] The students handled their protests and demonstrations effectively and kept the government from seeing them as threats to the regime.[94]

The first political campaign of the students was when the student movement seized upon the so-called "Toong Yai Affair" The affair resulted from the crash of a Royal Thai Army helicopter in the jungle of Kanchanabury about fifty miles west of Bangkok in April, 1973. Many high-ranking military officers and police officers were killed and injured in the crash. A team of news reporters reported that the crashed helicopter was returning from an illegal hunting expedition in Toong Yai National Reservation.[95] Nine students published a magazine openly criticized the affair resulted in the expulsion from Ramkamhaeng University and led to an enormous student demonstration in June, 1973. After the incident, another student demonstration broke out again protesting the government's alleged mishandling of the rice crisis which was the result of the inflation that hit in mid-1972.[96]

The last student demonstration began on October 6,

1973 with the arrest of thirteen professors, students, and politicians who had publicly passed out pamphlets in Bangkok demanding the speedy promulgation of a new democratic constitution. These activists were charged with treason as the police discovered alleged documentary evidence of a communist plot to overthrow the government.[97] It caused widespread cynicism and resulted in massive protest demonstrations organized at Thammasat University in Bangkok on October 6, 1973. The government refused the student demands for the unconditional release of the constitutional activists. A day later, the government was given an ultimatum to release the thirteen activists in five days.

As the deadline arrived without reply from the government, the largest demonstration in Thai history began with a crowd of half a million marching a distance of two miles from the university to the front of the National Assembly. Thanom finally released the activists. However, the demonstration did not stop. Conditions of the demonstration had been changing and led to the immediate promulgation of the constitution as the arrested activists had demanded. However, student leaders proceeded to meet with the government, and both sides agreed that the constitution would be promulgated within one year. When the terms were announced most of the crowd dispersed leaving only thousands of demonstrators who remained around the

National Assembly near the king's palace. This group was
composed of those who were dissatisfied with the one-year
delay in granting the constitution.[98]

That evening, the demonstrators finally agreed to
leave. However, on the way back some of the demonstrators
were refused permission to pass the palace by the security
police. Since the demonstrators insisted on passing that
way, the police used force to push the crowd back. At this
moment, serious violence erupted. People awoke to the news
of a massacre at the palace ground by the police. Tempers
rose quickly as word of the massacre spread, and crowd
began again to increase in size. Within hours battles
between the police and the demonstrators broke out at
several points in the city. The Army units that had been
used as police backup were called in. Some of the police
and soldiers were fired upon by the demonstrators. In
turn the police and military used their machine guns to
fire on the demonstrators. By late afternoon of the next
day casualties were near a thousand with two hundred dead.
It was the worst episode of political violence in modern
Thai history. On the night of October 14, Thanom resigned
with an announcement from the king that he had appointed
Professor Sanya Dharmasakti, Rector of Thammasat Univer-
sity, to be the new prime minister. The king appealed to
all parties to cease the violence. However, Thanom
remained as supreme commander. The crowd refused to dis-

perse, and the fighting continued through the night.

Thanom and Prapas, now the ex-leaders of the govern-
ment, ordered the army to use absolute measures against
the remaining demonstrators. But General Kris Sivara, just
appointed the Army Commander-in-Chief, refused. He indi-
cated that he was unwilling to see further violence.[99]
General Kris's response doomed Thanom, Prapas, and Narong
to exile on October 16.

Sanya, the new Prime Minister, then announced over
the national radio that Thanom and Prapas had resigned all
their government positions and left the country along with
Colonel Narong, their son and son-in-law respectively.
Violence subsided within less than two hours after the
announcement.

Second Period of Civilian Regimes

Sanya Dharmasakti, the new Prime Minister was the
first civilian Prime Minister ever appointed by the king.
Sanya was the rector of Thammasat University, former chief
of the supreme court, and served as a privy counselor to
the king. Sanya announced that the new National Assembly
would consisted of 2,300 members, principally civilians.
Then after the first national convention, the National
Assembly was dissolved and replaced by 299 new members who
were chosen by majority vote from the former members of
the Assembly.

The new National Assembly announced the new constitu-

tion after a few sessions. The Sanya government had
administered the country for six months before the
national election began. During the Sanya regime, the NSCT
led by the student leaders of the October 1973 uprising
was considered to be the most powerful political clique in
the country. The Sanya government was now being asked to
respond to the needs of the students in almost every
matter. Demonstrations occurred daily. A number of labor
strikes erupted in Bangkok and the other provinces, over
2,000 labor strikes during Sanya's regime.[100]

After the national election at the end of 1974,
Kukrit Pramoj, the leader of Social Action Party and a
well-known writer in Bangkok, was selected Prime Minister.
However, Kukrit's government was plagued by political
pressures. His coalition government consisted of 16 poli-
tical parties including his own Social Action Party, which
controlled a majority of the seats in the national legis-
lature. When Kukrit proposed economic reforms as his
party's program at the end of 1975, the coalition sup-
porting his government began to collapse. Under pressure
from many sides and with rumors of a possible military
coup, Kukrit decided to dissolve the National Assembly and
call for a new national elections. This was an option in
the new constitution. As a result of the April 4, 1976
election, the Democrat Party, led by Seni Pramoj, older
brother of Kukrit, won most of the seats in the National

Assembly. It won a massive victory in Bangkok and in many
provinces.[101]

However, Seni and the stability of his government
were confronted with new and mounting crises. Seni's
government also had its own weaknesses, one of them was
the continual in-fighting among all political parties
represented in the National Assembly. The other was
Seni's inability to deal realistically and effectively
with the military. The military leaders were disturbed by
the behavior of the cabinet members. This increased
resentment among many of military leaders. Then the demise
of Seni's government came when Thanom, the former leaders,
returned from political exile.[102]

On September 19, 1976, Thanom arrived at the airport
in Bangkok and promptly entered a Buddhist temple. Several
cabinet members tried in vain to persuade him to leave.
Student organizations began public protests immediately at
Thammasat University. The National Student Center issued a
demand that Thanom be ousted from the country. The delays
involved in the cabinet reshuffling during this crisis
caused students to organize a wider protest against the
return of the former military leader.

On October 4, thousands of students organized in
Thammasat University and announced that they were using it
as a base to force the Seni government to expel Thanom
from Thailand. On the following day tension reached a much

higher level when the students at Thammasat demonstrated against the actions of police officers who had executed two student activists in a northeastern province during the anti-Thanom protest. Unfortunately, the "hanged" student bore a close resemblance to the king's son, Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, who had just returned to Thailand from military training in Australia. This picture had been taken by a newspaper and rapidly distributed to general public and created the bitter feeling that the students had shown disrespect to the royal family which is the national symbol.

After finding that there were a number of heavy weapons inside the university, police officers broke into Thammasat University. Immediately the student protesters fired their weapons at a nearby police officer. Rightist students accompanying the police lynched several leftist students and burned their bodies. Forty two persons were killed and two hundred were wounded.[101]

The Return of Military Regimes

In that night, Admiral Sangad Chaloryu, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces who was supported by the army, announced the military coup. He declared that the Seni government was being ousted from power. The National Administrative Reform Council (NARC) which consisted of twenty three high-ranking officers of the armed force was

assuming control of the government. The reason for the
return to military rule, the admiral explained, was the
existence of a "communist plot" which had been planned by
indigenous and foreign subversives seeking control of the
country.

On October 22, 1976, King Bhumibol approved the
formation of a military-dominated government headed by a
former Supreme Court Justice, Thanin Kraivixian. Once
appointed, Thanin announced a plan for the development of
democracy to take place in four stages of four years each.
It would take sixteen years before a full democratic
system could be established.[104] However, after surviving
an attempted right-wing coup in March, 1976, Thanin was
given an ultimatum which demanded the reshuffling of his
cabinet. He refused.

Following Thanin's refusal, on October 20, 1977,
Admiral Sangad staged a coup to oust Thanin's government.
The coup group established a twenty-three member Revolu-
tionary Council (subsequently the National Policy Council)
virtually identical in composition to the former NARC. A
new constitution was drafted and was promulgated on
November 10, 1977. On the next day the Council designated
General Kriengsak Chamanan, the Supreme Commander of the
Armed Forces, as Prime Minister.

The constitution provided for general elections by
the end of 1978, and an appointed a Senate to draft the

permanent constitution governing elections. General elections were held on May 22, 1979, under a new constitution adopted on December 18, 1978. Although the Social Action Party, headed by Kukrit, won a majority in the lower house, Kriengsak's control of the appointed upper house permitted him to remain in office and form a coalition government. While Kriengsak was initially seen as providing a "vital connecting link" between the military and civilian establishments, his effectiveness waned perceptibly during 1979 because of pressures from both sides.[105] On February 29, 1979, at the peak of political pressure in the assembly, Kriengsak resigned. General Prem Tinsulanond was designated his successor following endorsement by a parliamentary vote of confidence on March 3.

Prem, as well as the former governments, had faced the communist terrorist problem in many regions of the country. In 1980, Prem issued an order (No. 66/23) which stressed the need to adopt a political strategy in addition to military suppression in dealing with the communist insurgency. His order was modified in 1982 (as order No.66/25) which resulted in increasing the rate of communist surrenders in the north and northeast regions of the country. Later the government proclaimed the "total suppression of communist insurgency," after a long military activity.[106]

The Prem government also faced an attempt coup, when a group of military officers commonly known as the "Young Turks," led by General Sant Chitpatima, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Army tried to seize power on April 1, 1981. Despite the coup's massive military support, Prem, with the king on his government's side, easily rallied other military generals to join his moves to suppress the coup. Within three days the coup was cut short.[107]

Prem's government survived until April 1983. After the announcement of the new constitution, however, the military, particularly, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, disagreed with the context of the constitution on the method of elections. By the pressure from the army, Prem chose to dissolve the National Assembly resulting in the general elections in May, 1983. Although the <u>Chat Thai</u> Party won the majority in elections, the National Assembly voted for Prem to be Prime Minister for another term. He accepted and formed a new cabinet in June 1983. Prem's government is the forty-fourth in the Thai modern political system since it had been established in the revolution of 1932.

Summary

The history of Thailand reveals several features of
the Thai political system. It began with the absolute
monarchy and was transformed to constitutional monarchy
with an ultimate goal of democracy. During five decades of
democratic politics, Thailand has experienced 9 coups
d'etat, 14 constitutions, 14 elections, and 44 govern-
ments. The cycle of politics in Thailand since 1932 can be
depicted by Chart 2.1.

In this poltical system, several civilian and mili-
tary leaders have come and gone as Prime Ministers, but
democracy is still questioned. So far, the last government
has completed the inner cycle to coalition government.
However, this government seems to be politically stable
and offers more democratic opportunity to its people.

Chart 2.1

Cycles of Politics in Thailand: 1932-1983

ι:
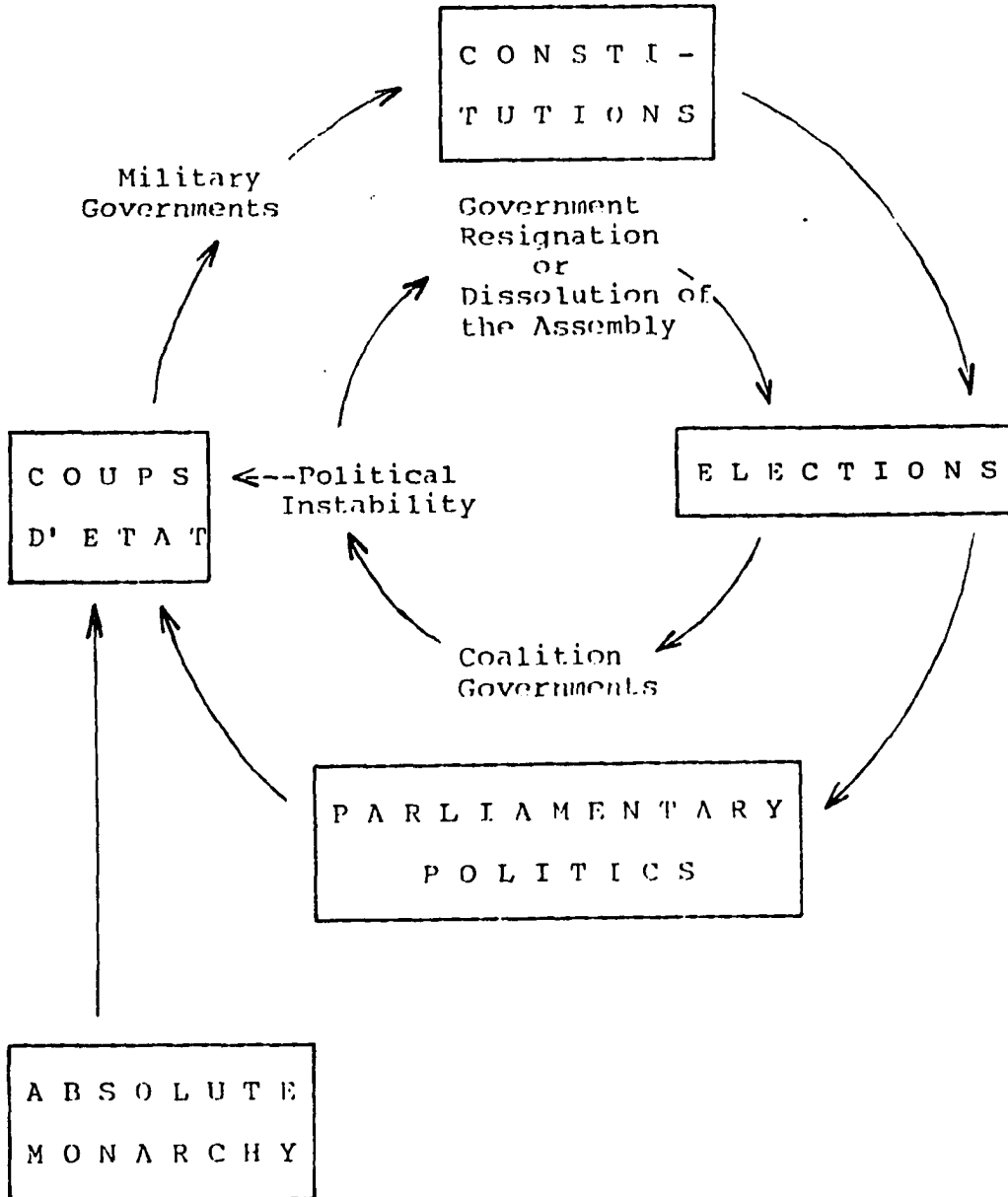
1. David F. Hass, <u>Interaction in the Thai Bureaucracy</u>: <u>Structure, Culture, and Social Exchange</u>, (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1979), pp. 1-2

2. At one time conflicting opinions and theories prevailed as the origins of the Thais. It may now be said with a degree of certainty that the Thai originated in northwestern Szechuan about 4,500 years ago. See <u>Thailand Official Yearbook 1964</u>, (Bangkok, Government House Printing Office, 1964), p. 11. See also D.G.E Hall, <u>A history of Southeast Asia</u>, 3rd ed., (New york, St. Martin's Press, 1968), p. 169

3. <u>Thailand Yearbook 1969-70</u>, (Bangkok, Temple Publicity Services, 1970), p. A76

4. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. A77

5. Some historians argued that Sukhothai Kingdom was established earlier in the year 1237 as a result of a struggle for independence from the Khmer suzerainty. See D.G.E. Hall, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 170

6. See H.G.Q. Wales, <u>Ancient Siamese Government and Administration</u>, (New York, Paragon Book Reprint Corp., . ·)), p.3, and see also Harry J. Benda and John A. Larkin, <u>The world of Southeast Asia</u>, (New York, Harper and Row, 1967), p.42

7. Likit Dhiravegin, <u>The Bureaucratic Elite of Thailand</u>: <u>A study of Their sociological Attributes, Educational Backgrounds and Career Advancement Pattern</u>, (Bangkok, Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University, 1978), pp. 17-18

8. The word "Siam" is called "Sayam" in the Thai language. "Siam" was first used by Sir James Lancaster in his first voyage to the Far East in 1592. By the 17th century Siam became the generally accepted name of the country among the Europeans, as witnessed by M. de la Loubere's book "<u>Description du Royaume de Siam</u>" which was printed at Paris in 1691. However Siam became official name of the country in the reign of King Mongkut (1851-1868) when he signed a treaty with Great Britain on April 18, 1855. Later in June 24, 1939 the Pibul's government decided to drop the

name Siam both in Thai and in European languages and changed to the name "Thailand" in order to conform with the racial origins and the popular practice of the Thai people. See Thailand Official Yearbook, op.cit., p. 10

9. See Wales, op.cit., pp. 16-17, see also William J. Siffin, The Thai Bureaucracy: Institutional Change and Development, (Honolulu, East-West Center Press, 1966), p. 18

10. Siffin, Ibid., p. 18

11. G. William Skinner and A. Thomas Kirsch (eds), Change and Persistence in Thai Society, (London, Cornell University Press, 1975, pp. 71-72

12. Thailand Yearbook 1973-74, (Bangkok, Temple Publicity Services, 1974), p. A8

13. See Siffin, op.cit., p. 39-41, and see also Fred W. Riggs, Thailand: The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity, (Honolulu, East-West Center Press, 1966), p. 58

14. Walter Vella, Siam Under Rama III, 1824-1851, (New York, Association for Asian Studies by J. J. Augustin, 1957), p. 27-33

15. Thailand National Directory 1979, (Bangkok, Advance Media, 1979), pp. 38-68

16. Abbot Low Moffat, Mongkut the King of Siam, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1961)

17. Thailand Yearbook, op.cit., p. A9

18. David K. Wyatt, "Education and Modernization", in Skinner (ed), op.cit., p. 130

19. Virginia Thompson, Thailand: The New Siam, (New York, The Macmillan Co, 1941), p. 47

20. Siffin, op.cit., pp. 52-58

21. Walter Vella, The Impact of the West on Government in Thailand, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1955), p. 327

22. Ibid., p. 341, and see also Norman Jacobs, Modernization Without development: Thailand as an Asian Case Study, (New York, Praeger, 1971), p. 22

23. Advid Joel Steinburg (ed.), In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History, (New York, Praeger, 1971), p. 313

24. Office of The Prime Minister, Thailand into the 80's, (Bangkok, Thai Watana Panich Press, 1979), p. 22

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., pp. 23-24

27. Ibid., p. 26

28. James Basche, Thailand: Land of the Free, (New York, Caplinger Publishing Co., 1971), pp. 32-33

29. Ibid.

30. Steinburg, op.cit., p. 316

31. Ibid.

32. James C. Ingram, Economic Change in Thailand Since 1850, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1954), p. 190

33. Ibid.

34. The committee consisted of Prince Devewongs, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Raymond B. Stevens, a former US. Congressman who was then advisor in foreign affairs, and Praya Srivisar, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, see Thailand Official Yearbook, op.cit., p. 27

35. Ibid., p. 28

36. Thompson, op.cit., p. 62

37. Basche, op.cit., p. 35

38. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 52

39. Thompson, op.cit., p. 12

40. Bancha Keokettong, Colonel, Samsib hok ratabal nai rabob prachathipatai kong thai, (Bangkok, Roong ruang tham, 1976), pp. 21-22

41. Thailand Official Yearbook, op.cit., p. 29

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid. ·-

44. Ibid., p. 25

45. Bancha, op.cit., p. 25

46. Ibid., p. 28

47. Thailand Official Yearbook, op.cit., p. 30

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., p. 31

51. Ibid.

52. Bancha, op.cit., p. 29

54. Pridi's economic program will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

55. Thailand Yearbook 1969-70, (Bangkok, Temple Publicity Services, 1970), p. A39

56. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 34-35

57. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 54

58. Bancha, op.cit., p. 38

59. Ibid., pp. 42-46

60. Ibid., p. 51

61. Ibid., pp. 52-53

62. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 56

63. The memorandum is considered to be one of the most significant document in Thailand's history. The original document has been kept in the National Library in Bangkok.

64. Bancha, op.cit., p. 71

65. Ibid., p. 77

66. Ibid., p. 80

67. Ibid., pp. 82-83

68. Ibid., pp. 90-91

69. Thailand National Directory, op.cit.. p. 59

70. Ibid., p. 60

71. Bancha, op.cit., p. 102

72. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 61

73. The essential agreement concerned 1,500,000 tons of rice to be sent to Great Britain as the war reparations. It also included a number of tin, teak, and other agricultural products which had great impact on the post-war Thai economy. See more details in Chapter 7.

74. Bancha, op.cit., p. 119

75. In the first stage, Senate members would be elected by members of the former National Assembly in one-year term.

76. The king's death was initially thought to have been an accident. The investigation committee could not indicate the real cause of death until the present time.

77. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 62

78. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 196-197

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 64

82. This incident led to a wholesale dismissal of the "unreliable navy officers" to such extent that the navy has no longer posed any serious threat to the army.

83. Bancha, op.cit., p. 204

84. Thailand Official Yearbook, op.cit., p. 34

85. See detail of this establishment in Thomas Lobe, United States National Security Policy and Aid to the Thailand Police, (colorado, University of Denver, No date)

86. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 64

87. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 235-236

88. Ibid., p. 247

89. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 65

90. Daniel Wit, Thailand: Another Vietnam?, (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), pp. 10-12

91. Stephen I. Alpern, Major, "Insurgency in Thailand," Military Review, July, 1975, pp.10-16

92. Jeffrey Race, "Thailand 1973: We Certainly Have Been Ravaged By Something...," Asian Survey, Vol. XIV, No. 2, February, 1974, pp. 195-196

93. For example, the government covertly encouraged the students to demonstrate against the Japanese economic power as a way of signalling the Japanese government that more favorable aid and trade agreements were required so as to gain leverage in trade negotiations with Japan.

94. Clark D. Neher, "Stability and Instability in Contemporary Thailand," Asian Survey, Vol. XV, No. 12, December, 1975, p. 100, See also Robert F. Zimmerman, "Student Revolution in Thailand: The End of the Thai Bureaucratic Polity," Asian Survey, Vol. XIV, June 1974, pp. 509-529

95. Bangkok Post, April 30, 1973

96. Race, op.cit., p. 195

97. Ibid., p. 197

98. Ibid., pp. 198-199

99. Ibid., pp. 199-200

100. Neher, op.cit., p. 100

101. Frank C. Darling, "Thailand in 1976: Another Defeat for Constitutional Democracy," <u>Asian Survey</u>, Vol. XVII, No. 2, February, 1977, pp. 117-119

102. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 121-123

103. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 127

104. Sanchai Buntrigswat, <u>Thailand: The Dual Threats to Stability in A Study of Communist Insurgency and Problem of Political Development</u>, (Bangkok, Borpit Co., 1982), pp. 12-13

105. Arthur S. Banks (ed.), <u>Political Handbook of the World 1980</u>, (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1980), p. 445

106. <u>Siam Mai</u>, 29, May, 1982, pp. 12-12

107. The coup attempt filled the papers for months, see <u>Bangkok Post</u>, April 1-12, 1981. A summary is contained in the April 12, 1981 issue.

Chapter 3

Thailand's Political Institutionalization:

An Evolutionary Perspective

3.1 Definition

One aspect of the political development of modern societies is the process of incorporation of the local community into the larger society. This process of political change has taken place when developing areas become tied more closely to the rest of society through the establishment of new and comprehensive political and administrative relations. The political changes that take place represent an extensive phenomenon which is connected to the concept of institutionalization.[1] The level of the institutionalization of any political system can be defined by the adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence of its organizations and procedure.[2]

In this particular study, we use the term "political institutionalization" consists of three elements:[4] (1) the establishment of formal political structures and authority; (2) the specific political roles of the administration; and (3) the political relationships within the society. For the first element, formal political structure, we refer to characteristics of the political system

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as seen by the emergence of viable political organizations within the society. The second element includes more specifically the character of authority and roles the authorities formally perform. The last element, the political relationships within the society, refers to the relationship between various institutions of the system.

3.2 Political Institutionalization in the Thai context

Since the founding of Sukhothai kingdom, Thailand has had a political system with pyramidal structure uniting the three symbolic elements representing the nation, the religion and the king. At the top of the pyramid was the king, who had absolute power, and his group of privy councilors. The king combined all government functions in his own person. The royal policies trickled down to the people who formed the pyramid's base.[5]

As the country modernized and the population increased, the king found it impossible to manage the nation's affairs alone. Accordingly, King Ramathibodi, the founder of Ayuthaya kingdom, created a system of <u>Chatu-Sdom</u> or four-ministry areas: <u>Wieng</u>, to oversee public order; <u>Wang</u>, to handle palace affairs and the administration of justice; <u>Klang</u>, to collect revenues and supervise royal property; and <u>Na</u>, to oversee agriculture, food supply and land tenure.[6]

The <u>Chatu-Sdom</u> system survived with little change

until the 1890s, when King Chulalongkorn introduced

western style "functional ministries" known as the "Chakri

administrative reform." The ministries consisted primarily

of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Interior, Local Government,

Royal Household, Finance, Agriculture, Justice, Education,

and Public Works.[7]

King Chulalongkorn's arrangement of functional minis-

tries has been slightly changed over time. The 1932 tran-

sition from absolute to constitutional monarchy brought

only few alterations. The Office of the Prime Minister and

some other ministries were created in accordance with the

new circumstances. However, the pyramidal structure

remained. Two factors have contributed to the pyramid's

solidity over the centuries: (1) the monarchy and the

Buddhism that cement the nation together throughout Thai

history; and, (2) the villages that form the pyramid's

base.[8] Despite increasing industrialization and urbaniza-

tion, some 35 million people still live in the villages

where democracy is practiced in its purest form. The

influence of these self-governed agricultural communities

reaches up through districts, provinces and ministries to

the upper levels of government.

The administrative system of Thailand today has been

divided into 73 provinces or Chanqwad.[9] The Chanqwad are

subdivided into 576 districts (Amphoe) and 80 sub-

districts (King Amphoe), 5317 communes (Tambon), and

49,841 villages (Moobans). After the 1932 revolution,

local legislative and executive bodies with limited powers

were established with functions, procedure and methods of

election closely resembling that of the National

Assembly.[10] The relationship of this administrative system

and the political structure can be depicted by Chart 3.1.

The government official of the village level is Poo

Yai Ban, literally, the elder man of the village who is

elected to be responsible for social harmony and local

government. At commune level, a Kamnan, who is appointed

by vote of the village headmen, forms essential links

between the village and the district officer or Nai

Amphoe, who is the Kamnan's immediate superior. The

district officers, are rural administrators. The district

officer is directly responsible to his provincial governor

or Poowa Rachakarn Changwad. These governors are generally

career civil servants appointed by the king on the recom-

mendation of the Interior Ministry which holds the power

to transfer, remove or punish them.[11]

Chart 3.1

The Relationship between the

Administrative System and Political Structure in Thailand

```
                        King
                     -------
                    Executive
                  Legislative
                 Judicial bodies
                -----------------
                    Ministries
               ---------------------

            Changwad (Provinces)

          -------------------------------

              Amphoe (Districts)
           King Amphoe (Sub Districts)

       -------------------------------------------

             Tambon (Communes)

   ------------------------------------------------------


             Moo Ban (Villages)

   ------------------------------------------------------
```
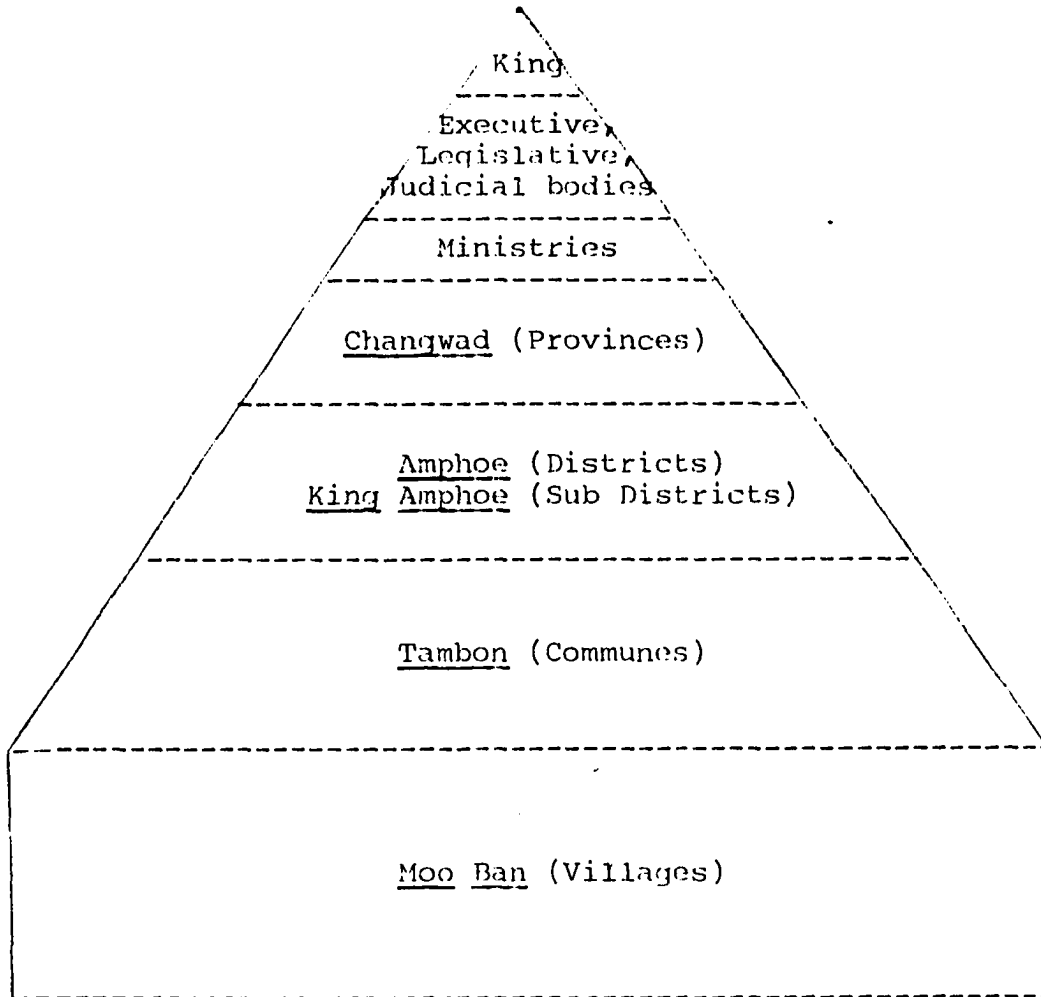
Remark: As of 1983, Thailand is divided into 73
Changwad, 576 Amphoe, 80 King Amphoe, 5317
Tambon, and 49,841 Moo Ban.

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The governor is responsible to the central government in Bangkok, more specifically the Ministry of Interior, and sees that the government policies are carried out. He supervises the operations of every government agency that functions within his jurisdiction. Thus the provincial governor is the vital link between the central government and the rural populace.

Ministries are the next step up the pyramid of power. Ministries are headed by ministers who comprise a cabinet. The cabinet is headed by the Prime Minister who holds responsibility in all matters of the nation.

The Office of the Prime Minister

The Prime Minister discharges his duties through various ministries and bureaus. The Office of the Prime Minister acts as a coordinating agency among the ministries. The Office of the Prime Minister is headed by the Secretary-General, who is a political appointee, and also a cabinet member. Thus this office is regarded as a ministry. Since it is largely concerned with formulating national policy, the Office of the Prime Minister is the vital center of the Thai government.

Since its establishment in 1933, the character of the office has changed. From 1958, the development of the Office of the Prime Minister has been in response to the growing complexity of the state and the increased power

and responsibility of the Prime Minister. To carry out his tremendous responsibilities, the Prime Minister receives help from a growing body of personnel and from several other agencies within his own office.[12]

During the Pibul government, the post of Deputy Prime Minister was created. The Minister attached to the Office of the Prime Minister (formerly Minister without port- folio) and a number of personal advisors and special staff assistants are the personal staff members of the Prime Minister. Many agencies in the Prime Minister's Office help the Prime Minister discharge his responsibility for coordinating policies and administrative activities within the government. Some of these agencies render administra- tive staff services to the Prime Minister; others perform policy planning functions and collect information for the Prime Minister; and still others carry out investigating and supervising duties.[13]

Since the purpose of this research is to study the Prime Minister, we will summarize some of these agencies' major tasks in serving the Prime Minister.[14] (1) The Office of the Under-Secretary performs staff functions including drafting regulations and collecting certain types of information. (2) The Office of the Secretary- General of the cabinet performs the essential secretariat functions connected with the work of the cabinet. (3) The Office of the Government House provides secretarial

services for the Prime Minister. (4) The Executive Office
of the Prime Minister facilitates the work of the policy
staffs and advisory groups which work directly upon the
assignments of concern to the chief executive. (5) The
Juridical Council Office furnishes technical staff assis-
tance in relation to bill drafting and related matters.
This office performs quite independent of the Justice
Ministry which administers laws after they are promul-
gated. (6) The Public Relations Department handles the
technical and administrative work of public relations. (7)
The Bureau of the Budget, which prepares a preliminary
national budget, serves as a chief instrument of coordina-
tion and control for the Prime Minister. (8) The National
Economic Development Board signifies the effort to
strengthen the economic planning apparatus of the nation's
chief executive. This Board lays out longer term develop-
ment planning, exclusively the so-called five-year plan.[15]
(9)The National Security Council coordinates policies
concerning the security of the country. (10) The National
Education Council also serves to coordinate government
policy, but coordinates policies and programs in higher
education. (11) The General Intelligence Department
provides the Prime Minister with intelligence information.
(12) The National Research Council was set up with the
responsibility for providing the Prime Minister with
useful information in various areas and for stimulating

and coordinating research activities in general. (13) The National Statistical Office collects and compiles statistics for the government. (14) The Board of Tax Supervision serves as an investigating agency in the field of tax collection. (15) The Board of Export Promotion supervises and promotes export activities. (16) The National Audit Council is responsible for post-auditing the account of government agencies. (17) The Civil Service Commission serves as the national central personal agency. (18) The Board of Investment provides incentives for investment. (19) The Technical and Economic Cooperation Department coordinates and supervises the related matters. (20) The Office of the National Education Commission supervises the national education. (21) The Government House Printing Office provides printing facilities for the governmental agencies.

To summarize, it can be said that the Office of the Prime Minister is designed to increase the power and effectiveness of the Prime Minister and to establish a basis for improved coordination of policies and administrative activities within the government.

The Ministries

Apart of the Office of the Prime Minister, there are other ministries. Since the 1932 revolution, the number of ministries varied between nine to thirteen ministries. By 1983, there were thirteen ministerial portfolios:

Education, Interior, Agriculture and Cooperatives, Communication, Commerce, Defense, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Industry, Justice, Public Health, Science and Technology and Energy, and the State University Bureau.[16]

Each ministry is headed by a political appointee or the minister who is answerable to the cabinet, of which he is automatically a member. He may also have one or two deputy ministers and at least one secretary, all of whom are considered cabinet appointees and can be removed from office as the government changes.

The permanent head of a ministry is the under-secretary who has administrative control over the departments, each of which is headed by a director-general who is also a career civil servant. Large departments are often split into divisions which may be subdivided into sections. The section is the lowest ministerial administrative unit.[17]

Some ministries are usually regarded as more desirable than others because of their direct bearing on power and economic rewards. Two of the more coveted are defense and interior, the latter being responsible for police and provincial administration. In recent years, as the share of resources allocated to the economic sector increased steadily, control of such portfolios as finance, industry, agriculture, and communications has taken on importance.[18]

Since this study is to compare Prime Ministers, it is

necessary to describe the structure of the membership of the cabinet. It might reveal some interesting features of Thai cabinet politics headed by the Prime Minister.

During the fifty years of Thailand's democratic system, there is overwhelming evidence that most Thai cabinet members are either government officials at the time of appointment or had been officials in civilian or military services. Among bureaucrats, military personnel played a great part in the political process. Numerically, the military officials also exceeded the non-military ones in ministerial posts. Though the numbers of the Prime Ministers are equally distributed between the military and the civilian, the military regime stayed in power five times longer than the civilian one.[19]

Most of the Thai constitutions (including the present one) state that the cabinet is composed of a Prime Minister and a number of ministers vested with power to administer the country.[20] As the provision does not rule that one minister has more authority than others, it is clear that the cabinet as a collective is responsible for the administration. Although the Prime Minister is the final decision-maker, the system is apparently closer to the British system than the presidential system in which the President is solely responsible for the executive branch.

Moreover, most constitutions also include an article

stating that the cabinet must carry out the administration of the country with the confidence of the parliament. Thus, the minister is not only responsible for the administration of his particular ministry, but also collectively responsible for the general policy of the government. The cabinet as a whole must resign if the National Assembly passes a vote of no confidence, or when tenure of office of the Prime Minister ends, or when the Prime Minister resigns. However, it is an acceptable rule that a vote of no confidence on any individual minister or ministers actually does not affect the entire cabinet.

Authority of the Cabinet

In general, the cabinet has the authority to lay down general policy of the administration and to administer the policies as declared to the parliament. The cabinet must co-ordinate the work of all units of government, set up general regulations for all units, and consider and decide whatever problems the ministers or any units of government bring to its attention. The cabinet's authority vested by law is divided into two categories, those powers specified in the constitution and those powers given to the cabinet by other laws. The powers derived from the constitution have been mentioned above; therefore, only the detail of powers vested by other laws will be discussed.

Since 1932, a large number of laws have been enacted.

A number contain sections which in one way or another have given some-power to the cabinet collectively to administer them. In a study, it was found that at least 68 laws have vested some power in the cabinet. While it would be too extensive to list all those laws and their provisions here, some of the authority the cabinet has been given in those laws are as follows:[21]

(1) to appoint, approve, consent and propose appointments of committees, governors of boards, secretaries-general of various units of government including dismissals and demotions; (2) to approve appointments of comittees, governors involving government officials; (3) to determine, approve and consent to matters concerning benefits to committee members, governors, directors, including bonuses and rewards to administrators and workers; (4) to consent to important undertakings concerning construction, abolition of projects, increase or decrease investment, loan, etc.; (5) to consider auditing and financial reports, and consent to capital budget and operation budget; (6) to consent to allotment of national funds for rural development and plantation support; (7) to consent to the arrangement for distribution of annual net profits, payment of welfare funds, and custody of money; (8) to approve of promotions, transfers, return to government service, salary increase of all special grade officials and police officials tothe rank of general; (9) to approve

promotions, salary increases, requests for decorations for officials who lose their lives on duty, and other matters concerning officials; (10) to designate a minister to act as acting Prime Minister or minister, and approve of appointments and demotions of political officials below the ministerial ranks; (11) to approve of extension of service beyond retirement age, or extension of terms of office of governors; (12) to give out special approvals concerning land concession beyond 20 years, land buying of foreigners beyond legal limits, and allowing the Director-General of the Custom Department to refund part of the import duties to the tax-payers; (13) to propose an annual appropriation bill and special appropriation bills to the National Assembly; (14) to refer economic matters to the National Economic Development board for consideration before final decision of the cabinet; and, (15) to approve the deployment of armed forces according to the plan for defense of the kingdom, referring national security matters to the National Security Council and consider its proposals.

Besides these powers, there are many instances in which the cabinet has to decide on such matters that must be presented to it for consideration or approval. In these instances, the cabinet may issue two types of orders: first, matters that the cabinet have specified as requiring its definite approval every time; and second,

matters that the cabinet may decide to have brought to its
attention occasionally.[22]

However, as we have mentioned before, these authori-
ties, are vested in the cabinet as a collective responsi-
bility. Traditionally, only the Prime Minister has the
right to decide the final judgement as a matter of his own
preference. In other words, the stated authorities of the
cabinet have shown the true power of the Prime Minister as
the national top decision-maker with all political respon-
sibility for the entire state. The comparison of the
characteristics of Prime Ministers in the next chapter
places stress on this point.

The Constitution

Political institutions in Thailand have changed from
civilian to military regimes and vice versa since the 1932
revolution. A number of coups have been staged by groups
of military officers during the past decades; as it has
been often declared, the coup was the beginning of true
democracy for the country. But true democracy has not yet
existed or, even if it exists, it is far from the meaning
described in the western terminology.

The tranformation of the Thai governmental system
from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy on
June 24, 1932, was an abrupt one. The revolution of 1932
was planned and executed by a small number of civilian and
military officials of the government themselves. However,

planning a democratic regime was somewhat more difficult and perhaps had not been planned for in advance. It is apparent from the present perspective that the promoters of the coup had no definite plan for the new regime.

During the first five months of the revolution, the country was run by a provisional constitution which provided for a People's Committee and an appointed assembly.[23] The People's Committee acted collectively as the executive branch. Members of the committee did not formally take charge of ministries as in a cabinet system, though each of them was assigned a specific area of responsibility.

Under the provisional constitution of 1932, an executive branch quite similar to the British system emerged but with a difference in that the Thai executive branch was not actually accountable to parliamentary control because of the lack of political parties. The People's Party dominated both the legislature and the executive branches, though the first Prime Minister and a few ministers were not members of the People's Party.

The creation of appointed members to the National Assembly as another category of members, came right after the revolution. Members of Parliament were, therefore, half elected and half appointed. It was planned that this tutelage period would be over in ten years or when half of the electorate were literate, which ever came first.[24]

Since then the Thai parliament has always been composed of about half elected and half appointed members in a single house, or an elected lower house and an appointed upper house. Though the parliament could sometimes threaten the position of the cabinet, it was the cabinet or the Prime Minister who held real power.[25]

Since the revolution of 1932, there have been fourteen constitutions. It has been stated in all Thai constitutions that "sovereignty belongs to the people and is exercised by the king under the provisions of this constitution." Most constitutions also prescribe that the king uses executive power through the cabinet, the legislative power through the parliament, and the judicial power through the courts.

Although the power to interpret the constitution is vested in the parliament as a tool to check and balance the executive branch, it is far from the western model. Because of the frequent changes of the constitutions, most governments in reality have dominated the Assembly's members effectively from the beginning of the democratic regime. There were two attempts to check the executive power in the short-lived constitutions of 1949 and 1952 by vesting the power to interpret the constitution in a constitutional Tribunal composed of top law makers, jurists and attorneys. But these measures were not effective because the tribunal's power was restricted to only

non-parliamentary matters.[26]

In order to show the pattern of Thailand political institutions, Table 3.1 lists the constitutions that were promulgated, the date of general elections, and the percentage of citizens who voted. The table also indicates the appointed or elected members of the National Assembly in accordance with the constitution, including whether or not the political parties were permitted at that time.

Even though the relationship between the three powers was not clear, most Thai constitutions since 1932 have accepted certain democratic features such as the separation of the three powers, the relative independence of the judicial branch, the provision for rights and duties of citizens, and the requirement that the cabinet describe its general policy to the parliament for a vote of confidence. This last provision, though without providing for a viable party system, brings the Thai cabinet system closer to the British model.

Table 3.1

Patterns of Thailand's Political Institutionalization

Prime Minis- ter	Constitution	Elections	% of Vote	Assembly Members Appointed	Assembly Members Elected	Pol. Party
Mano	Jun 1932 (pv)	–	–	x	–	–
	Dec 1932	–	–	x	–	x
Pahol	Dec 1932	Nov 1933	41.5	x	x	x
		Nov 1937	40.2			
Pibul		Nov 1938	35.0			
Khuang	Dec 1932	Jan 1946	32.5	x	x	x
	May 1946	Aug 1946	34.9	–	x	x
	Nov 1947 (pv)	Jan 1948	26.5	–	x	x
Pibul	Mar 1949	Jun 1949	24.7	–	x	x
	Dec 1932 as	Feb 1952	38.8	x	x	x
	amended 1952	Feb 1957	57.5			
Sarit	Jan 1959 (pv)	–	–	x	–	–
Thanom	Jun 1968	Feb 1969	49.0	–	x	x
	Dec 1972 (pv)	–	–	x	–	–
Sanya	Oct.1974	Jan 1975	47.2	–	x	x
Kukrit	Oct.1974	Apr 1976	40.1	–	x	x
Thanin	Oct.1976	–	–	x	–	–
Krieng- sak	Nov 1977 (pv)	–	–	x	–	–
	Dec 1978	Apr 1979	24.4	x	x	x
Prem	Jun 1983	Apr 1983	n.a.	x	x	x

Remark: 1. This table shows only the Prime Ministers at the time constitutions were promulgated or elections were held.
2. x = yes
3. pv = provisional constitution
4. % of vote = % of voters out of total eligible
5. n.a. = not available

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6. constitution absence (after coups) during
   (1) Nov 29,1951 - Mar 8,1952
   (2) Oct 20,1958 - Jan 28,1959
   (3) Oct 20 - Nov 11, 1977.

Source: 1. Chaianan Samutavanich (ed.), Karn muang-karn pok krong kong thai samai mai, (Modern Thai Politics and Governments), Thammasat University Press, 1979, p. 513

2. Chaianan Samutavanich, Karn luak tang, pak karn muang, rata sapa, lae kana taharn, (Elections, Political Party, Assembly, and Military Groups), Bangkok, Brunakich, 1981.

3. Frederica M. Bunge, Thailand: A Country Study, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981, p. 191

3.3 Prime Minister as an Institution

In the first 25 years of constitutional government, the Prime Minister possessed relatively limited independent power and was dependent mostly on the support of key ministers for his plans and policies. But from 1958 (Sarit's regime), the Prime Minister's role gradually was increased.[27]

Today, the Prime Minister is the strongest figure in the government. He has played the dominant role in running the country. According to the Thai culture, the Prime Minister is being seen as a protective father-like leader. Thus he is expected to deal effectively with national problems, and is the acknowledged head of government.[28]

Politically, the Prime Minister is the most influential. He holds the ultimate power of appointment, review, enforcement and investigation. The Prime Minister counter-

signs royal decrees and exercises a wide rage of powers,

including the power to take necessary action in case of

"an emergency when there is an urgent necessity to

maintain national or public safety or national economic

security or to avert public calamity." However, his

actions will be considered as legitimate when he submits

appropriate emergency decrees to the National Assembly

"without delay."[29] The Prime Minister may declare martial

law or lift it; declare war with the consent of the

National Assembly; conclude a peace treaty, an armistice,

and other treaties. These powers, though vested in the

Prime Minister, are subject to cabinet approval and must

be declared under the king's name.

The cabinet consists of ministers who are indivi-

dually and collectively accountable to the National

Assembly. Since the Prime Minister is the chairman of the

cabinet, the cabinet must resign if the Prime Minister

resigns or receives a vote of no-confidence by the

National Assembly. According to Thai political tradition,

the Prime Minister need not be the leader of the majority

or coalition in the elected house. He may be selected from

the minority party or he may be from outside the

Assembly.[30]

Most of the time the Prime Minister's office has been

held by the military leader of a given coup group. This

practice grew out of the general belief that civilian

party leaders have proven unstable and that the military

control of the premiership was essential to the mainte-

nance of stability. Most of the constitutions have stated

that, "the President of the National Assembly shall

countersign the Royal Command appointing the Prime

Minister." This means that any time the National Assembly

has to select the Prime Minister, it is the president of

the military-dominated Senate who submits the assembly's

choice to the king for pro forma consent.[31]

In order to compare the political performance of the

civilian and military Prime Ministers, we will examine the

political institutions in the Thai context of political

events, executive bodies, constitutions, coups d'etat,

elections, and the National Assemblies as legislative

bodies. Since Thailand has had forty four governments, it

is impossible to analyze fully the performance of each

government at a micro level. The best approach should

begin with the division of.regimes into civilian and

military as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Categories and Periods of the Thai governments from

1932-1983

Period	Regime	Prime Minister	Time in Office (Years)	Regime's Duration (Years)
1932-33	Civilian I.	Praya Mano	.98	.98
1933-44	Military I.	Praya Pahol	4.67	10.27
		Pibul I.	5.60	
1944-48	Civilian II.	Khuang	1.55	3.61
		Tawee	.05	
		Seni	.38	
		Pridi	.42	
		Thamrong	1.21	
1948-73	Military II.	Pibul II.	9.50	25.35
		Sarit	4.92	
		Pote *	.26	
		Thanom	10.67	
1973-77	Civilian III.	Sanya	1.42	3.81
		Seni II.	.52	
		Kukrit	.83	
		Thanin	1.04	
1977-83	Military III.	Kriangsak	1.46	6.21
		Prem	4.75 **	

remark: * Pote is excluded from Military II.
        ** Prem is still Prime Minister at the time of
           writing

Source: adapted from Prasert Patamasukont, Ratha Sapa Thai
        nai rob si sip pee (2475-2517) (Thai National
        Assembly in Forty Two Years (1932-1974), Bangkok,
        Chum Noom Karn Chang, 1974

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Table 3.2 is an overview of the categories and
periods of Thai governments from 1932 to 1983. In this
table we have broadly divided the sixteen Thai Prime
Ministers into six categories consisting of three civilian
and three military regimes. These regimes are numbered in
sequence to the period they held. The name of each Prime
Minister has been shown in each period with his tenure in
office as calculated in years. In fact, some Prime
Ministers were in office more than once. If he had been
Prime Minister for the second time or more, but belonged
to the same regime, we add times and express it as a
single figure.

There were two Prime Ministers who had been in office
for the second time in different regimes. We count them in
both of the regimes and put a number of I and II after his
name. The duration of each regime is also shown in the
last column to the right. This duration reflects the total
time in office of all Prime Ministers in each regime.

Description of Regimes

The first regime belongs to the civilians because
Praya Mano was the civilian Prime Minister though he had
been chosen by the People's Party which represented the
1932 coup group. The duration of the first regime is
approximately 1 year (June 28, 1932 - June 20 1933). Praya
Mano became the first Prime Minister of Thailand by direct

appointment of the People's Party.

The first military regime began when Praya Pahol led the military coup against Praya Mano's government on June 20, 1933. Then Praya Pahol became Prime Minister (June 25, 1933 - September 11, 1938) by the appointment of the coup group. After Praya Pahol resigned, he recommended Colonel Pibul, his defense minister to be his successor. As a result Pibul became Prime Minister (December 16, 1938 - July 24, 1944). When he resigned during a political crisis, a civilian government took over the office.

Prime Minister Khuang (August 1, 1944 - August 20, 1945) led his government and started the second civilian regime. When his government announced the nullification of the Pibul's declaration of war on August 16, 1945, Khuang resigned. There were four civilian governments after his resignation. Tawee became Prime Minister for a provisional government of only 17 days (September 1-16, 1945). Then Seni, the Free Thai Movement' leader in the United States was called to be Prime Minister (September 17, 1945 - January 30, 1946). Seni resigned after he signed the peace treaty with Great Britain and made an arrangement for general election. The Democratic Party won a majority seat in the National Assembly. Khuang, the party leader became Prime Minister (January 31 - March 24, 1946). Khuang resigned when he lost in the Assembly. Pridi took over the office (March 24 - August 23, 1946). During this

period Pridi changed his government three times. Upon his resignation, Rear Admiral Thamrong, the former Pridi's Minister of Justice, was selected by the National Assembly to become Prime Minister (August 23, 1946 - November 8, 1947). His government lasted when a group of military officers staged a coup against Thamrong on November 8, 1947.

After the coup, Khuang was called by the coup leaders to become Prime Minister again (November 10, 1947 - February 6, 1948). Though Khuang was appointed by the coup group, we include his government in the second civilian regime because his government was provisional while waiting for the general elections. After the February elections, Khuang was re-elected and became Prime Minister again (February 21 - April 8, 1948). This time Khuang was ousted by another coup.

Pibul came to the office again after the coup of April 1948. We identify this government as Pibul II (April 8, 1948 - September 16, 1957) and it marked the beginning of the second military regime. Pibul had been in power for almost ten years until he was ousted by Sarit's coup on September 16, 1957. Although after the coup Sarit appointed Pote Sarasin Prime Minister (September 21 - December 26, 1957) but only for heading a provisional government to arrange the general elections. We exclude Pote's government from many of the analyses because his

period was short and in between the second military regime. After the elections, the second military regime continued when Thanom became Prime Minister for the first time (January 1 - October 20, 1958). We include Thanom in this regime because, while in the office, he also held a military position. Then Sarit took over the government by coup with consent of Thanom on October 20, 1958.

This time Sarit formed a military junta which he headed. He governed the country from October 20, 1958 - February 6, 1959. After the provisional constitution had been promulgated, Sarit became Prime Minister (February 6, 1959 - December 8, 1963). Upon Sarit's death, Thanom succeeded him for almost ten years (December 9, 1963 - October 14, 1973). With the students' uprising in October 1973, Thanom resigned and the second military regime ended.

Following Thanom's resignation, the third civilian regime emerged with four Prime Ministers: Sanya (October 14, 1973 - February 15, 1975), Seni II (February 15 - March 14, 1975 and April 20 - October 6, 1976), Kukrit (March 27, 1975 - April 4, 1976) and Thanin (October 8, 1976 - October 20, 1977). Though Thanin was appointed by the October 1976 coup group, he was given autonomy to run the country under the constitution of 1976 without military intervention. So Thanin is counted as a civilian government during his period.

A military coup ousted Thanin on October 20, 1977 and ended the third civilian regime. The third military regime began with Kriangsak who was appointed Prime Minister by the coup group (November 11, 1977 - March 30, 1979). Upon Kriangsak's resignation, Prem became Prime Minister and he still is.

For more understanding of the Thai Prime Ministers of both civilian and military regimes. Table 3.3 provides information concerning the patterns of entry and exit to and from the political arena.

Table 3.3

Thai Prime Ministers'
Pattern of Entry and Exit

Regime	Pattern of Entry			Pattern of Exit				
	Coup	Assembly Appointed	Other	Coup	Resign	Dis- solve Assembly	Elec- tion	Other
Civ.I	1	2	-	1	-	1	1	-
Civ.II	-	10	1	1	7	-	2	1
Civ.III	-	5	2	2	2	1	1	1
Total	1*	17	3	4	9	2	4	2
Mil.I	1	6	-	-	4	1	2	-
Mil.II	5**	7	1	3	1	-	4	4
Mil.III	2***	2	-	-	-	1	1	-
Total	8	15	1	3	5	2	7	4

Remark: * the first coup staged by the People's Party
consisted of both civilian and military
** included the coup staged in November, 1947.
*** included the coup staged in October, 1976.

Source: 1. Prasert Patamasukont, Rata sapa thai nai rob si
sip pee (2475-2517) (Thai National Assembly in
Forty Years (1932-1974), (Bangkok, Chum Noom
Karn Chang, 1974.)

2. Bancha Keokettong, Colonel, 36 Ratabal nai
rabob prachathipatai kong thai, (36 Governments
in Democratic System of Thailand), (Bangkok,
Roong Raung Tam, 1976.)

3.4 Political Characteristics of the Regimes

In order to look closely at the characteristics of these regimes, Table 3.4 offers more specific data in describing the civilian or military regimes. As indicated in Table 3.2, the duration of regime reflects the total . time in office of all Prime Ministers in each regime.

In table 3.4, the number of changes in cabinet represents the number of times that each Prime Minister came to the office in each regime no matter how he entered or exited the premiership. The average change per year is the frequency of the cabinet reshuffle in a year. It is calculated by dividing the number of changes in cabinet by the duration of regime. The average military in the cabinet (per cent) is the mean percentage of the active or retire military officials who composed every Prime Minister's cabinet in one regime. Since this study is interested in the military corporate interests, the percentage of the civilian ministers is not calculated.

The next table is the continuation of table 3.4. The number of coups represents the actual coups that took place, but not the abortive ones. The first coup is assigned to the first civilian regime since the coup had been staged by a combination group of civilian and military personnel or the "People's Party," but the actual first executive was Praya Mano who was a civilian retired judge. All other coups belonged to the military since they

Table 3.4

Political characteristics of the Thai civilian and military regimes

Regime	Period	Duration of Regime (years)	No. of Change in Cabinet	Average Change Per Year	Avg.Military in Cabinet (Per Cent)
Civ.I	1932-33	1.0	3	3.00	41.00
Civ.II	1944-48	3.6	11	3.05	16.02
Civ.III	1973-77	3.8	7	1.89	19.03
Total		8.4	21	7.94	76.05
Mean	-	2.8	7	2.65	25.35
					N = 157**
Mil.I	1933-44	10.3	7	.65	54.75
Mil.II	1948-73	25.1*	11	.44	41.43
Mil.III	1977-83	6.2	3	.48	31.47
Total	-	41.6	21	1.57	127.65
Mean	-	13.9	7	.52	42.55
					N = 283**

Remark: * Pote's government is excluded.
** N = number of the military cabinet members.

Table 3.4 (continued)

Political Characteristics of the Thai Civilian and

Military Regimes

Regime	Number of Coups	Constitution (Number)		Assembly Members (Years in Office)		Avg. % of military in assembly
		Provision	Actual	Appointed	Elected	
Civ.I	1	1	1	.9	.5	20.00
Civ.II	-	-	1	2.5	3.5	n.a.
Civ.III	-	-	2	3.5	2.3	8.36
Total	1	1	4	6.9	6.3	28.36*
Mean	-	-	-	2.3	2.1	14.18
						N = 376**
Mil.I	1	-	1	11.0	11.0	61.54
Mil.II	5	5	3	23.5	11.3	67.93
Mil.III	2	1	1	6.1	.5***	57.06
Total	8	4	4	40.6	22.8	186.53
Mean	-	-	-	13.5	7.6	62.18
						N = 1306**

Remark: * calculate only the existing numbers.
 ** N = number of the military members in the assembly.
 *** the present assembly.

Source: adapted from details in:
1. Bancha Keokettong, Colonel,36 rataban nai rabob pracha thipatai kong thai (Thirty six governments in Democracy System of Thailand), Bangkok, Rung Raung Tham, 1977
2. Chaianan Samutawanich, Karn luak tang, pak karn muang, rata sapa lae kana taharn. (Elections, Political Parties, Parliament, and Military Groups), Bangkok, Brunakich, 1981.
3. Boonchai Chaiyen, Taharn Maha Sedthi (The Millionaire Soldiers), Bangkok, O.S.Printing House, 1982

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staged the coups and took over the governments by them-
selves. The next item concerns the division of constitu-
tions into two categories:[32] the provisional constitution
and the actual constitution. It should be noted that some
constitutions had been used continuously in more than one
regime. For example, the constitution of December 1932 had
been used by both the first civilian and the first mili-
tary regimes.

Next we look into the structure of the Thai parlia-
mentary system. Usually the system depends on the provi-
sion of the constitution. Some Constitutions provide for
one house (such as the constitutions of 1932 and 1952, and
all provisional constitutions except 1947). Some constitu-
tions provide for two houses: House of Representatives and
House of Senate such as the constitution of 1946, 1949,
1968, 1974 and the provisional constitution of 1947.
Members of National Assembly are also divided into two
categories: the appointed and the elected. The members are
also based on the provision of the constitutions. In
certain regimes, mostly military, all members are
appointed, such as the constitution of 1976 and the provi-
sional constitution of 1932, 1959,, 1972, and 1977.[33]

Tenure in office of the Assembly members is calcu-
lated by summing up the actual period of each category in
each regime. The average mean of military officers in the
Assembly is also included. The data of percentage depend

on evidence from the source literatures. Since all
appointed members of the Thai National Assembly have been
the direct product of the executive's appointment, parti-
cularly the military regimes, we assume that the data are
accurate.

Based upon these tables, we can establish some rela-
tionships between the civilian and military regimes as
follows:

(1) The military has been in office longer than the
civilian at an approximate ratio of 5:1.

(2) The changes in the cabinet of the civilian
regimes has occurred more frequently than the military.
Civilian changes average 2.7 times per year while the
military averages .52 times per year.

(3) The average of military personnel in the civilian
regime is less than that of the military in an approximate
ratio of 1:2. This ratio might be higher if we did not
count the first civilian regime because the first regime
was an abrupt change from absolute to constitutional
monarchy. The new government required the equal distribu-
tion of the cabinet members among those in the People's
Party consisting of both civilian and military officials.

(4) The military regimes are products of the success-
ful coups while civilian regimes came to power mostly by
democratic procedures.

(5) The military regimes have utilized the provi-

sional constitutions more than the civilian by the ratio of 6:1. This phenomenon can be explained in that all provisional constitutions provided the necessary authority for the executive body to eradicate political opponents. In other words, the provisional constitutions are the legal instruments of the military regimes that had been used to govern the country.

(6) The number of the appointed and elected members is equally distributed in the civilian regime. While the number of the appointed members of the military regimes exceeds the elected ones approximately 2:1.

(7) The percentage of the military in the National Assembly of the military regime also exceeds the civilian by a ratio of 6.5:1.

As we may see from details of the regimes, the Prime Minister, as the leader of executive body, has played the most important role in the Thai society. Other political institutions such as constitutions, legislatures, elections or political parties are of less importance, considering that the Prime Ministers assume all political roles and tremendous responsibility alone. In this context, the military Prime Ministers have played a larger part, because most came to power by coup, stayed in office longer, and assumed more responsibility than their civilian counterparts.

1. Francesso Kjellberg, <u>Political Institutionalization</u>, (London, The Pitman Press, 1975), pp. 1-2

2. S.N. Eisenstadt, "Institutionalization," in <u>International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences</u>, Vol. XIV, (New York, Macmillan and Free Press, 1968)

3. Samuel P. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay," <u>World Politics</u>, 17, 1965, p. 386

4. Kjellberg, <u>op.cit</u>, p. 4

5. Office of the Prime Minister, <u>Thailand into the 80's</u>, (Bangkok, Government House Printing Office, 1979), p. 51

6. <u>Thailand Official Yearbook 1965</u>, (Bangkok, Government House Printing Office, 1964), p. 49)

7. Thailand into the 80's, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 52

8. <u>Ibid.</u>

9. During the period of 1932 through 1970s, Thailand has 71 provinces. Two more provinces were created recently, the two provinces are <u>Payao</u> and <u>Mukdaharn</u>.

10. <u>The Stateman's Yearbook 1979-80</u>, (New York, Macmillan Press, 1979), p. 1173

11. Thailand into the 80's, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 42

12. <u>Thailand Official Yearbook 1964</u>, (Bangkok, Government House Printing Office, 1964), p. 51

13. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 52

14. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 53-57

15. At the time of writing, Thailand is at the beginning of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, 1982-1986.

16. Bunge, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 182

17. Thailand into the 80's, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 44

18. Bunge, <u>op.cit.</u>, pp. 182-183

19. We will discuss the matter further in Chapter 5.

20. The theory of collective responsibility specified in most constitutions stated that in other matters not specifically mentioned in this constitution, a decision is to be made in accordance with the tradition of Thai government under democratic system.

21. Thailand Official Yearbook, op.cit., pp. 40-41

22. Ibid.

23. See Chapter 3.

24. Art. 65 of 1932 constitution.

25. The constitutions of June 1932,1959, 1972, 1976 and 1977 provided for only appointed membership in the Constituent Assembly which also acts as a legislative body.

26. 1949 constitution in part 9, and Art. 177; 1932 constitution as amended 1952 in Part 7, and Art.112

27. According to the Administration of the Kingdom Act of 1952 which is still valid today, the Thai central administration consists of: (1) the Office of the Prime Minister; (2) ministries; and (3) departments or agencies of department status.

28. Thailand into the 80's, op.cit., p. 43

29. Frederica M. Bunge, Thailand: A Country Study, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 182

30. For examples, in 1975, Kukrit, whose party held a few seats in the National Assembly was selected Prime Minister after Seni lost in the vote of confidence, and in 1983, Prem was selected Prime Minister, though he was totally outsider. See more detail in Chapter 3.

31. This holds true in most long-lived constitutions except the constitution of 1946, 1947, 1949, 1968 and 1974 which were valid only one or two years.

32. The details of constitutions that had been in usage in each regime are shown in Table 3.1.

33. See Table 3.1

Chapter 4

Social Background and Career Pattern

of Thai Prime Ministers

In order to understand the recruitment function of the Thai political system. It is necessary to compare the socioeconomic backgrounds of all sixteen Prime Ministers since the 1932 revolution. We will conclude this chapter by summarizing the characteristics, the similarities and differences between the civilian and military Prime Ministers.

4.1 Praya Manopakorn Nithithada (1932-1933)

Praya Manopakorn was the first Prime Minister of Thailand under the constitutional monarchy. He was born in 1884 in a middle class family in Bangkok. After he had finished his law study in Thailand, he was sent by the government to continue his study in England where he received his law degree and became a barrister-at-law. He returned to Thailand during the reign of King Chulalongkorn and served as a judge in Ministry of Justice. During the reign of King Vajiravudh, he was appointed Chief Judge of Court of Appeal and Privy Councilor. His duty was to make recommendations concerning judicial problems for the king. He also taught at Law .op

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School in the Ministry of Justice.[1]

After the revolution of 1932, the coup group convened
and decided to establish the People's Committee function-
ing as an administrative body to run the new government
Although the revolution had been conducted by the People's
Party, there was no reason that only members of the
People's Party should be involved in the country's
affairs. It was felt that the new government should be run
by a qualified person who did not take part in the revolu-
tion. Since Praya Mano was a qualified outsider, he was
then invited to be President of the People's Committee or
the first Prime Minister with the People's Committee
serving as his cabinet.

Praya Mano was chosen for many reasons. First, he
represented a compromise between the new constitutional
government and the older more conservative leaders in the
old regime. Second, since he was a commoner from a middle
class family who had received government scholarship to
study law in England, it was thought he would be in favor
of democratic rule. Third, Praya Mano while serving on the
Privy Council during the reign of King Prajadhipok, had
once suggested that the government should cut down the
allowances given to members of the royal family so that
more money could be spent for public works. This proposal
impressed the promoters of the revolution. Fourth,
Despite the fact that he had the king's favor because his

wife was also one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting, Praya Mano had made comments before the revolution had taken place that he did not like absolute monarchy. Fifth, the People's Party also hoped that Praya Mano's close connection to the king would enable him to be a mediator between the party and the king.[2]

During his tenure as Prime Minister, Praya Mano had an argument with Pridi, the coup promoter who proposed the new economic plan. Praya Mano saw the plan as communistic. Since most members of the National Assembly agreed with the plan, Praya Mano chose to send the issue to the king for his final judgement. When the king ruled that the plan was communist, Pridi then was forced into exile. After Pridi left, Praya Manopakorn's government became increasingly dictatorial.[3] To assure that Pridi's followers' radical ideas did not disturb the peace, strict press censorship was imposed and several newspapers were closed. Anti-Communist law was promulgated making communist participation a crime punishable by ten years in prison. By the end of April, 1933, Praya Mano's faction seemed to be victorious. But shortly thereafter, Praya Mano was removed by coup d'etat.

4.2 Praya Pahol Polpayuhasena (1933-1938)

Colonel Praya Pahol, born in 1887 came from an army officer's family. His primary education began in

Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok. As number one in his class at age 16, he was sent to study at a military institution in Germany for 8 years. Upon requesting more allowance, he was called back to Thailand for his misbehavior. However, when he returned to Thailand, he was not punished by his superior. He was commissioned as second lieutenant in the army in 1914. He served in many military installations before he was raised to the rank of colonel. Pahol received his royal name of Praya in 1931 one year before the revolution.[4]

Praya Pahol led the coup d'etat of 1932 while he was a deputy army inspector. Although he succeeded, it was very risky, because he had few troops to execute the coup. He was selected to be a member of the People's Committee and served as Minister in Praya Mano's cabinet. On June 18, 1933, after Praya Mano forced Pridi into exile, Praya Pahol resigned from his post. Two days later, he staged a coup against Praya Mano's government. Then he assumed the office as Prime Minister for the next five years.

Praya Pahol had gone through political difficulties many times during his five times in the office. Four month after his first inauguration there was a rebellion led by Prince Boworadej. After the government's victory over the rebel troops, King Prajadhipok abdicated on March 2, 1934. Soon Praya Pahol was defeated in the National Assembly on the issue of the sale of crown property. The last time he

dissolved the Assembly, he proposed his most trusted man, Colonel Pibul Songkhram, as the next Prime Minister.[5]

4.3 Field Marshal Pibul Songkhram

(I. 1939-1944, II. 1948-1957)

Field Marshal Pibul Songkhram was born in 1898 in Nontaburi province near Bangkok. His father was a rich fruit gardener. Pibul graduated from Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in 1914 and was commissioned second lieutenant in the artillery corps. After he had finished his study at the Army Staff College, he was selected to go for military training in Paris where he met Pridi Bhanomyong, Khuang Abhaiwongs, and some other 1932 coup promoters. Upon his return to Thailand, he joined the coup group and took part in the 1932 coup.[6]

Pibul's rise through the military hierarchy was wholely the result of his own efforts. He was a good looking man. His popularity and prestige was further increased by the European military training. In 1933, he was assigned to be the commander of the government force to counter the rebellion of Prince Boworadej. He successfully drove the rebels to complete surrender within two weeks. Pibul was an extremely ambitious and highly motivated individual. He wanted to modernize the country as he had seen in Europe. But at that time he was influenced by militarism in Germany, Italy, and Japan. Pibul felt the constitutional method was weak and only authoritarian

government based on military strength was the most effi-
cient way to achieve progress in Thailand.[7]

During his first rule in 1939, he consolidated his

power by jailing or executing all of the opponents. Though

the constitution remained, he appointed his military

officers to the National Assembly. By 1940, Pibul was in

complete control of the government.[8] Consequently, he

launched a program destined to arouse a strong nationalist

spirit. Much stress was placed on military virtues to

remind people of the significance of the military in

defending the nation. Pibul's miliarism resulted in his

cooperation with the Japanese during World War II.[9]

In 1944, Pibul introduced a bill to the National

Assembly asking for approval of the emergency decree

enacted by the government on the creation of the new

capital city of Petchaboon and Budhaburi Monthon. Most

members of the Assembly voted against the bill. Pibul then

was obliged to resign and end his first office.[10]

After the military coup in 1948, Pibul became Prime

Minister for the second time. In contrast to his first

period of rule, this time he placed greater emphasis on

the democratic process. He lifted press censorship and

allowed open political criticism of his government. He

even declared that military and police interference in

politics was "undemocratic."[11] It might have been that his

own ideology changed drastically during his three month

tour to Europe and the United States in 1955 or that he
sought to weaken the power of the police and military
leaders in his own cabinet. Pibul was ousted by a military
coup in 1957. He escaped the coup and died in Japan in
1963.

4.4 Khuang Abhaiwongs

(I. 1944-1945, II. 1946, III. 1947-1948)

Khuang was born in 1902 to a noble family. His father
was a prince governor of Pratabong Province in Cambodia.
That province belonged to Thailand before it was ceded to
France during the absolute monarchy. After his secondary
education in Thailand he was sent to France where he met
the other coup promoters. Khuang received his bachelor
degree in civil engineering. When he came back to Thailand
he joined the People's Party coup against absolute
monarchy in 1932. After the coup he established the
"Democratic Party" and became the party leader.[12]

Khuang was a member of the National Assembly by the
time of Pibul's downfall in the political crisis of 1944.
When Pibul resigned in August, Khuang was nominated as
Prime Minister candidate and won the vote in the Assembly.
When World War II was over, Khuang's government announced
the nullification of the Pibul's declaration of war
against Great Britain and the United States. Since the
policy of his government had been altered by this nullifi-

cation, Khuang resigned.[13]

Khuang became Prime Minister for another term when the Democratic Party won the general election on January 6, 1946. This government lasted only two months and ended when the Assembly did not approve a draft bill. Khuang resigned again. Khuang's third term came after a group of military officers successfully staged the third coup d'etat against Thamrong's government in 1947. Although the coup group supported Pibul, there was a perception that Pibul might not receive international recognition if he were to became Prime Minister, so the group turned to Khuang. Khuang agreed to hold office and arranged the general elections. The Democratic Party won a majority of seats in the National Assembly, so he stayed in office for another term. This led to dissatisfaction of the military officers who supported Pibul. After two months in office, Khuang was forced to resign by a group of military officers.[14]

4.5 Tawee Bunyaketu (September 1-16, 1945)

Tawee was born in 1904, into an upper class family. His father was a high-ranking government official who held the title of Praya in the absolute regime. Tawee's education began in Thailand and continued to the secondary level. Then he was sent to France and received a bachelor degree in agriculture. He was one of the first appointed members of the National Assembly after the 1932 coup. He

was selected to be Minister of Education in Khuang's first
                  15
government:

When Khuang's government resigned due to a policy

change, Tawee was asked to lead a provisional government

because he was seen as a middle man in cooperating with

the Allies after World War II. After only 17 days in

office, Tawee resigned when Seni, the Thai ambassador to

Washington who opposed Pibul's government and led the Free

Thai Movement in America arrived from abroad. Seni became
                16   ;
Prime Minister.

4.6 Seni Pramoj (I. 1945-1946, II. 1975, III.1976)

Seni was born to a highly noble family in 1905. His

father was a relative of the king. When he finished his

secondary education in Bangkok, he was sent to Britain to

continue his education. Seni received a law degree with

honors from Oxford University. He also became a barrister-
                                          17
at-law in England in 1929.

Before World War II, Seni was appointed ambassador to

the United States. When the country was occupied by the

Japanese forces and Pibul's government declared war on

Great Britain and the United States on January 25, 1942,

Seni refused to deliver the Thai declaration of war.

Instead he claimed that the declaration of war did not

represent the will of the Thai people because the declara-

tion did not act on behalf of the National Assembly. Seni

then founded a "Free Thai Movement" or "Seri Thai" against the government in Bangkok. The Free Thais also joined Pridi, who covertly organized an anti-Japanese underground movement in the country. It provided the Allies with intelligence on Japanese activities in Southeast Asia.[18]

After the war, as Seni was well appreciated by the American people, he was the most suitable person to lead the Thai negotiations with the Allies. Seni was summoned to Bangkok by regent Pridi. Upon his arrival, he was appointed Prime Minister.[19] While in office, Seni worked toward a peace treaty with Great Britain for three months. After the treaty was signed, Seni resigned for the new general elections.

After his resignation, Seni was not reelected. The premiership changed over a few other civilian politicians. Then the military took over the office for three decades. During that period, Seni was out of politics for almost 30 years. He opened a reputable law firm in Bangkok and was a prominent lawyer.[20] After the 1973 student uprising, the military was ousted and political parties were allowed. Seni was chosen to be the leader of Democratic Party. In 1975, the general elections were held and Democratic Party and won. Seni, as the party leader, received the first chance to establish a government. However, Seni failed to receive the necessary vote of confidence in the Assembly. Kukrit Pramoj, the leader of Social Action Party who is

his younger brother, became Prime Minister.

In 19%6, Kukrit's government dissolved the Assembly by political pressure and new general elections were held. Democratic Party won the elections once again. This time, Seni received a majority vote of confidence in the National Assembly and became Prime Minister. He was in office for six months before a military coup was success-fully staged on October 6, 1976.

4.7 Pridi Bhanomyong (1946)

Pridi was born in 1904 in Ayuthaya province, the old capital city. His father was a rich farmer and merchant who sent him to study in Bangkok. After he finished law school in the Ministry of Justice, he practiced law for a while. In 1920 he won a government scholarship to study law in Paris. While he was in Paris, Pridi began his revolutionary campaign with Pibul, Khuang, and some other students who were there. Pridi was thought to be the most intelligent among the revolution leaders.[21]

In 1929, after his graduation with Docteur en Droit and a diploma in Economics. Pridi returned to Bangkok and served as a professor in the Royal Law School. As a professor he had a good chance to espouse his political ideologies to his students. This was important for his political future, because later most of these students became his trusted followers in the National Assembly and the bureaucracy. By the end of 1931, he and his friends

could recruit civilian and military officers enough to stage a coup against the king. After the successful coup of June 24, 1932, Pridi was credited with drafting the first provisional constitution of Thailand.[22]

Pridi was appointed Minister in the first two governments under the new democratic system. However, he was bothered by the conservative Praya Mano's government that made only minor changes and slight improvements from the old fashions. Pridi's followers in the National Assembly began demanding the government make more radical changes. As a result, Pridi was asked to draw an economic plan for the entire nation.

Pridi's plan called for drastic reforms in the structure of Thai society. The plan nationalized virtually all natural and industrial resources including land, labor and capital. Farmers, some 80 per cent of the population, were supposed to become state employees. However, Prime Minister Praya Mano strongly opposed the plan and turned the plan over to the king for final judgement. Once the king identified the plan as communist, Pridi was ousted from his ministerial post and was forced into exile. A few months later, Praya Mano's government was overthrown by a military coup. Praya Pahol became the new Prime Minister and Pridi was allowed to return. Though Pridi was investigated concerning his communist charge, the government dropped the charge. Pridi was then appointed minister in

23
Praya Pahol's cabinet.

In 1939 Pibul became Prime Minister. Pridi was again appointed Finance Minister. But when the Japanese invaded Thailand in 1941, Pridi was relieved of his post, because he failed to comply with the Japanese demands. However, Pridi was appointed a member of the regent council. Then he began his covert movement against the Japanese and secretly communicated with Allied forces.[24]

In 1944, Pridi recommended that Pibul resign as it was likely that the allies would win and Thailand would be in trouble if Pibul remained after the complete victory. After Pibul's resignation, Pridi was considered to be the most powerful man in the country.[25] For examples, as regent, he appointed Khuang to be the next Prime Minister, and he initiated the nullification of the Pibul's declaration of war. He also proposed Seni Pramoj from Washington to become Prime Minister, but in the interim period he appointed Tawee Bunyaketu Prime Minister. All of his political actions were endorsed by the National Assembly.

As regent Pridi occupied a position of considerable power without having to be involved in politics. However, when Khuang resigned in March, 1946, Pridi's followers convinced him to accept the premiership himself. Pridi agreed and became Prime Minister on March 24, 1946. After being in the office for two months, Pridi arranged for elections for members of the Senate. After the elections,

he was supported by both houses and stayed in power for

another term. But King Ananda's death resulted in his

immediate resignation. Though he was voted Prime Minister

again, public suspicion about the death of the king had

ruined Pridi's reputation and he could not run the govern-
ment without popular support.[26] He decided to resign on

August 23, 1946. However, he still had strong influence in

the next government of Thamrong. His influence actually

collapsed when a group of military officers staged a coup

against Thamrong's government. Since then Pridi left

Thailand for good. He died in 1983 in Paris.

4.8 Rear Admiral Tawal Thamrong Nawaswat (1946-1947)

Admiral Tawal, or "Luang Thamrong," was born in 1902

to a middle class family in Ayuthaya province. He

graduated from the law school in the Ministry of Justice.

He joined the navy and ultimately achieved the rank of
rear admiral.[27] Thamrong participated in the 1932 coup.

As a result, he was appointed a member of the National

Assembly. Since he had made impressive statements many

times in the assembly, he was selected to be Minister of

Justice and later changed to Minister of Foreign Affairs

in Pridi's government. When Pridi resigned, Pridi recom-

mended Thamrong to be Prime Minister. Since most of the

assembly members had supported Pridi, Thamrong was easily
voted to the office.[28]

Although Thamrong was Prime Minister, he had no personal support of his own. He was controlled by the Pridi supporters in both the cabinet and Assembly. By the end of 1947, his government had been accused of corruption and administrative inability. On November 8, 1947, a group of military officers staged a coup that ended his one-year government.

4.9 Pote Sarasin (September-December 1957)

Pote was born in 1906 in Bangkok to an upper class family. His father was a government official in the absolute regime and he held a rank of Praya. Pote's education began in Thailand and later he was sent to the United States to study law. After he graduated with a law degree, he went back to study for the barrister-at-law in Thailand and later in Britain. He successfully completed his study in both countries. [29]

When the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization was formed in 1954, he was nominated to be secretary. He was approved by the member states including the United States, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and other states in Southeast Asia. Pote came to be Prime Minister after a coup staged by General Sarit Thanarat in 1957. Pote was asked to lead the government temporarily until the next elections could be held. Pote occupied his post only three months. Once he had made an arrangement for general elections, he resigned.

4.10 Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn

(I. 1958, II.1963-1973)

Field Marshal Thanom was born in 1911 in Tak, a northern province of Thailand. He was a son of a middle-level government official who was assigned to that province. His education began locally and he was sent to Bangkok to study at Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy. He was commissioned second lieutenant in the infantry corps. Later he was assigned to be a military instructor at the military academy.[30]

Thanom had participated in the coups led by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat. Sarit regarded him as the most reliable and close follower. He became Prime Minister when Pote Sarasin resigned after the general elections. At that time Thanom was also the deputy of Sarit, who was in command of the army. On October 20, 1958, Sarit returned from medical treatment in the United States, and Thanom resigned as he already knew that Sarit would take over the government.[31] On that night Sarit staged a coup and Thanom became Minister in Sarit's cabinet.

After Sarit's death in 1963, Thanom became Prime Minister for the second time. During Sarit's regime, Thailand was ruled by a provisional constitution. When Thanom succeeded Sarit, he did not change the provisional constitution, and he continued to rule under the same

constitution. But he appointed a number of assembly
members to draft a new constitution. In 1968, the new
constitution was promulgated and the general elections
were held. The United Thai People's Party won the majority
seats in the Assembly. Since Thanom was the party leader,
he stayed in office for another term.

However, in 1971, Thanom was severely criticized by
most of the assembly members who said that the government
was unable to cope with internal security matters. Thanom
then staged another coup. The assembly was dissolved and
political parties were banned. Thanom continued to rule
without a constitution until the October 1973 student
crisis forced him into exile in the United States for
three years.

4.11 Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat (1958-1963)

Field Marshal Sarit was born in 1908 in Bangkok. His
father was a major in the army. He went to study in the
Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in 1919 and was com-
missioned in 1929. At the time of the 1947 coup, he was
the commander of an infantry regiment in Bangkok. Sarit
was recruited to participate in the 1947 coup and he
accepted. Sarit played a central role in the coup by using
the regiment under his command. After the coup, he was
promoted to the rank of general and commanded the First
                                32
Division in Bangkok.

In 1949 naval officers attempted a coup against the

government. Sarit was instructed to counter the coup. He successfully seized the coup headquarters but the coup leaders escaped. When the mission was over, Pibul raised him to command the First Army in Bangkok. In 1951, Pibul appointed Sarit a minister in his cabinet. One year later, Sarit became Deputy Minister of Defense and Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

In 1957, after the general elections were held and Pibul was made Prime Minister for another term, Sarit was promoted to Field Marshal and became Minister of Defense. However, there was a protest over the elections by an organized group of student demonstrators in Bangkok. Pibul declared a state of emergency and put Sarit in charge again. This time Sarit proceeded to negotiate with the student demonstrators. Sarit's leadership and his statements satisfied the demonstrators and he was widely appreciated by the public. After the demonstration, Sarit convened the military officers and called for the resignation of the cabinet. Pibul set a condition that he had to form another government. Sarit did not accept the condition and staged a coup against Pibul on September 16, 1957.

However, Sarit did not want to get involved in politics immediately after the coup. He set up a provisional government headed by Pote Sarasin to arrange for the elections. After the elections, he went to the United

States for medical treatment. When he heard of a counter-
coup plan, he returned suddenly to Thailand and staged
another coup in October, 1958. Sarit banned political
parties and political activities, and became Prime
Minister under a new provisional constitution.

Sarit had been characterized as a "ruthless gangster,
a traditional oriental despot, and a shrewd judge of
expertise."[34] While in office, he build up immense private
interests for himself in banking, real estate; construc-
tion contracting and other sectors. However, his energy
and political power allowed him to make a number of needed
structural changes in the bureaucracy within a very short
period, because he had mobilized and utilized the intelli-
gentsia of the country effectively. Sarit initiated many
development changes in the government. He developed a long
range economic plan which is still in force. Sarit ruled
the country with stability and progressively and was the
only Prime Minister who died in office on December 8,
1963.

4.12 Sanya Dharmasakti (1973-1975)

Sanya was born in 1907 in Thonburi. He came from an
upper class family. His father was a high-ranking official
in the absolute regime. Like many other Prime Ministers,
Sanya graduated from the law school in the Ministry of
Justice. He was a barrister-at-law and he received the

government scholarship to study further in Britain. Sanya
became a barrister-at-law in Britain in 1933. When Sanya
returned to Thailand he served as a judge in the Ministry
of Justice until he retired as Chief of the Supreme Court.
After his retirement, the king appointed him member of
Privy Council.[35]

Sanya was a strict Buddhist, and was the President of
the Buddhist Association of Thailand. He was considered to
be a very honest, highly moral and trustworthy man.[36] In
1973, after the student uprising and Field Marshal Thanom
resigned from his post, Sanya became Prime Minister by
direct appointment from the king. However, Sanya was cri-
ticized for his weakness in dealing with the student
organization and the inability of his government to cope
with the labor strikes and demonstrations throughout
Bangkok during his two years in office.[37] Sanya resigned
after the general elections were held in 1975.

4.13 Kukrit Pramoj (1975-1976)

Kukrit was born in 1911. He was from a noble family,
and is a younger brother of Seni. After his secondary
education, he was sent to England to study at Trent
College and Oxford University. He received a bachelor
degree in Philosophy, Economics and Politics with honors.
When he returned to Thailand he served for awhile in the
civil service and Bank of Thailand. Then he established
his own businesses including a newspaper, Siam Rath.[38] By

writing a column in <u>Siam</u> <u>Rath</u> regularly for 25 years,
Kukrit gained popularity as the most intelligent columnist
in Thailand.

Kukrit had been in the Thai political scene since he
was a member of the Democratic Party. When Khuang became
Prime Minister, he appointed Kukrit a minister in his
cabinet. Kukrit had been member of the National Assembly
many times and was nationally recognized as an orator and
wit. In 1973 Kukrit established the Social Action Party
and became the party leader. He was elected in the 1975
elections.

However, the Democratic Party led by Seni, his
brother, won a majority in the assembly. Thus, Seni was
given the first chance to form a new government. Before
the vote of confidence in the Assembly, Kukrit argued
against Seni's government policy. This resulted in a no-
confidence vote for Seni. Instead, Kukrit who had only 18
seats in the Assembly was proposed to form a coalition
government. With a confidence vote from th assembly,
39
Kukrit became Prime Minister himself.

During his time in office, Kukrit initiated an eco-
nomic redistribution program by distributing large sums of
money to community Councils throughout the country to
develop their own social and economic programs without
40
government interference. Though there was criticism of
this program, he was successful. After the fall of Saigon

in 1975, Kukrit changed the foreign policy by establishing relation with the People's Republic of China. Kukrit himself went to visit China two times. He also disapproved of the presence of the American military in Thailand and he insisted that the American military bases be withdrawn.[41] The complete American withdrawal had been made at the end of his government.

Kukrit's government was terminated when he was pressed by the parties participating in his coalition government. There were arguments concerning ministerial seats in the cabinet and quarrels among those parties. Kukrit then announced the dissolution of the Assembly and the arrangement of new general elections in 1976.

4.14 Thanin Kraivixien (1976-1977)

Thanin was born in 1927 into a middle class family. He graduated from Thammasat University in Bangkok in 1948. Then he went to study in England where he became a barrister-at-law. He served as a judge in e Ministry of Justice on his return to Thailand.[42]

In 1976, Seni's cabinet was ousted by a military coup d'etat led by Admiral Sangad Chaloryu, who was then the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and was backed up by a group of army officers. The coup group established a National Reform Council consisting of the high-ranking military officers who participated in the coup. The

council decided to select as Prime Minister the most

suitable person who could get along with the military. The

council came up with Thanin because of his anti-communist

reputation and his past record of cooperation with the

military.[43]

Thanin began his government by announcing the esta-

blishment of a procedure to introduce a true democracy in

a sixteen-year period. But by the end of the year he had

faced many political crises. These crises included: a coup

attempt by another group of military officers; military

clashes with the Khmer military along the eastern border;

and the accusation that his government had not paid atten-

tion to the security of the royal family. Finally, Thanin

was ousted by a military coup in 1977.

4.15 General Kriangsak Chamanan (1977-1978)

General Kriangsak was born in 1917 to a middle class

parents. He graduated from Chulachomklao Royal Military

Academy in 1939. His military training inc ided the Royal

Thai Army Command and General Staff Colleg   the US Army

Command and General Staff College, and the National

Defense College. He was commissioned and assigned to the

engineer corps. He was selected to be the commander of a

Thai battalion to participate in the Korean war and was

decorated with a Legion of Merit medal from the US

military. Kriangsak's last position in the military was

the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.[44]

General Kriangsak plotted the 1976 coup against Seni's government, and the 1977 coup against Thanin's government. After the last coup he was selected Prime Minister. However Kriangsak stayed in office only one year. When he lost support from the military and the Assembly, he resigned.

4.16 General Prem Tinsulanonda (1979-Present)

General Prem was born in 1919 in Songkla, a southern province of Thailand. He was raised in a middle class family. Upon completion of his secondary education in Songkla, he was sent to Bangkok to continue his pre-university study. General Prem graduated from Chulachomklao Royal Military School. He was commissioned and assigned to cavalry corps. Prem was a true career officer. He served in several combat units. He was famous for his plan to suppress the communist terrorists in the Northeastern part of the country while he was the second army commander.[45]

After the 1977 coup, General Kriangsa appointed General Prem to be Deputy Minister of Interior and also the Commander-in-Chief of the army. When Kriangsak resigned, Prem was selected to be Prime Minister. During his first tenure he survived a coup attempt by his own officers in 1981. In 1983 there were general elections, and no party won a majority of seats in the National

Assembly. Prem was requested to stay in position for another term and he reluctantly accepted. He is still Prime Minister.

Summary

In chapter 3 we divided the Thai Prime Ministers into three civilian regimes and three military regimes. The socio-economic backgrounds of these Prime Ministers can be summed up according to their regimes in Table 4.1.

The recruitment patterns of the Thai Prime Minister suggest differences and similarities in many cases. First, all Prime Ministers were well educated by Thai standards. Most Prime Ministers were educated at the same level. All civilian Prime Ministers graduated from abroad and mostly from law schools in Britain. All military Prime Ministers graduated from Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy. Second, although two of the Prime Ministers came from farmer or merchant families which were considered to be lower class, but high in terms of family economic background, the rest of them came from the middle or upper class families. Third, with only the one exception of Kukrit Pramoj, all Prime Ministers had careers in the Thai bureaucracy before they became national leaders. Fourth, while most of the civilian Prime Ministers came to office by democratic procedure, with the exception of some direct appointments such as Sanya and Thanin, the military Prime Ministers were self-appointed after successful coups and

Table 4.1

Thai Prime Ministers' Socio-Economic Background

Regime	Prime Minister	Year Born	P.M. Age	Father's Occupation	Economic Status	Place of origin
Civ.I	Praya Mano	1884	48	Business	Middle	Bangkok
Mil.I	Praya Pahol	1187	46	Army officer	Middle	Bangkok
	Pibul I	1898	40	Farmer	Middle	Nontaburi
Civ.II	Khuang	1902	42	Prince	High.	Bangkok
	Tawee	1904	41	Royal service	High	Bangkok
	Seni I	1905	40	Prince	High	Bangkok
	Pridi	1904	42	Farmer	Middle	Ayudaya
	Thamrong	1902	44	N.A.	Middle	Ayudaya
Mil.II	Pibul II	1898	50	Farmer	Middle	Nontaburi
	Pote *	1906	53	Royal service	High	Bangkok
	Sarit	1908	51	Army officer	Middle	Bangkok
	Thanom	1911	48	Civil service	Middle	Tak
Civ.III	Sanya	1907	66	Royal service	High	Thonburi
	Seni II	1905	70	Prince	High	Bangkok
	Kukrit	1911	64	Prince	High	Bangkok
	Thanin	1927	49	Business	M. idle	Bangkok
Mil.III	Kriangsak	1917	60	Business	Middle	Samut Songkram
	Prem	1919	60	Civil service	Middle	Songkla

Remark: Pote is excluded from Mil.II.
        P.M. Age is the age of the Prime Minister at the
        first year he was in office.

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Table 4.1 (continued)

Thai Prime Ministers' Socio-Economic Background

Regime/ Prime Minister	Education		Former Career	Political Background
	Domestic	Foreign --------- Degree/Country		

Civ.I

| Mano | Law | Law/Britain Bar. | Judge | Privy Councilor |

Mil.I

| Pahol | C.R.M.A | Military/Germany | Army Commander | 1932 Coup leader, Minister |
| Pibul I | C.R.M.A | Military/France Training | Army Commander | 1932 Coup Promoter, Minister |

Civ.II

Khuang	Second- ary	Civil/France Engineer	Civil Service	1932 Coup Promoter, Minister
Tawee	Second- ary	Agricul- ture/France	Civil Service	Assembly Member
Seni I	Second- ary	Law/Britain Bar.	Ambas- sador	Leader of Free Thai
Pridi	Law	Economic/France (Docteur en Droit)	Pro- fessor	1932 Coup Promoter, Minister, Regent
Thamrong	Law	-	Naval Officer	Assembly Member

Mil.III

Pibul II	C.R.M.A	Military/France Training	Army Commander	Ex-Prime Minister
Pote *	Law Bar.	Law/USA. Bar./Britain	Secret- ary of SEATO	N.A.
Sarit	C.R.M.A	-	Army Commander	1957-58 Coup leader, Minister

Table 4.1 (continued)

Thai Prime Ministers' Socio-Economic Background

Regime/ Prime Minister	Education		Former Career	Political Background
	Domestic	Foreign Degree/Country		

Mil.II

| Thanom | C.R.M.A | – | – | Army Commander | Minister, 1971 Coup Leader |

Civ.III

Sanya	Law	Law/Britain Bar.	Judge	Privy Councilor
Seni II	Secondary	Law/Britain Bar.	Lawyer	Ex-Prime Minister
Kukrit	Secondary	Philosophy, Economics, Politics/Britain	Business, columnnist	Assembly Member, Minister
Thanin	Law	Law/Britain Bar.	Judge	Assembly Member

Mil.III

| Kriang-sak | C.R.M.A | Military/USA. (General Staff Officer) | Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces | 1976,77 Coup Secretary |
| Prem | C.R.M.A | – | – | Army Commander | Assembly Member, Minister |

Remark: * Pote is excluded from Mil.II
C.R.M.A. = Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy.
Bar. = Barrister at Law

stayed longer due to their strong influence over the bureaucracy and politics.

The recruitment function in the early period (1932-1957) focused on a group of persons who participated in the 1932 revolution. In the first half of the list of Thai Prime Ministers up to 1957, most were coup participants, with the exception of Seni Pramoj, who became Prime Minister after World War II without links to the 1932 coup. The most outstanding civilian Prime Minister was Pridi Bhanomyong. Though he was in office for a very short term, he was the most influential in Thai politics. His influence extended from the first government to the last government in the first period. The outstanding military Prime Minister was Field Marshal Pibul Songkhram, who stayed longest in power, maintained his integrity, and promoted many social and cultural reforms. Pibul also gained some credit for many decisions, such as the suppression of the rebellion in 1933, the demands on France to cede former Thai territories, the compliance to the Japanese ultimatum, and the democratic changes after he had visited the western world in 1954.

The second period (1957-1983) concentrated on a new generation of Prime Ministers who did not participate in the 1932 revolution. Undoubtedly, Field Marshal Sarit was the most distinguished military Prime Minister in this period because of his social and economic reforms. Despite

many scandals in office, he raised the standard of living of the rural Thai people, reduced the crime rate in the urban areas, and united all efforts to develop the country. The most prominent civilian Prime Minister was Kukrit Pramoj who skillfully maneuvered his coalition government from a minority of seats in the National Assembly, changed the foreign policy, and drastically reformed the Thai economy by his national economic redistribution program.

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2. <u>Thailand National Directory</u>, (Bangkok, Temple Publicity Service, 1979) p. 55

3. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 60

4. Thainoi, <u>Praya Pahol</u>, (Bangkok, Prae Pittaya, 1954), pp. 4-22

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7. Thailand National Directory, <u>op.cit.</u>, p.62

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9. Ch. Prasangsit, <u>Karn patiwat lae kabot nai prades thai</u> (Revolution and Rebellion in Thailand), (Bangkok, Aksorn Charoon, 1949), pp. 89-109

10. Pridi Bhanomyong, <u>Political and Military tasks of the Free-Thai Movement to Regain National Sovereignty and Independence</u>, (Bangkok, Amarin Press, 1979) p.72

11. Thailand National Directory, <u>op.cit.</u>, pp.59-61

12. Khuang Abhaiwongs, <u>Karn toesoo kong kapachao</u>, (My Struggles), (Bangkok, Pramuan Sarn, 1955), pp. 3-9

13. Poh Samlamchiek, <u>Sam nak karn muang ruang nam kong thai</u>, (Three Prominent Thai Politicians), (Bangkok, Tham bannakara, 1972), pp. 8-15

14. Bancha, <u>op.cit.</u>, pp. 145-154 and 180-188

15. Boonsong, <u>op.cit.</u>, pp. 35-46

16. Bancha, op.cit, pp. 124-127

17. Sagnob 'Suriyint, Prawat siped nayok ratamontri kong thai, (Biographies of Eleven Thai Prime Ministers), (Bangkok, Paw 88, 1964), pp. 58-63

18. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 62

19. By Pridi's authority as the only regent at that time.

20. Seni was selected to be the Thai lawyer in the Khao Pra Viharn case in the World Court against Cambodia during the Sarit regime.

21. Pranchan Boonaleus, Cheewit karn toesoo kong Dr. Pridi Bhanomyong, (Life and Struggles of Dr. Pridi Bhanomyong), (Bangkok, Pramuansarn, 1958), pp. 9-10

22. Poh, op.cit., pp. 58-81

23. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p.58

24. See more details in Pridi, (Political and Military tasks)

25. Prachan, op.cit., p.45

26. Ibid.

27. Siri Premchit, Cheewit lae gnan kong pol rua tri Tawal Thamrong Nawasawat, (Life and works of Rear Admiral Tawal Thamrong Nawasawat), (Bangkok, Sang Tham, 1962), pp. 3-9

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29. Boonsong, op.cit., p. 78

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36. _Ibid_, p. 62

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39. Bancha, _op.cit._, p.338

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42. Boonsong, _op.cit._, p.108

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Chapter 5

The Prime Minister's Administrative Styles:

Military and Civilian Comparisons

5.1 Characteristics of the Administration

In this chapter we will begin our analysis of the characteristics of the Thai administrations by comparing civilian and military Prime Ministers from 1932 to 1983. We will consider each administration according to nine different dimensions which represent measurements of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Thailand's national leaders. As a result, these dimensions should indicate difference among the administrations. These dimensions are: activeness, enjoyment, decision-making, leadership skill, popularity, political expertise, organization, rules, and legitimacy.

Activeness and enjoyment are well documented by Barber.[1] They are regarded as psychological dimensions of the executive personalities. Activeness means energy in running state affairs and it can assume two values: active or passive. An active Prime Minister runs his office with more energy and initiative than a passive one. This factor is vital to any of the developing countries in that the executive is under constant pressure to meet the needs and demands of the political system.

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Enjoyment is another factor in determining the style of administration. It is based upon two configurations: positive and negative. If the Prime Minister enjoys his work he is positive, and has the autonomy to run the government. On the contrary, if he does not enjoy being Prime Minister, he might feel an obligation to engage in coercion in the operation of the state's affairs. According to this perception, enjoyment is counted as an important factor in the operational characteristics of political administration.

Decision-making is a process of selecting one course of action from an array of alternatives to achieve an objective in allocating public resources.[2] In the developing countries, these resources are limited and they require a certain degree of expertise to allocate their utilization. An ideal executive decision should be precise, have good timing, and most important, be correct. Some situations may require a quick decision. But the quick decision is not always correct or may not achieve good results. In this light we can described the decision-making process of the Prime Minister according to two broad categories: high or low. High decision-making means that the executive has met the demands by making all necessary decisions without delay. Also, the executive's reaction to a crisis is fulfilled with precision, timing, and correctness. Low decision-making implies the opposite.

We can assume that low decision-making reflects some dis-
crepancies in the administrative process. This charac-
teristic is based on the executive's personality and the
way he was trained.

Prominent political leaders require tremendous
leadership skills. Leadership skills mean the executive's
tendency to be both skilled in the utilization of human
resources and also motivated to use them at a high level.[3]
Since the Prime Minister is first among politicians, he
tends to be skillful and ambitious. Though leadership
skills are unevenly distributed in the population, the
Prime Minister who possesses them is more attractive than
one who lacks them. In developing countries, low leader-
ship skills generally result in the dawnfall of the
government or at least the break down in administrative
organization.

Popularity is a form of social support that comes
from a cross-section of society rather than from smaller
solidarities.[4] The public may find it easier to focus its
attention and support on a single individual rather than a
group of individuals. Prime Ministers are well placed in
the contest for popularity in that they are usually indi-
viduals in a nation who aspire to become popular heroes.
If he could control popular support, the Prime Minister
would derive power as much from popularity as from coer-
cion. Popularity is one of the factors in determining the

style of administration.

Political expertise is another way to assess the characteristics of a government. High political expertise means the executive can politically manipulate various strategies in running the government without getting involved in difficulties with the bureaucratic specialists. According to Fried[5] political expertise may develop in the making of decisions and executives are often immersed in the details of policy-making.

Organization means the Prime Minister is likely to have organized constituencies in the form of the civil and military bureaucracies, as well as an apparatus of a political party.[6] By mean of organization, the Prime Minister is provided organized support from the administrative elements around him especially the organ of state. If the Prime Minister can maintain the supporting organization, his administration is likely to stay in power for a longer period.

Rules are the establishment of laws and procedures of the administration. Rules often favor executive power. When the rules are made and enforced by the executive office, they often facilitate as well as restrict the Prime Minister in administering the country affairs. As a state leader, the Prime Minister is subject to rule of law. The constitution is one set of rules that may allow the Prime Minister discretionary power ranging from low to

extreme or dictatorial.[7] In the case of Thailand, strict rules ofteñ cause political tensions ranging from debate in the National Assembly to military coup or civil unrest.

Legitimacy is the widespread belief that the institution and its authority have a moral right to exist, and that it would be wrong to attack either the institution or its authority. The premiership is protected from the adverse effects of unpopularity by the possession of legitimacy. A Prime Minister may make unpopular decisions and may become highly unpopular without threatening the existence of the institution or his powers.[8] However, at a certain point, unpopularity of a political leaders can result into a situation of illegitimacy.

5.2 The Implication of characteristics

Now that we have defined the terminology that is used in identifying characteristics of administration of the Thai Prime Ministers, the following tables are represented in the Thai case as they have been directly implied by several factors described. There are sixteen governments under evaluation. Two of the Prime Ministers (Pibul and Seni) were in office at two different times and situations. Since Tawee Bunyaketu's and Pote Sarasin's governments were in power for a very short period, no attempt has been made to evaluate their offices.

Table 5.1

Characteristics of Administration

Regime/ Prime Minister	Activeness	Enjoyment	Decision	Leadership
Civ.I				
Pray Mano	active	positive	low	low
Mil.I				
Praya Pahol	active	positive	high	high
Pibul I.	active	positive	high	high
Civ.II				
Khuang	active	positive	high	moderate
Seni I.	active	negative	high	low
Pridi	active	positive	high	high
Thamrong	active	positive	low	low
Mil.II				
Pibul II.	active	positive	high	high
Sarit	active	positive	high	high
Thanom	passive	positive	low	high
Civ.III				
Sanya	passive	negative	low	low
Kukrit	active	positive	high	high
Seni II.	passive	positive	low	low
Thanin	active	negative	low	low
Mil.III				
Kraingsak	active	positive	high	high
Prem	passive	positive	low	moderate

Remark: Tawee's and Pote's government is excluded in this evaluation.

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Table 5.1 (Continued)

Characteristics of Administration

Regime/ Prime Minister	Popularity	Political Expertise	Organi- zation	Rules	Legitimacy
Civ.I					
Praya Mano	low	low	low	low	low
Mil.I					
Praya Pahol	high	low	low	high	low
Pibul I.	high	high	high	high	high
Civ.II					
Khuang	high	high	low	low	moderate
Seni I.	low	low	low	low	moderate
Pridi	high	high	high	high	moderate
Thamrong	low	low	low	low	low
Mil.II					
Pibul II.	high	high	low	low	moderate
Sarit	high	high	high	high	high
Thanom	high	moderate	high	high	moderate
Civ.III					
Sanya	low	low	low	low	high
Kukrit	high	high	moderate	low	high
Seni II.	high	high	low	low	high
Thanin	low	low	low	high	low
Mil.III					
Kriangsak	low	moderate	low	low	low
Prem	high	moderate	high	high	high

Remark: Tawee's and Pote's government are excluded from
this evaluation.

5.3 An Assessment of the Dimensions

In Table 5.1 we have categorized the sixteen Prime Ministerships according to the values of activeness, enjoyment, decision, leadership, popularity, political expertise, organization, rules, and legitimacy. We have made these assessments based upon specific activities of the Prime Ministers concerned.

The first Thai Prime Minister we deal with is Praya Mano who was in office from 1932 to 1933. Though his period was rather short, his tenure is significant because he had instituted many new arrangements in the transitional period from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy. During his tenure, there were still some conservative government officials from the old regime who opposed the new political system. As stated in Chapter 4, Praya Mano was chosen to be Prime Minister partly because of his attitudes favoring the new regime, and partly because of his close connection with the king.[9] The activeness and enjoyment of his position can be shown by his acceptance of the position with pleasure, his willingness to run the country with the new type of politics, and his obligation to the parliamentary system. Praya Mano spent a great effort to establish the foundation of the Office of the Prime Minister as the vital element of the Thai government. It has been continued to the present time.[10]

Due to the nature of the Thai judicial system Praya
Mano was unpopular among the Thai people.[11] At that time,
democracy had just been initiated and the persons who knew
the system well were very few. Since Praya Mano's govern-
ment depended largely on the interpretation of the new
constitution and the existing law, he did not institute
more rules to regulate the state affairs. His rules, as
well as political expertise, are considered to be low.

There was no question concerning the legitimacy of
Praya Mano's government. Though the king granted pardons
to the coup promoters, this did not mean that Praya Mano's
government was viewed as legitimate by the public.
However, it was very difficult for the Prime Minister who
spent most of his life in the traditional absolute
monarchy to change or to adjust himself at once to the new
circumstances. In the area of decision-making, we can say
that Praya Mano was low. This was because of his conserva-
tism and scrutiny growing out of his former career. For
example, he could not make any decision on the Pridi's
controversial economic program. Although the matter was
actually an ordinary interpretation of the existing law,
Praya Mano had to send the program to the king for his
consideration and final judgement.[12]

The next Prime Minister was Praya Pahol who had
served the country for five years between 1938 to 1944.
Praya Pahol was described as a man "noted for honesty,

integrity, and fair-mindedness."[13] He voluntarily headed

the coup of 1932 without sufficient forces because of his

strong determination to modernize the administrative

system of Thailand. His personality was enhanced by preci-

sion and good timing in his decision-making. For instance,

when Praya Mano's government drove Pridi out of the

country because of his radical economic plan in 1933,

Praya Pahol and several military officers felt insecure

because of concern that their connections with Pridi might

cause them political difficulties. Praya Pahol accordingly

resigned as minister in Praya Mano's cabinet and staged a

bloodless coup against the old regime within two days

after his resignation was accepted. He became Prime

Minister on the day after the coup.[14]

His second coup did not settle all political accounts

and there was a military revolt by a royalist group. After

the revolt seized a strategic area in the suburb of the

capital city, Praya Pahol was given an ultimatum to resign

immediately. Praya Pahol reacted with a military counter-

attack as he was aware of the situation and was prepared

for it. Another illustration was when King Prajadhipok's

demanded a greater share in ruling power, Praya Pahol made

a tough decision in refusing the king's request because

these demands would weaken his position or might lessen

public confidence in his government.[15]

Praya Pahol was popular among the Thais because of his reputation as being the coup leader in 1932, and a person who led five governments during his terms of administration. Praya Pahol was an active person and positively enjoyed doing his job. When the Praya Mano's government was overthrown by him, he immediately accepted the Premiership but he declared:[16]

> "...just for the time of necessity ...only a matter of days, because I am not qualified and I have no experience in administering the country." ;

However, he remained in the post for five years. His leadership skill was relatively high considering his past activities that were carried out with precision, good timing, and success.

The Praya Pahol's government was not well-organized. In his first tenure which lasted only six months (June 21 - December 16, 1933), he had shuffled the cabinet membership six times. From 1933-1938, he reshuffled his government five times, two of them because of political pressures from the National Assembly.[17] Praya Pahol's political expertise was also relatively low due to his military background. He was not devious. For example, he did not yield to the king's demands, though negotiable, resulting in the king's abdication. Also whenever his government lost a vote in the Assembly, even when the vote was insignificant, he and his cabinet resigned.[18]

Although he came to power by coup, Praya Pahol did not suspend or alter the existing constitution. His rules are considered to be high as demonstrated in the refusal of the king's demands and consistence with the 1932 constitution. Since Praya Pahol had staged two coups, his legitimacy in the eyes of the public remained questionable. The first coup was staged with a determination to convert the absolute regime into a democratic one. On the contrary, the second coup was based upon his group's self-interest. His resignations from the post were seen as methods to change cabinets. These factors lead to the conclusion that he should receive a low score for legitimacy.

Pibul first became Prime Minister in 1938. Pibul was among the original promoters of the 1932 coup while he was training in Paris. His activeness began with his enthusiastic and ambitious participation in the first coup.[19] While he was a minister in Praya -Pahol's first cabinet, he was named commander of the government force to counter the military revolt. He easily completed the job within two weeks.[20] He participated in every cabinet of Praya Pahol. When asked to be Prime Minister, he accepted without delay.

Pibul's enjoyment of being Prime Minister for the first time was more than positive. Once he became Prime Minister, he launched a program destined to arouse a

strong nationalist spirit with a stress on military

virtues accompanied by frequent parades. He promoted the

slogan "follow the leader" and encouraged people to call

him a truly "national leader." [21] He changed the name of

the country from "Siam" to "Thailand." He directed

nationalism to the fight against France for the terri-

tories lost in the 1893 incident. With military operations

and the Japanese mediation, Thailand received these terri-

tories back from France during World War II. .

There was no doubt that his flame rose to its peak

during this period. Pibul was a great national hero. His

decision and leadership skills were exceptional. His rules

are considered to be high as the 1932 constitution was

still in use and many laws were enacted in his period. His

legitimacy is also high for his regime was acceptable to

the public. He consolidated power both militarily and

politically, and provided his administration with a highly

effective organization. [22] Pibul's government was the

example of an efficient Thai administration. The major

cause of his first downfall was the war situation--an

external factor.

Unlike his first term, in 1948 after the third coup,

Pibul came to power without much support from the military

and the National Assembly. His power had been shared with

both the military and police leaders. The factionalism

among the civilian, military, and police had lessened his

popularity. The organization of his government was ill-defined and the rules were less complete. Because of the coup, the legitimacy of his office remained in doubt. However, he was still active and positively enjoyed his office. His leadership skill and political expertise in balancing the power of the military and police allowed him to remain in office for nine more years.[23] No matter how hard he tried with democratic methods, when political tension ran high, he was ousted by the same method-- a military coup d'etat in 1957.

After Pibul's first tenure, the regime was returned to civilians. Most governments during this period were in office for only short time. The total time of these six governments is approximately three and a half years. The Prime Ministers in this regime were Khuang, Seni, Pridi, and Thamrong.[24]

Prime Minister Khuang was in office for the first time in September 1944 after Pibul resigned from the post. When he became Prime Minister, he already possessed much experience in politics because he had been minister in both Praya Pahol's and Pibul's governments. As we have mentioned before, Khuang was an intelligent orator. He was always ready for political debate and enjoyed lively dis-cussions. He established the Democratic Party and had himself presented as a candidate for election. From his interest in politics we can assume that Khuang was active

and enjoyed his political assignment.

Khuang was selected to be Prime Minister three times between 1944 to 1946. Though he was the Democratic Party leader, his leadership skills were limited when compared to those of Praya Pahol and Pibul. There were always disagreements in the party as well as in his cabinet. Khuang was a close friend of Pridi. Since Pridi had dominated most of the members of the National Assembly, his government pressured by Pridi most of the time. However, Pridi and Khuang had numerous disagreements and the Assembly and some cabinet members tended to follow Pridi in matters of debate.[25] So Khuang could neither run the government effectively nor adjust himself to Pridi's ideas or demands. The impact of the disagreement fell on his rules and organization as they reflected the inability of the government to counter the military coup in 1947.

Khuang was one of the most popular Thai Prime Ministers. People knew him well as the famous opposition party leader and the original 1932 coup promoter. His decision-making is considered to be high as illustrated by his intention to announce a new constitution during his third time in the office although conditions did not allow him to do so. His resignation from the post was imposed by political and military pressure. Although his first two terms in office were characterized by respect for democratic procedures. His legitimacy is considered to be

moderate as one of his terms was made possible by the
appointment of the coup leaders.

The next Prime Minister was Seni Pramoj. Seni became
Prime Minister twice in 1945 and 1976. Although Seni's
personality was different from Khuang's, he had the same
characteristics in decision-making and activeness as
Khuang. His first term (September - January 1946) did not
reveal very much about his administration because the only
task he performed was negotiating with the British to
reestablish Thailand's sovereignty after World War II.[26]
When the peace treaty was finally signed, Seni then
resigned his position to open way for general elections.
His leadership was high during the period as he success-
fully negotiated with the Allies for the post-war status
of the country. But his other characteristics were limit.
With the exception of Pridi's support, there were few
organizations which supported him.[27] He had little poli-
tical expertise and the period was too short to establish
rules.

Although Seni led the Free Thai Movement, most of his
activities were conducted abroad.[28] When he became Prime
Minister, people did not know him well and this resulted
in his low popularity. His legitimacy during this period
is considered to be moderate since he was appointed Prime
Minister as a result of the country's situation and
necessity. We can assume that in his first term he had a

negative enjoyment because he became Prime Minister by duty or obligation in the period of difficulty. His negative attitude was further confirmed by his prompt resignation after the duty was accomplished.

On the contrary, during his 1976 term, Seni was well-known in Thailand for past activities as leader of the Free Thai Movement in World War II and as the second head of Democratic Party.[29] Because he was elected Prime Minister, his legitimacy in office as well as his political expertise were high. His major difficulties were in decision-making, organization and rules which can be observed in his 1976 government.[30] This government had faced one of the most chaotic events in modern Thai political history. When the political crisis reached its peak, he did not receive support from either military or the bureaucracy.[31]

Pridi was also in office as a civilian Prime Minister for a brief term though he dominated most of the civilian governments and Assemblies. He was one of the most influential persons in the early democratic period from 1932 to 1946.[32] Pridi's decisions were largely quick, right, and characterized by precise timing. For instance, he was the planner of the 1932 coup; he supported Praya Mano as the first Prime Minister; later he planned to overthrow Pibul's government. As regent he appointed Khuang, Tawee, Seni, and recommended Thamrong to be Prime

Ministers. He controlled almost all the assembly's members from the beginning of the democracy to his last day in Thailand. One of his most important official acts was his nullification of the Pibul's declaration of war on the Allies. By these activities we can ascertain that his other characteristics such as leadership skills, political expertise, organization and rules were all high.

Pridi's popularity was considered moderate although he was the original 1932 coup promoter. His scandal concerning King Ananda's death ruined his image and made him less popular.[33] It cost him so dearly that he had ended his political career in 1946. After the incident he could not even remain in Thailand and was in exile for the rest of his life.[34]

Thamrong was the next Prime Minister. He was well-known in the Assembly by his personality and oratorical skill. Unfortunately, his personality was of little help in running the nation's affairs. His government was seen as a corrupt and inefficient, scandals-ridden. Thamrong himself was not popular among Thai people. He was chosen largely because he was a close friend of Pridi and would remain under Pridi's influence. Because of Pridi's influence, Thamrong decided to lift the Anti-Communist law.[35] His government was totally dependent on Pridi's support in the assembly.

Thamrong was active and positively enjoyed his term in office,"although he was dominated by Pridi. The decision-making of his government was low since the government had not taken many independent decisions. They were secondary to Pridi's judgements. Thamrong's leadership and political expertise are also low, once again depending mostly on Pridi's recommendations. As a result of the scandals of corruption and Pridi's dependency, his organization and rules were inefficient and low. Also because of these, his legitimacy was moderate instead of high although he was selected by democratic procedures.[36]

The next Prime Minister was Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat who received high ratings in most areas. Although he came to power by force Sarit was Thailand's most popular Prime Minister ever.[37] The Sarit regime was characterized by political authoritarianism, modernization, economic development, and massive internal security activity in terms of communist suppression and crime prevention. Nevertheless his scandals in building up immense private holdings for himself and his excessive sexuality (he had hundreds of minor wives) ruined his reputation but only after he died.[38]

We conclude that his legitimacy was low because he had staged a coup. However, his energy and authoritarian power allowed him to make a number of needed structural changes in the Thai bureaucracy. Several new bureaus and

offices were established during his regime in his massive
effort to modernize the country. He epitomized the drive
for national development, recruiting western-educated
technocrats, authorizing planning, and enforcing
decisions.[39]

Sarit's regime was politically stable. He was the
only Thai Prime Minister who died in office. As one writer
points out:[40]

> People today remember him, not only for his 100 wives,
> but for his efforts in getting the country going. Many
> remember his rule with fondness and wish that Sarit
> could come back to rule today.

After Sarit's death in December 1963, Thanom
succeeded Sarit as Prime Minister. Thanom, in contrast to
other Prime Ministers, was passive at the very beginning.
He did not seem to possess any political ambition. Thanom
was the one whom Sarit trusted the most after the 1958
coup. Although Sarit was the leader of the coup, he did
not become Prime Minister immediately. He devised a means
by appointing Pote Sarasin,the Secretary General of SEATO,
as Prime Minister for a few months.[41]   After general
elections, Thanom became Prime Minister by recommendation
of Sarit. However, when Sarit came back from abroad,
Thanom, being faithful to Sarit, resigned in order to
allow Sarit to stage another coup. His loyalty was highly
respected among the military officers.

Thanom had been Prime Minister for almost a decade
from 1963. His government was strengthened by the most
powerful general who was assumed to be Thanom's right
hand, Prapas Charusatiara the Minister of Interior and the
Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Colonel Narong is Thanom's
son and Prapas's son-in-law. This government was often
called by the foreign observers as Thanom-Prapas regime.

During the period of 1963-1971, as a result of the
Sarit regime, the Thanom cabinet was well-organized. The
rules during this time were considered to be high.
Although there was only a Constituent Assembly, without
the true parliamentary system, few complained. The eco-
nomic boom in the 1960s did much to facilitate ruling.[42]
However, when the constitution was promulgated in 1971 and
the general elections were held, the situation changed.
Thanom and Prapas grew intolerant of political pressure.
This had not been the case previously. After a trial
period of two years, Thanom staged another coup. At this
point we rate his political expertise and legitimacy as
moderate. But his organization and rules are considered to
be high as they reflect continuous supports of the bureau-
cracy and the military to the regime. Since Thanom had
always been respected by military officers and high
ranking bureaucrats, his leadership skill was beyond
question.

During his decade in office Thanom was well known

among the people. However, with many errors in decision-
making process we rank him low on this dimension. Thanom
himself depended very much on the bureaucracy. He received
much incorrect information from this organization and
under-estimated the true strength of his political
opponents.[43] Whenever a crisis occurred, he would rely on
his close companions' information. For instance, the
student riot in October 1973 became a revolt because of
this deficiency in both information and decision-making.
Another decision that shared this failure was the decision
to promote Colonel Narong, his son, to be his successor
too soon.[44]

After Thanom was ousted, the king appointed Professor
Sanya Dharmasakti to be the next Prime Minister. Sanya was
rector of Thammasat University at that time. He also was
a member of the Privy Council and a retired supreme court
judge. But his popularity among the people was low because
of the limited role of judges in Thai society.

Sanya's government is said to be the most passive one
in modern Thai history. Sanya was a passive leader with
negative enjoyment as indicated by his relief in his
farewell statement in 1975. During his two year period in
office, he was pressed hard by student and labor demands.
We conclude that his decision making was low for whenever
he confronted any crisis, his decision could be predicted
in advance as compliance to the demands. Although his

tenure was longer than other civilian governments, he did

not make many decisions. Sanya depended almost entirely on

the bureaucracy to work for him. [45] His only advantage in

the government was legitimacy in ruling the country since

he was appointed by the king who is the most respected

person in the country.

The next Prime Minister was M.R. Kukrit Pramoj.

Kukrit was in office for one year in 1975. Kukrit was a

former politician in the Democratic Party. He was a

minister in Khuang's cabinet during the World War II

period. When the military seized power. Kukrit had his own

newspaper and other business sectors. [46] His political

expertise and leadership skills were unusually high.

Before the elections in January 1975, Kukrit established

his own Social Action Party. He tactfully maneuvered in

the assembly for a no-confidence vote on Seni's first

attempt to set up government, resulting in the fall of

Seni's six-day government and the Kukrit's coalition

government with several parties when his party held only

eighteen seats in the National Assembly.

Kukrit was an active Prime Minister with positive

enjoyment. His popularity among the people was high for he

was well-known nationally as a prominent columnist. Kukrit

conducted the state's affairs with ease in trying to solve

the mounting problems in Thai society, [47] for example, his

economic redistribution program. But his coalition

government did not allow him to do much. Kukrit is rated
low in organization and rules because he could not control
or set up rules for these parties effectively.

After the military staged another coup in 1976 and
formed a National Reform Council, Thanin Kraivixien was
appointed Prime Minister by this council. For Thanin
himself, his popularity among the people was almost nil as
he was a relatively young and unknown Supreme Court judge.
The military selected him largely because of his anti-
communist attitude and his extreme right wing orientation.
Although appointed, Thanin's government was an active one.
He positively enjoyed his term by setting up a new Thai
democratic system which was to be fully developed in
sixteen-year-period.[48]

However, his lack of political expertise and leader-
ship skill led to his termination in one year. With his
authoritarian attitude, he generated political opposition
from most of the major groups, especially from the mili-
tary who placed him in power.[49]   Without support from any
organization, Thanin's organization is considered to be
low. Since this government was appointed by the coup
leader and could not maintain popular or political
support, the legitimacy of Thanin's government was also
low. The only advantage he gained was the high rule
largely because of the constitution and his full utiliza-
tion of laws against communism.

General Kriangsak Chavanan was appointed Prime
Minister by the coup group. Kriangsak was one of the 1976
and 1977 coup leaders. Although he was appointed Supreme
Commander of the Armed Forces, Kriangsak was not popular
among the Thai people. As a result of the coup his legiti-
macy was low. However, he was an active leader and posi-
tively enjoyed his time in office. He expended most of his
efforts in rural development programs and was determined
to raise the standard of living for the rural. people.

Kriangsak's leadership skill and political expertise
were accepted to be high. Kriangsak eased press censor-
ship, established better relations with labor unions, and
gave amnesty to the student leaders arrested in the
October 1976 coup. He promised more relaxed internal and
external policies, to be followed by elections.[50]   Never-
theless, his organization of government was not seen to be
as competent as his political skill. This is indicated,
for example, by his secret economic decisions such as
raising the oil price, and the major changes in the
government policies were always revealed before the actual
changes had taken place. His decisions and rules faced
mounting criticism from the Assembly and the public.
Kriangsak resigned because he could no longer count on
military support.[51]

Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda succeeded Kriangsak
in 1979. He was a professional soldier and his succession

was fully supported by Kriangsak and the military. Prem was well-known especially in the north-eastern area of the country where he employed a successful strategy in suppression of the communist insurgency while commanding the Second Army in the area. Because of his popularity, he was called to be a minister in Kriangsak's cabinet and later succeeded Kriangsak himself.

Prem was not so active in terms of his desire to become Prime Minister. He often stated in public that he did not possess any political ambition. When the elections were held in 1983, several political parties asked Prem to be Prime Minister for another term. He refused many times, but later accepted saying it was "unavoidable" in the present circumstances.[52] This passive attitude toward the country's affairs renders his decision-making rating low. Sometimes it seemed like he had ignored many important political and economic cases.[53]

Since Prem's cabinet had been supported by the military and several political parties, his organization is rated high. Since he has issued many orders for the anti-communist campaign, his rules are also considered high. Prem's leadership skill and political expertise were biased by a factor of nepotism. He was regarded a good leader but was criticized in gathering around him close friends from the same class, under his previous command, and from the southern part of Thailand where he came

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from.   Nevertheless his legitimacy was considered to be
high as it was tested one time by a military coup attempt
in 1981. Prem was accepted by the royal family, most of
the bureaucrats, military personnel, and the public in
most parts of the country.

Styles of administration vary among the Thai Prime
Ministers. The implication of these styles are generalized
in terms of military and civilian governments which will
be evaluated in the last chapter.

1. James D. Barber, <u>The</u> <u>Presidential</u> <u>Character</u>:
   <u>Predicting</u> <u>Performance</u> <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>White</u> <u>House</u>, (New
   Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 11

2. James Gatza (ed.), <u>Decision</u> <u>Making</u> <u>in</u> <u>Administration</u>:
   <u>Text</u>, <u>Critical</u> <u>Incidents</u> <u>and</u> <u>Cases</u>, (Philadelphia,
   W. B. Saunders, 1979), p. 2

3. Robert C. Fried, <u>Comparative</u> <u>Political</u> <u>Institutions</u>,
   (New York, Macmillan Co., 1966), p. 12

4. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 10   -

5. <u>Ibid.</u>

6. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 12

7. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 13

8. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 11

9. <u>Thailand</u> <u>National</u> <u>Directory</u>, (Bangkok, Advance Media,
   1979), p. 55

10. The office of the Prime Minister was created in 1933,
    and is located in Bangkok, the capital city of
    Thailand.

11. Since the judge deals mostly with public disputable
    matters, most judges in the Thai society do not
    participate much in social activities as they might be
    seen unjust and unsuitable.

12. Bancha Keokettong, <u>Samsip</u> <u>hok</u> <u>ratabal</u> <u>nai</u> <u>rabob</u>
    <u>prachathipatai</u> <u>kong</u> <u>thai</u>, (Thirty Six Governments in
    the Thai Democratic System), (Bangkok, Roong ruang
    tham, 1976), p. 28

13. Thailand National Directory, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 56

14. Thai noi, <u>Praya</u> <u>Pahol</u>, (Bangkok, Prae pittaya, 1954),
    p. 4-22

15. Bancha, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 71

16. Bancha, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 39

17. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 40-81

18. Ibid.

19. See his social background in Chapter 4.

20. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 40-78

21. Ch. Prasangsit, Karn patiwat lae kabot nai prades thai (Revolution and Rebellion in Thailand), (Bangkok, Aksorn Chareon, 1949), pp. 89-109

22. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 111-112

23. Thailand National Directory, op.cit. p. 60

24. In this period, we exclude Prime Minister Tawee Bunyaketu because he was in office for only 17 days which is too short for analysis purpose.

25. See Chapter 2

26. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 132-140

27. The Free Thai Movement headed by Seni was considered by Pibul to be an organization against his government. Since Pibul had dominated bureaucracy and the military, Seni received little cooperation from these organizations.

28. See details in Pridi Bhanomyong, Political and Military Tasks of the Free-Thai Movement to Regain National Sovereignty and Independence, (Bangkok, Amarin Press, 1979)

29. Seni became famous because after World War II the story of the Free Thai Movement had been taught in school for years.

30. For examples, he paid little attention to the bureaucracy including the military, and in turn he receive little support from these organizations.

31. This can be identified by the military coup of 1976.

32. At that time, Pridi was assumed to be the most intelligent and knowledgable person in the democratic system. He was assigned to draft the first three constitutions on this account.

33. The scandal was directed toward him for plottering the king's assassination.

34. Pridi went into exile in People Republic of China and later he moved to France. He died there in April 1983 at the age of 82.

35. Bancha, op.cit., pp. 166-167

36. Though Thamrong was a high-ranking naval officer, he became Prime Minister by the vote of National Assembly. We consider Thamrong's government a civilian one.

37. This is confirmed by many foreign writers such as Wit, Neher, Riggs, Silcock, and all Thai political writers.

38. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 61

39. Somboon Worapong, Chompol Sarit Thanarat, (Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat), (Bangkok, Kasemsan, 1964), pp. 2-5

40. Thailand National Directory, op.cit., p. 66

41. Pote's administration was not included in the analysis because his term was short and his administration was provisional.

42. This was a result from Sarit's national economic development programs.

43. For examples, the former politicians, the press, and the student organization.

44. Colonel Narong was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Board of Inspection and Follow-up of Government Operations (BIFGO), while Thanom was the chairman himself. The board was politically powerful because of it's authority to act as a secret police including to inspect, follow any economic or political activity by using clandestine operations. At the same time Colonel Narong retained his military post as a commander of an infantry regiment in Bangkok which was considered to be significant to the government's stability.

45. Sanya appointed his cabinet members mostly from the bureaucrats by assuming these ministers would have gained the cooperations of the bureaucracy. See Likhit Dhiravegin, The Bureaucratic Elite of Thailand, (Bangkok, Wacharin Press, 1978), p. 210

46. Kukrit's famous newspaper "Siam Rath" was basically politically oriented for more than thirty years. Kukrit himself daily writes a column in this newspapers until the present time.

47. Likhit, op.cit., pp. 195-196

48. The most active activity in Thanin's government is the anti-communist propaganda. See Frank C. Darling, "Thailand in 1976: Another Defeat for Constitutional Denocracy," Asian Survey, Vol. XVII, No. 2, February, 1977, p. 128

49. Montri Chenvidyakarn, "One Year of Civilian Authoritarian Rule in Thailand." Southeast Asian Affairs, 1978 (Singapore : Heinmann Educational Books, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Lts., 1978. pp. 267-270

50. John L. S. Girling, Thailand: Society and Politics, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 117

51. Girling, op.cit., p. 118

52. Prem was fully supported by Kukrit Pramoj, one of the former Prime Ministers and the leader of Social Action Party. It has been said that Kukrit persuaded Prem to accept the post after the elections.

53. Prem was called by the reporters of many newspapers as "Temee Bai," as implied his silent gestures most of the time in his reaction to questions asked by reporters. The newspapers include "Thai Rath," "Daily News," "Siam Rath," and "Ban Muang."

54. Siam Mai, Vol. 1, No. 31, June 19, 1982

Chapter 6

The Process of Economic and Social Adaptation

in Thailand

During the past five decades, the major goals of all
Thai governments have been to promote economic progress,
to raise the people's standard of living, and to eradicate
social and economic inequalities. Measures to achieve
these goals have been devised, implemented and changed by
the ruling civilian and military parties with the claim to
alleviate the problems of poverty and inequalities.[1]

In this chapter, we will attempt to analyze the
comparative aspect of social and economic development in
Thailand by reviewing what has been done by each govern-
ment. In this way, we can compare the economic performance
of each Prime Minister as discussed in Chapter 4. Before
we proceed further we should bear in mind that there are
many limitations in comparing these economic situations
and policies. One limitation is that the development of
the Thai economy has depended on several domestic and
international factors that happened periodically and unex-
pectedly. These factors were not in any way under the
control of the respective Thai Prime Ministers. Another
limitation is the difference in time in office of the
Prime Ministers which varied from 17 days to 10 years. It
is almost impossible to evaluate governmental performance

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in short periods of time. Also, economic and social processes tend to overlap across time periods, and are often immune to changes in political personnel.

These limitations become major problems in identifying the social and economic performance of an individual Prime Minister. However, we can circumvent some of the problems by discussing comparatively fashion in terms of the common characteristics, overall social and economic strategies, and the solutions being executed by each government. Since it is impossible to analyze the social and economic performance of those Prime Ministers who were in the office for short periods, we will look at the Prime Minister in each regime, and skip some of the Prime Ministers as was done in the comparison of the administrative styles.

6.1 Economic Performance

Historically, Thailand's economy has depended mostly on food production. Peasants planted rice for their own consumption and to pay taxes, whatever remained was used to support religious institutions.[2] However, the period of transformation began at the end of 18th century with the system of irrigation supervised by the royal administrations. This system produced a surplus that could be sold cheaply abroad. Under royal patronage, corvee labor dug the canals on which rice was brought in from the fields to

the royal warehouses and then carried to sea in the king's ships for export to China.[3] The system was conducted under a royal monopoly until King Mongkut signed a treaty with Britain in 1856. This treaty led to the reorientation of the Thai economy. The terms of the treaty set forth the country's acceptance of the principle of free trade and put its economy in touch with the world markets. Thailand had to shift from economic self-sufficiency to an export-oriented specialized economy based on rice supplemented by teak and tin. One-third of the rice produced in the country went for export. Until early in the 19th century, land used for rice production more than doubled. Great Britain handled 70 percent of the trade, carrying rice to China through Hong Kong and to India by way of depots at Singapore.[4]

After the transformation from absolute to constitutional monarchy in 1932, the modern Thai economy continued to function much along the open market lines that had characterized it since the 1856 British treaty. It remained capitalist in orientation, largely operated by the private sector, with a supportive infrastructure furnished by the public sector and some governmental participation in production through a limited number of state enterprises.[5] Between 1870 and 1934 the volume of rice exports increased twenty-five times (while population doubled). The area of paddy field increased from 6 million

rai (2.4 million acres) in 1850 to more than 12 million
rai in 1932.[6] Rice continued to provide about half the
value of all Thai exports to the 1930s.[7]

As of 1932, Thailand entered the constitutional era
in a generally favorable position economically. High world
commodity prices brought a degree of prosperity to the
economy and it acted as a stimulus to further development.
Thailand was endowed with such natural resources as
adequate agricultural land from which a surplus of rice
was ordinarily harvested, extensive commercially exploit-
able forest areas, areas highly suited to producing rubber
and important deposits of tin ore.[8]

During the period 1932-1933, economic growth in real
terms was 3 percent a year while the real per capita
income increased at a rate of 2.7 percent, Though the
political institutions were changed, the new regime led by
the Praya Mano government did not change the basic struc-
ture of Thai economy. At this period, industrialization
and foreign investment were not yet introduced. The major
trading partners remained England and Japan as they had
been in the decades of royal absolutism. Only minor
administrative and managerial improvements had been accom-
plished. Taxes were readjusted so that the rich would pay
a larger share. The salary tax, which originated in the
absolute regime, was replaced by a progressive income tax.
Since the Thai farmers' indebtedness was reported high

(over 100 million baht), a value probably greater than
that of the land itself,[9] Praya Mano's government enacted
a new law to help poor farmers by forbidding landlords to
seize the farmers' tools and that rice reserved for food
and planting as payment of their depts. The land and
capitation taxes and corvee system were abolished.[10]

The economic situation of the country which changed
only slightly in structure was largely unsatisfactory to
the coup leaders who now demanded a drastic structural
change in both economy and society. Pridi, one of the coup
leaders, proposed to Praya Mano that a new economic plan
be enacted which nationalized land and virtually all of
the natural and industrial resources. If this plan had
materialized the peasants and farmers would become state
employees and the land owners would be compensated for
their losses. However, the plan was sent to the king who
ruled that the plan was communistic and the economic
reform was never executed. Since this plan had been
ultimately rejected, no formal commitment to economic
planning occurred until 26 years later.[11]

Praya Pahol became Prime Minister after the coup of
1933. Although Pridi was appointed minister in Praya
Pahol's cabinet, Praya Pahol paid no further attention to
Pridi's proposed economic plan. At this time Thailand
still had a traditional economy. The government avoided
any serious industrialization efforts, and whatever

actions that were taken were chiefly administrative, legal, and fiscal designed to bolster the security of the subsistence farmer, facilitate the participation of specialized commercial agriculture in international trade, improve public transportation and communication systems, protect Thai farmers from exploitive mill owners (most of them Chinese), and conceal the impact of taxes by imposing them indirectly. As political institutions became more stable and accepted, small commercial and manufacturing sectors began to emerge during this period.[12]

During the Praya Pahol's five years in office, the annual gross national product (GNP) growth rate slightly increased to 3.5 percent, while growth in per capita income was about 3 percent. The main feature of growth remained in the agricultural sector which was chiefly the result of high commodity prices in the world market. Such economic growth was largely unplanned and relatively unaided, and grew out of a natural expansion of rice production.[13]

Pibul became Prime Minister in 1938. His first government contributed little economic change because of the wartime situation. Pibul began his office with the goals of militarism and nationalism as he was impressed by the power of Germany and Japan. Nationalism was directed against the Chinese merchants throughout the country. At that time, the country's internal trade was under the

control of the Chinese. Rice, the main Thai export commo-
dity, was exclusively a Chinese business, once it left the
Thai paddy and entered into the world market. It was
revealed in the budget report for 1936-37 that a Chinese
banker was quoted having congratulated his countrymen in
Thailand for the announcement in China, that even during
the 1931-32 depression, their remittances to China still
remained as high as 37 million baht, a sum equivalent to
one-third of the Thai government's annual revenue.[14]

The Pibul government actively pursued policy objec-
tives designed to lessen Chinese economic domination by
enlarging Thai participation in non-agricultural activity.
Pibul prohibited Chinese entry into certain trades and
skilled worker positions which were reserved for Thais by
legal restrictions. Registered Thai ships were required to
employ Thai nationals to the extent of three-fourths of
their crew.[15]   He encouraged Thai commercial participation
and also introduced some protective labor legislation for
the industrial labor force including some limited
insurance and welfare programs.[16]   Thai businessmen
received favored treatment in government contracts. Thai
peasants were compelled to add at least one pig, three
chickens and a small plot of vegetables to their rice
fields as a measure to increase their self sufficiency and
decrease their dependency on Chinese local businesses.[17]

However, the Japanese occupation and war time infla-

tion from 1941 abruptly stopped the country's economy growth rate. The declaration of war against the west had cut off the British as the major trading partner. Actually Thailand's dependency on British trade was tremendous. There were several British shipping companies and commercial enterprises, three British banks operating in Thailand and many British companies held concessions of timber forests and mines.[18] When Thailand acceded to Japan, Thailand's trade was almost totally cut off with other countries. Pibul's government depended solely on trade with the Japanese. When Pibul's government ended in 1944, the Khuang government was also faced with the same predicament.

As Thailand entered the post-war era, the civilian governments following the war (Khuang, Seni, Tawee, and Thamrong) were hit hard with an economic depression. There had also been some damage received by the bombing of the Allies during the war. The power station in Bangkok, the Ministry of Industry, several important bridges and much of the port of Bangkok had been destroyed in bombing raids. Thus there was an acute shortage of manufactured goods of all kinds, except for a limited quantity of durable foods from Malaya made available through looting, smuggling or distress sales. The first year after the Japanese surrender, inflation in Thailand reached a staggering 1,200 percent. The currency in 1945 was only one-

twelfth of its pre-war value because the baht was left
with no cover except a small amount of gold reserve in
Thailand. The gross domestic product at market price
dropped sharply to 1.8 percent.[19]

Despite this situation, the country's main commodity,
rice, was still abundant. Nevertheless, Thailand's post-
war economy continued to suffer when Seni's government
signed the peace treaty with Great Britain at the cost of
rice surplus for war reparations.[20] Almost all the post-
war civilian governments faced economic disasters until
Thailand began to recover under Thamrong's Prime
Ministership in 1946.

Thamrong was in office for almost two years. However,
the economic recovery was a natural process. Thamrong did
not do much in the area of economic development except to
engage in major financial reforms designed to increase
national revenue, reduce financial deficits, and to regu-
late exports and otherwise control currency exchange tran-
sactions.[21] These were done while the government had faced
a political crisis and was accused of corruption and other
scandals. At the end of his governmental term in 1948, the
GNP rate of growth rose to 3 percent and the rate of per
capita income increased to 2.8 percent while the popula-
tion increased to 16 million (see Table 2, Appendix).

Since the major determining factor affecting the Thai
economy had been the world depression, economic perfor-

mance during the post-war regimes can not be concluded or described in any way as the failure of the civilian governments. The major task of these governments was one of international politics to retain the country's sovereignty while maintaining law and order after the war.

Pibul took office for the second time in 1948 when he was called to join the coup group and ousted the Thamrong's government. Pibul ruled the country until 1957, one of the longest periods of rule in recent Thai political history. During this period anti-communism became a major theme of domestic and foreign policy. Most of the anti-communist drive centered against the Chinese community, particularly in Bangkok area. Pibul began to accept United States' assistance to Thailand in modernizing the armed forces and police in addition to some economic aid.[22]

It became increasingly apparent that the additional growth needed for national economic well-being required more active and broader governmental leadership than had been provided in the past. Major structural reforms had to be planned and promoted. Since Thai public and private financial resources were extremely limited, and economic managerial skills were short, Pibul was compelled to turn abroad for economic assistance. The United States became the major source of assistance for Pibul's anti-communist regime. Pibul also called for help from the International

Bank for Reconstruction and Development and negotiated a series of loans to finance improved irrigation in the Chao Praya Basin, expand and modernize the Port of Bangkok and the railway system, and to launch the large Yanhee (later the name was changed to Bhumibol) hydroelectric power and irrigation complex.[23]

In 1950, Pibul government also signed an initial Economic and Technical Coorperation Agreement with the United States, to become a recipient of American foreign aid which averaged about $6 million per year in the period of 1951-1954. In 1955 and after, US foreign aid increased about five times to $30 million annually (see Table 7, Appendix). Thailand had expanded many programs in developing human resources and welfare services, increasing its investment in social overhead capital development, and introducing agricultural diversification.[24]

Moreover, since Thailand had been a member of the United Nation, Pibul's government also benefitted in special assistance from this organization.[25] Pibul's economic scheme steadily improved the general economic condition. The gross national product (at market price) growth rate increased to an average of between 4.5 and 4.8 percent annually while the per capita income in real terms rose to 3 percent per year. The currency level returned to its normal pre-war condition. Some efforts had been made, though not successful, to expand industrialization by the

creation of a National Economic Development Corporation

(NEDC) in 1954, and the provision of various guarantees

and benefits to private enterprises under an Industrial

Promotion Act of 1954. [26] The establishment of several

public enterprise organizations was also included in this

effort. Nevertheless there was a political motivation

behind the scenes. Pibul put some of his supporters or

high-ranking military personnel in various key positions

of the public enterprises as a reward for their support of

the regime. By 1957 the government had over sixty enter-

prises in the manufacturing field. Many were costly,

poorly planned, and undertaken primarily as a result of

political influence. Management was poor, and top-heavy.

Most operations had proved commercially unprofitable

except for a few of monopolies. In 1957, a World Bank

mission recommended that no further increase of government

be undertaken except to develop an infrastructure that

would encourage the private sector. [27]

Thailand's economy during Pibul's second regime

remained basically agricultural. The agriculture sector in

the Thai economy produced over 75 percent of the gross

domestic product while the industrial sector accounted for

only 20 percent. [28] About 75 percent of the total popula-

tion worked in the paddy field and over 10 percent worked

in other areas such as other crop farming, forestry, and

fishery. Over 90 percent of the labor force in 1950

engaged in agriculture. However, as the development programs continued, rice's share of total agricultural product dropped from 81 percent in 1948, to 62 percent at the end of Pibul's regime. The annual growth rate of rice remained between 1 to 2 percent while that of the other products rose faster.[29] However, the tax on the export of rice for this period accounted for 25 to 35 percent of the total value of rice exports.[30]

There was other evidence of a new agricultural diversification which began to occur after 1949. This was provided by the expanding importance of corn, rubber, sugar cane, jute and kenaf, the development under government monopoly of a significant tobacco industry, the rising of livestock for export, and the introduction of a wide range of other farm products which entered export channels or the urban market economy as cash crops.[31] Nevertheless, a very limited agricultural technology was introduced. There were no mechanization such as tractors in use during this period, and small amounts of fertilizers were used 90 percent of which were imported.[32] In the process of modernizing agriculture and related service sectors during the Pibul's regime, it should be noted that the Thai cultural and behavioral attitudes were also being modified. We now find a willingness to pursue personal material rewards for successful efforts in the market economy. This new attitude later provided a basis for the

boom economy in the 1960s.

Sarit entered the Thai political scene in 1957 when he staged a coup against Pibul's government. But Sarit really conducted state affairs in 1958 only after his recovery from an illness. Sarit's regime lasted five years. Although there were some efforts to provide necessary economic leadership before, but these efforts were fragmented, uneven, and not sustained with maximum energy. Sarit revealed a much greater preoccupation with the national requirements for economic development.[33] During his period, he made intensive changes in the structure of the economy and administration as a result of his serious efforts to modernize the country. For example, he created a new Ministry of National Development and he took over management of this ministry himself. The National Economic Development Board, the Board of Investment (BOI), and the Industrial Finance Corporation of Thailand were also established in this period.

The Sarit regime was further strengthened by increased agricultural activities and exports which were the result of Pibul's programs. These programs included major irrigation schemes, road networks, currency and banking reform, and the massive increase in the training of Thai students overseas, particularly in the United States.[34]

Nevertheless, Sarit's Thailand became increasingly
conspicuous for its lack of a national economic develop-
ment plan. The first national comprehensive economic plan
was not created until 1961, and it covered six years to
1966. The primary objective of the first economic plan was
"to raise the living standard by mobilizing and utilizing
both human and natural resources to achieve a high rate of
economic growth."[35] This plan revealed the government's
basic strategy in economic development: (1) financial
improvement and budgetary soundness; (2) economic growth
in conjunction with improved individual income; (3) public
investment primarily in social overhead capital; (4)
commitment to private enterprise; (5) emphasis on agricul-
tural modernization and diversification; (6) encouragement
of private investment in manufacturing; and (7) balanced
regional growth.[36]

In his strategy to develop the country, Sarit
stressed foreign investment. He successfully created a
favorable climate for investment by means of several eco-
nomic boards he had established to attract investors.
Sarit assumed the position of Chairman of these boards.
This step led to the enactment of an Industrial Investment
Act of October 1960, which was designed to provide signi-
ficant incentives for investors in particular industries
earmarked for development. Foreign investors were guaran-
teed protection from nationalization or from competition

by public enterprise in specific industries, were exempted from income taxes for two to five years, and were given an allowance to withdraw capital and profits from the country.[37]

Sarit had recruited economists both in the country and abroad to investigate, plan, and supervise the execution of the national economic plan. On the recommendation of the World Bank survey mission in 1959, Sarit launched a sustained effort to intensify and rationalize the national economic development programs. In his address to the National Economic Council, he declared:[38]

> The national economy is beset with difficulties; it is therefore, time that something is done to save the beloved country from this plight and lead it on the path of welfare and prosperity... All obstacles and impediments have to be swept away.

For this analysis, it is necessary to evaluate economic performance after it had been executed. The result of the first national economic plan was reported by the Office of the National Economic Development Board in 1966. There had been an average GNP annual growth rate between 6 to 7 percent. The government revenues had increased 11 percent per year (see Table 4, Appendix). The revenue increased resulted from improved tax collection efficiency under a program developed in conjunction with the United States Agency for International Development.

While government revenues and the GNP were increasing, the consumer price index in Bangkok and

Thonburi rose 7.7 percent. Gold reserves also continued to rise from $300 million in 1956 to $600 million in 1965 with the same amount of hard currency reserves. As one writer points out "the Thai baht, therefore is one of the hardest currencies of Southeast Asia."[39] Per capita income had been increasing at average 4 percent and labor force growth was close to 2.5 percent annually.[40] Thailand in Sarit's era made good economic progress in most of the objective areas in the plan. This era was the corner stone of the booming Thai economy and subsequent governments have implemented the same method of economic planning programs.

In 1963 Sarit died, and Thanom began his long regime for the next ten years. Benefitting economically from his predecessor, he remained until the next two economic plans were successfully executed. Impressive growth was registered by the economy during the next decade. The gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an average annual rate of 8.3 percent while the gross national product grew at 7 to 8 percent (see Tables 3 and 4, Appendix). Important in this expansion was the real growth in agriculture, which averaged 5.7 percent a year, well above the annual population growth rate of 3 percent. Contributing to this was the steady expansion of cultivated land which was averaged about 4 percent a year, the gradual extension of irrigation, and the spread of commercial crops other than

41
rice.

During the first national economic development plan, there were some deficiencies that had been discovered later. The plan did not address directly the question of regional income disparities or social equity. Funds were allocated specifically to improve economic and social conditions in only the northeastern part of the country.
42
The existence of the disparities and the potential for resolving them reflected in part the limitations in a free enterprise economy and the government's inability to shape and direct private sector investment. The limitations were important in Thailand since the private sector provided the greater share of development funds. The increasing concentration of private investment in the Bangkok Metropolitan area was the direct result of developmental policy. Few enterprises have been established in regional
43
areas.

With the expiration of the first economic development plan in 1966, the second plan was created. Thanom's economic advisors were aware of the problems and included a policy guideline calling for consideration of the need to reduce regional income disparities and imbalance between the programs. Since government revenue was limited, Thanom requested funding from foreign countries. The armed involvement in Vietnam and the outbreak of communist insurgency in Thailand during the mid-1960s led to the

coming of the United States. Its agency in Thailand, "the United States Operations Mission (USOM)" began providing major funds for the programs.[44] In return, Thailand complied with the United States' request to establish US military bases in Thailand, as they were seen necessary to facilitate the military operations in Vietnam.

In 1966, Thanom established the Office of Accelerated Rural Development (OARD) as a planning and supervising agency for regional development in accordance with the national economic plan. Its main task was to provide basic infrastructure to rural areas, especially those where security problems and armed insurgency might develop. Many development programs of OARD resulted in a large number of road networks, rural public water wells, and provision of local educational, training, and health facilities.[45]

There was a little setback in the second economic plan. In the latter half of the 1960s there had been a slowing down and the gross national product increased only 4 percent in 1967 from approximately 80 billion to 83.2 billion baht. As the goals were exceeded in the first plan, they were set too high for the second plan. Although Thanom's regime had tried vigorously to promote new industrial investment from abroad, industry grew slowly. Rice production also dropped in this period from 1.5 to 1.08 million tons, due to the drought conditions in the late 1960s.

Since Sarit's regime, Thailand's favorable balance of
payments had permitted the government to accumulate
foreign reserves of approximately one billion dollars to
stabilize the baht. The baht became one of the most stable
currencies in Asia.[46] With the drop in rice exports,
Thailand's favorable balance of payments decreased, a
major cause of financial instability.

Thanom's government encouraged new industries and
more diversification of agriculture. Maize, tapioca,
kenaf, and jute products had been supported by government
in order to renew the favorable economic and financial
position. At the end of the decade, these products had
increased in export volume from two to five times.[47] In
certain forest products, however, the picture was not
favorable. The value of rubber exports dropped about 30
percent and teak over 50 percent due to the world price
fluctuations.

The third national economic and social development
plan began in 1972 with the coverage of five years to
1976. Since the distribution of benefits from the growth
had been the major problem of the development in the first
and second plans, Thanom's economic advisors at the
national economic board set up the third plan specifically
that was designed to alleviate problems related to the
widening income gap and inequitable distribution of social
services. The plan called for regional planning and

preparation of a list of development activities by sector.

However, implementation of the proposed strategy

faced the same situation as the earlier plans because the

infra-structure of the centralized administration has not

changed.[48] The concentration of executive control in the

senior government staff in Bangkok and the lack of delega-

.tion of authority was a characteristic found throughout

the government. This situation was worsened by the time-

consuming need to refer local government questions to the

capital for resolution. More than two-thirds of the

government's employees were located in Bangkok, and many

in agencies concerned with development had to devote sub-

stantial amounts of time to bureaucratic paperwork. Thus

only the metropolitan and major urban areas benefited from

the distribution of economic development.[49] The gap

widened between the people in Bangkok and major cities and

the rural farmers. This situation also coincided with the

high birth rate in the late 1960s.

Although Thanom was ousted by the student uprising in

October 1973 and the economic plan was carried through

1976, it was worthwhile to look at the result of the plan

as an evaluation of his economic performance during his

time in office. The actual real GNP annual growth rate was

6.2 percent while the projected growth was 7 percent. It

was characterized by an increase in the economic disparity

between the regions and no reported improvement in the

high degree of inequity in income between occupational

groups.^{50} The labor force growth during the period grew

about 2.0-2.5 percent annually. Despite some deficiencies,

the economic growth in this period was still rapid and

sustained.

The civilian governments following the student

uprising in 1973 had carried on the national economic

plan. However each government had faced different poli-

tical crises and most of them were in office only for

short periods. Sanya's government took over the nation's

affairs between 1973-1975, the most chaotic period in Thai

history. It was followed by Kukrit in 1975, Seni in 1976,

and Thanin, by the appointment of a military council in

1977. Since the period of these governments had been

brief, it would be more logical to point out some charac-

teristics of each government than to analyze the statisti-

cally economic results during these periods.

Sanya was pressed by the students to concentrate his

energy in political activities. There were strikes and

demonstrations by labor unions, farmers and other groups

daily. It coincided with the world economic depression due

to the energy crisis in the early 1970s. Sanya, by his

nature, realized that he was only a leader of a care-taker

government while the constitution was being drafted in the

assembly, so he did not pay any attention to development

and the economy. With the exception of the existing

programs, there were almost no innovative economic
programs developed in Sanya's period.

After the election in January 1975, Kukrit became
Prime Minister. The decreasing economic growth had become
a major concern of the government. Kukrit announced an
economic redistribution program of "transferring funds" to
the National Assembly as the new government economic
policy. The program was nothing more than a distribution
of the government funds to the rural community at the sub-
district or Tambon level to create temporary labor for the
people in the community. Each Tambon council had to ini-
tiate its own development projects and hire local people
to do the jobs. The program called for 2,500 million baht
in distribution to 5,000 tambon councils nationwide.[51]

However, Kukrit's program seemed to be more political
than economic. As he was the Social Action Party leader,
the program would be a political base to rally the rural
area in the next elections more than to develop Thailand
economically. The results of the program were not
impressive. Over half of the give-away funds were used to
purchase raw materials and administrative procedures which
benefited only the rich merchants in the urban areas.
Although it was against government regulation to use the
fund, some rural communities had used machinery instead of
labor to complete its project in the required time. When
Kukrit dissolved the assembly due to political pressure in

1976, he was not re-elected as expected. His program died
with the coming of the new government after the general
elections.

Seni, the big brother of Kukrit, became Prime
Minister. This government engaged in the national security
problems after the fall of South Vietnam. The period of
the government was so short (April - October 1976) that
Seni could not participate in any economic program except
to carry on the existing programs from the third national
economic plan.

The next civilian Prime Minister was Thanin who was
appointed by the National Reform Council after the 1976
coup. Thanin concentrated his efforts on creating new
steps in his plan for democratic development. Most of his
cabinet members were inexperienced as they were his close
friends or were relatively young. This period has been
identified by the Thai economists as the "slackening of
economic activities" period.[52] The communist insurgency
increased with the leftist student's participation in the
terrorist activities. Though several reform policies had
been made, it was not from the economic initiative but
security drive as a result of both internal and external
threats. Economic development was of less priority as
Thanin spent most of his time on ceremonial affairs. Only
the existing programs in the third national economic plan
continued on their own momentum almost without any super-

vision from the government.

The introduction of the fourth national economic and social development plan came as the third plan expired in 1976. The plan coincided with General Kriangsak becoming Prime Minister as a result of the coup against Thanin government. As former Chief of Staff on the Supreme Headquarters who engaged in many rural development programs, Kriangsak pledged to improve rural infrastructure and the income of the farmers. He stated in the announcement of government policy to the National Assembly that: [53]

> ...the government has set as its most urgent policy, the elimination of absolute poverty and the lessening of income disparity between rural population and urban dwellers. It is the government's firm intention to pursue the aims of providing better livlihood and prospects, and a higher overall standard of living among farmers who constitute majority of the Thai people. The policy includes measures to yield a more equitable income distribution and the implementation of important agricultural development policies.

The fourth national economic and social development plan took into account that although the overall growth rate during the first and second plans was satisfactory, the nature of growth led to further income disparities among various income groups and regions of the country. The third plan although it emphasized the improvement in this area was unsuccessful. Emphasis in the fourth plan was given not only to improving of the economic structure and the maintenance of economic stability through increased production, but also to alleviating problems

related to the widening income gap and inequitable distribution of social services.[54]

However, evidence from the fiscal year budget did not show any major shift in existing development strategies. Overall development expenditures were increased about 10 percent, but the share of economic services, in which the largest appropriations were for agriculture and road construction, declined to 19.5 percent on the first year of the plan.[55] In November 1978, Kriangsak revised the fourth plan that called for a 29 percent increase in the induction of foreign investment capital during the final three years of the plan.

The revision of the plan also included additional development programs for the poorer rural areas. The funding was supported by a multinational consultative group for Thailand that included the Asian Development Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the Organization for Economic Development, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations Development Program.[56] Kriangsak had emphasized his commitment to rural sector by declaring 1979 to be the "Year of the Farmer." Later it was changed to the "First Year of the Farmer" as he felt that the development required a longer term because the basic attitude of the bureaucrats toward the rural population and its problems had not yet been changed.[57]

In 1979, General Prem became the sixteenth Prime

Minister of Thailand. During his first year in office,

Prem followed Kriangsak's path by emphasizing in develop-

ment of the rural sector. On one occasion he stated:

> We must face the fact that ours is an agricultural
> society. The success of the production capabilities.
> The fundamental aim of development policies and program
> should, therefore, be focuses on strengthening the
> capabilities of farmers who have been known as the
> backbone of the nation...we must readjust our develop
> ment strategies. Greater part of our limited resources
> must be channeled to rural development programs in
> order to build a strong base for the country's future
> development.

Economic conditions during the Prem government

reflected uncertainty and a lack of confidence. Many eco-

nomic groups such as the World Bank, the American Chamber

of Commerce, and a team of economists at Thammasat Univer-

sity issued reports citing structural defects in the eco-

nomy and voicing pressimism concerning the government's

capacity to deal with them.[59]   The overall growth rate in

1981 was 6.5 per cent, lower than the average annual

growth rate of 8-9 per cent in the last decade. Inflation

ranked with trade and current account deficits as major

economic problems. The inflation rate in 1981 alone

reached 20 per cent as a result of rising costs for

imported oil.

Despite the skepticism voiced by outside observers,

the Prem government set ambitious targets in the fifth

five-year plan for 1982-1986. The plan stated that

dependence on oil for energy needs would decline from 75
per cent to 46 per cent. Exports and industry were
expected to increase by 15 per cent annually. Trade and
account deficits are to be brought under control. The plan
emphasized reducing urban rural disparities by raising
agricultural productivity and providing rural communities
with resources and social services.[60] Nevertheless, in a
public opinion poll undertaken by the Institute of Social
Research at Chulalongkorn University in 1982, Prem was
given a low score for his handling of economic problems.[61]

In 1982, the fifth national economic and social
development plan (1982-1986) went into effect. Since the
effects of the world recession and the structure of the
Thai economy had become apparent in the fourth plan,
consequently, this recent plan calls for fiscal austerity,
a reduction in domestic consumption, removal of subsidies
to various state enterprises, increased taxes, and an
upward adjustment of public utilities' prices. The empha-
sis on reduction of absolute poverty is retained and
strengthened in the current plan. Nevertheless, the plan
still envisages a reduction of overall economic growth in
the next five year period. As one writer has pointed out
"familiar problems of implementation will be compounded if
the assumption of a slower economic growth rate is
correct."[62] But whether the assumption holds true or not
and how the plan is to be carried out remains to be seen.

6.2 Social Adaptation

This section will analyze the performance of the
Prime Ministers in the social development area to deter-
mine the adaptation of the Thai executives during each
period. In comparing the civilian and the military Prime
Ministers, there are some limitations, the main problem of
which is the time in office of the civilian Prime
Ministers which was only one-tenth of their military
counterparts. This has made it difficult to analyze
performance. The next problem concerns the process of
development itself. Social development in Thailand, as it
has been in the past, is subject to self-adaptation of the
Thai people as the country modernized and the conditions
of living changed. In other words, social development
tends to be a generalized social process involving a large
group of people. The process of development is not a
criterion for assessing the government leaders only. There
are many conditions concerned in this process.

In this section, however, we will study the perfor-
mance of the Prime Ministers by assessing them according
to general established criteria. Then we can generalize
the performance of the civilian and the military Prime
Ministers by comparing the outcomes. Before we proceed
further, we should examine the chronology of political,
economic, and social events that has occurred periodically
since the 1932 revolution as shown in the following table.

Table 6.1

Chronology of Political, Economic, and Social Events

Period/ Regime	Military and Political change	Economic Change	Social Change
1930s Civ.I Mil.I	1932 Coup d'etat End of Absolute Monarchy	Post WW I. Depression	Beginning of western civilization
1940s Mil.I Civ.II Mil.II	Militarism Party Politics 1947 Coup d'etat	War time: Inflation Peace time: Reconstruction	Nationalism End Chinese Inflow
1950s Mil.II	Counter coups Military rules	State enterprises Beginning of rural Development	Harassment of the Chinese Ban on opium trafficking
1960s Mil.II	Thanom's regime Beginning of Insurgency	National Economic Development Plans Economic boom	Minority Assimilation Beginning of massive urban inflow Higher education opportunity
1970s Mil.II Civ.III Mil.III	1973 Student uprising Democratic Regime 1976 coup d'etat	World energy crisis Economic Recession Inflation Labor strike	Massive urban migration Interest articulations
1980s Mil.III	Effective commu- nist suppression 1983 constitution	Rise in cost of living Economic Recovery	Nation-wide mobilization Integration

Source: Adapted from John L. S. Girling, Thailand Society
and Politics, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press,
1981), p. 64

From Table 6.1 we can observe that social change has
varied according to political and economic changes over
time. Social change in Thailand was slow until the mid-
1950s, when Thailand began to develop economically. Then
the rapid changes occurred coincidently with the second
military regime at the end of Pibul's regime and the
beginning of Sarit's regime. This social change continues
through the present.

In order to analyze social adaptation of the Prime
Ministers, we shall divide the social development into
four categories: integration, minority, social services,
and urban-rural disparities. Although these four
categories are not a complete scheme of the social
development, they seem to be the most promising criteria
for performance in comparing the Prime Ministers.

Integration is a process of forming parts into a
whole. Although Thailand is a unique country in terms of
race, religion, and language, the Thais vary according to
their regions, local dialects and cultures. The integra-
tion process in Thailand has always been a problem due to
some social disparities between these regions. In this
study, the concepts of nationalism and regionalism will be
used in analyzing integration in Thailand.

Minorities in Thailand have constituted another
social problem. Thailand has more than 30 ethnic groups or
minorities. The distinguishable minorities are: the

Chinese, the Thai-Malay, and the hill-tribes. Over time these minority groups have posed social problems as seen by most governments. Viewed from the perspective of a minority person, however, government has posed problems for them. Each government has acted differently in its response to the problem of minority relations.

Social services in this study refer to the governmental policies concerning the areas of public health, housing, education, and social assistance. These services, though they contribute nothing as direct or tangible as other facilities such as power to light cities, are nevertheless important to development and modernization since they affect the efficiency and the productivity of the population.

The last area of concern is urban-rural disparities. This issue indicates that there are social and economic differences between urban and rural living conditions. Thailand has begun to experience this problem as a direct result from the economic boom during the second military regime. These disparities, in turn, have created a problem of massive migration to the urban areas, especially to the national capital, in search of a better life and services. This influx places a heavy burden on urban service delivery.

Since Thailand's administrative system is centralized in nature and Thai governments in the past reacted dif-

ferently to these problems, the described factors became

problems of social development and required certain poli-

cies from the central government. Social activities in

Thailand during the civilian and military regimes can be

depicted in these four categories by Table 6.2.

In Table 6.2, The problems described have occurred

continuously in Thailand under the so-called "constitu-

tional monarchy." In compariing of individual Prime

Ministers' performances in this area, we will analyze by

specific activities of individual governments as follows:

Nationalism: A Process of Integration

Nationalism is defined as "social and psychological

forces that spring from unique cultural and historical

factors to provide unity and inspiration to a given people

through a sense of belonging together and of sharing

values."[63] Nationalism binds together people who posses

common cultural, linguistic, racial, historical, or

geographical characteristics or experiences and who give

their loyalty to the same political system. Nationalism

tends to emphasize the separateness of and differences

between groups.

With more than ninety per cent of the Thai population

ethnically and racially Thai, speaking the same language

or a variation of it, and following the same religious

beliefs, Thailand is culturally one of the most

Table 6.2

Social Activities
in Thailand: 1932-1983

Regime	Integration	Minority	Social Services	Urban-Rural Disparities
Civ.I	-	Chinese	Primary Education	-
Mil.I	Nationalism Cultural legislation	Chinese	-	-
Civ.II	-	-	-	-
Mil.II	Beginning of Insurgency	Chinese Thai-Malay Hill-tribes	Public Health Housing Education Social Insurance	Urban Migration
Civ.III	Insurgency	Thai-Malay Hill-tribes	Social Insurance	Urban Migration
Mil.III	Mobilization	Hill-tribes	-	Urban Migration

Remarks: The descriptions of each category represent the
social problems or the government initiatives for
social development which occurred during various
regimes.

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homogeneous countries in Asia. Nationalism has become a
part of the integration process as it unites people in
different regions to a unique Thai society. Nationalism
has moved along with modernization.

In the past, Thai nationalism was anti-Chinese in
character. Thai opinion against the Chinese community was
a direct result of increased emigration from China in the
early twentieth century. Later these emigrants assumed
control of domestic commerce because of the gap created by
the Thai's aversion to nonagricultural occupations.[64]

Nationalism in Thailand was stronger in military
regimes while it was less pronounced in the civilian ones.
Since 1932, all civilian Prime Ministers did not recognize
nationalism as an effective tool of integration while most
military Prime Ministers did. In this case, the military
Prime Ministers can be assumed to be more conservative
than the civilian ones.

In the first military regime, Prime Minister Pibul
was the first to pronounce nationalism to the public using
propaganda methods borrowed from Europe. In order to make
it clear that the country belonged to the Thai, the name
of the country was officially changed to Thailand. With
the Chinese in mind, Pibul's government announced an eco-
nomic plan that levied heavy taxes on foreign-owned busi-
nesses, the majority of them Chinese, while offering state
subsidies to Thai-owned enterprises. Regulations were

enacted designed to check Chinese immigration and to reserve for the Thai numerous occupations that had formerly been held predominantly by Chinese. The Pibul government encouraged the Thai to emulate European fashions, decreeing, for example, that shoes and hats be worn in public. Betel chewing was prohibited, and opium addicts were prosecuted.[65]

Apart from the anti-Chinese scheme, Pibul also revived irredentist claims, stirring up anti-French sentiment for the restoration of former Thai possessions in Cambodia. In search for support against France in Indochina, Thailand recognized Japan as the only Asian country to challenge successfully the European powers.[66] Pibul cultivated closer relations with Japan as the model of an Asian country that had achieved rapid modernization.

Pibul's policies during his second term were similar to those he had initiated in the late 1930s. The regulation of Thai social behavior through legislation to make it conform to modern standards was reintroduced. Military appropriations were substantially increased. The harassment of the Chinese and the tendency to regard them as disloyal and, after 1949 as communists, were notable features of the Pibul regime.[67]

Nationalism in the sense of anti-Chinese sentiment disappeared with the end of Pibul's second government. The next Prime Minister, Sarit, concentrated his attention a

more profound policy of integration. When Sarit came to
office, he initiated the motto "nation, religion, king" as
a political slogan for his regime.[68] The slogan combined
the paternalism of the ancient Thai state and the benovo-
lent ideal of Buddhism as well as nationalism. Since a
majority of the Thai are Buddhist and they have had
natural affection for the monarchy, Sarit succeeded in
increasing the symbols of the king, nation, and Buddhism
to the process of national integration.

After Sarit, nationalism declined in most governments
until the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. The danger of
communist threats activated a new form of nationalism in a
process of "national mobilization." National mobilization
was initiated by General Prem while commanding the Second
Army in the northeast, before he became Prime Minister.
Mobilization is a recruitment of local population in
several provinces, mostly at the border or in the area of
communist influence, to form groups of paramilitary forces
to protect themselves from the communist terrorists. Since
the suppression of insurgency in the northeastern area
succeeded, mobilization was accepted throughout the
country.

In fact, the concept of national mobilization was the
combination of the elements of nationalism that were used
effectively by Sarit in the early 1960s. While training in
some basic military tactics, the activity was centered

around the king and religion as the national symbols for
protection.[69] It was even more pronounced when Prem became
Prime Minister in 1979. Every province around the country
was scheduled for a training program for the recruited
local people with assistance from the military and many
government agencies. In 1981, approximately over a million
people have participated in this program. The program has
continued on to the present time.

Regionalism: The Problem of Integration

Throughout Thailand's long history, the process of
nation-building has been greatly facilitated by the fact
that there is an ethnic, cultural, and religious majority
which constitute over ninety percent of the total popula-
tion. This majority population of Thailand has been
divided into four groups according to their regions: the
"central" Thai, "northern" Thai, "northeastern" Thai, and
"southern" Thai.

These four subgroups collectively form the country's
strategic cultural core. Among them, the central Thai,
most of whom inhibit the central plain, provide not only
cultural but also political, economic, and social leader-
ship. They also dominate the national capital. It is upon
the central Thai that Thailand's unity and integrity most
depend.

However, it also has become apparent during the past

decades that the "northeastern" or "Esan" Thai have not
been as well integrated.[70] This subgroup forms more than a
quarter of the total population. The "northeastern" Thai,
although ethnically and culturally related to the majority
Thai, have their own distinguishable dialect. Because they
live in most economically depressed area of the country,
they have been seen as culturally and economically
"inferior" to people of the other regions. This ethnic
Thai group became a problem for national security and
integration when there were communist infiltrations in
several northeastern provinces at the end of World War II.

Unfortunately, most governments since 1932 paid
little attention to the region's problems. Before 1959 no
effort had been made to improve economic and social condi-
tions in the northeast. Sarit was the first Prime Minister
who was interested in this region for national security
reasons. As Sarit was aware of the communist activities in
the northeast, he announced several schemes to suppress
the communists as well as economic development programs
throughout this region. Sarit's initiative substantially
reduced the communist activities in the area at least for
awhile. One of the most important changes in the northeast
region during Sarit's era was the construction of many new
roads linking all major provinces together and with the
national capital. Other changes began to break down the
isolation of the northeast region from the rest of the

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country.

After Sarit died in 1963, Thanom took over Sarit's
security scheme in the northeast by implementing a eco-
nomic and social development plan while taking military
action against the communist terrorists in the area.
Thanom's government tooks steps to improve the general
conditions in education both at the lower levels and
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through the establishment of a university in the region.
Nevertheless, the military tactics being used made
problems for the other developments. As a result they
created more popular support for communist activities
during Thanom's decade.

It was not until the third military regime that the
insurgency in the northeastern region was eradicated by
mean of the mobilization initiated by General Prem. As the
northeast benefitted from the successive social and eco-
nomic development plans, regionalism in the northeast,
gradually became less divisive.

Minority: The Problem of Assimilation

In Thailand, the ethnic minorities are the Chinese,
Malay, and hill-tribe peoples and, to a much lesser
extent, the Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Mon peoples. These
ethnic differences should be properly recognized, particu-
larly the first three ethnic groups. These people have
caused problems for Thai governments for several decades
by resisting integration into Thai society. The govern-

ment's reaction to the problem varied as leaders changed.

The Chinese

The Chinese in Thailand present a serious minority problem both numerically and economically. They are the most important of the non-Thai ethnic groups resident in the country. The Chinese follow their own ways of morality and religion, speak their own language, join their own private social organizations, and marry mainly within their own group. Social values emphasized by Chinese society in Thailand are in many instances, the direct opposite of those stressed by the Thai people.[73]

Since the Chinese dominate the Thai economy and form an unassimilated element in the social body, they represent a potential threat to Thai national security as well as a serious problem for Thai economic development. Within significant elements of this economically powerful minority, the communists have infiltrated some urban Chinese workers, and there has been evidence of a degree of infiltration of intellectual and commercial groups as well.

Pibul's was the only government after 1932 revolution that arouse strong nationalism over Chinese. However, most Thais have not seen any Chinese threat. An indication of the tolerant attitude of most Thai is that, even though Pibul's government tried to spread anti-Chinese sentiment, few Thai adopted such views. Throughout rural Thailand

there is very little feeling against the Chinese. In
contrast the Chinese shop-keeper or rice miller is
regarded as a valuable member of the community, performing
essential services at reasonable cost. Only in the very
largest towns, and especially in Bangkok, has anti-Chinese
sentiment appeared.[74]

After the Pibul government, the anti-Chinese policy
declined. Governments after Pibul's stressed greater
assimilation to help develop the country economically. The
Chinese are usually treated as equal to the Thais. They
are subject to military conscription, taxes, and other
regulations. In the third civilian regime, the Chinese
were politically accepted. Several Chinese descendants
were appointed to the National Assembly and to the
cabinet. The Chinese culture remains and is publicly dis-
played without creating bad feelings among the majority
Thai. Instead, it became easy for the Thai to absorb
Chinese cultures after a long exposure to them. Generally
the Chinese problem disappeared in the middle of second
military regime.

The Thai-Malay

One of the minor ethnic groups which presents
Thailand with some potentially significant security and
development problems is the Thai-Malays. These people form
about one percent of the total population. A majority of
them live in the four southernmost provinces bordering

Malaysia, where they comprise 80 percent of the local

population. Their language is Malay, their religion Islam.
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They are essentially unintegrated into Thai society.

Historically the Malays in southern Thailand have

been oriented toward their fellow Malay-Muslims farther

south in Malaysia. They follow their own leader in poli-

tical affairs and resist all official efforts toward

assimilation. Moreover, there are evidences of communist

and separatist forces at work among these people.

Before 1960, most Thai governments, both military and

civilian, tried to assimilate these people culturally.

Most governments banned the Malay language in the schools.

Thai laws covering personal and family relations are

contrary to the teaching of the Islamic law. Thai

officials in Bangkok were insensitive to the needs and

desires of their Malay subjects in the south. Officials

were sent to the southern provinces who did not know the

Malay language and customs, and worse, were completely

unfamiliar with Islam, its laws and its meaning for the
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every day life of the Thai Muslims.   In other ways the

Thai-Malay felt they were discriminated against. In many

ways, the Thai governments frequently antagonized this

minority group and built up a resentment which was easily

utilized by irredentists calling for reunification with

northern Malaysia.

Early in the 1960s, as Sarit became Prime Minister, a new factor was introduced into the situation in the form of the communists from Malaysia. When faced with severe suppression from the British in Malaya (later Malaysia), the Malay communist leaders fled across the border into the jungles of Thailand where they attempted to rebuild their organization and forces. These communist leaders have used the discontent among southern Thais to recruit new members and to gain support for their organization.

During the Sarit regime, there were combined efforts by the Thai police and Malaysian forces to root out the remaining communist bands. They had little real success. The situation went on until Thanom became Prime Minister. The government reached an agreement with Malaysia in establishing a new joint military operation center in suppressing communist organization at the border area. However, government's strong military measures created more resentment among the Thai Malays as it appeared that the military operations often threatened the security of the local population.

After Thanom's government, governments of the third civilian and the third military regimes, took steps to improve the relations between Bangkok and the southern provinces. The later civilian and military leaders finally began to demonstrate their awareness of the problems of the south and their willingness to take some positive

steps and make some concessions to bind the Thai-Malay
more closely to the national state. Muslim leaders from
the south were brought to the capital for training and
integration programs. Efforts were made to send Malay-
speaking officials to the southern provinces. The Malay
language, under certain conditions, can be used in
schools, at least in elementary schools, but all students
must also learn Thai. Disputes involving marriage, inheri-
tance, and other family matters, when only Malay are
parties to the dispute, can be settled according to
Islamic law. The courts generally in the Malay area have a
Muslim religious adviser, rank equal to judge, present
during the hearings on cases.

Hill tribes

The hill tribes are non-Thai-speaking people who live
generally in small villages in the mountains, usually
above the elevation of two thousand feet. The total number
of hill tribes population is estimated to be less than
one-half of one percent of the total population.[77] Many of
the groups do not limit themselves to moving inside
Thailand. In reality, the country of Thailand has no
special meaning to them, because many of the tribes are
related to similar groups across the borders in Burma,
Laos, and Yunnan province in China.

The different languages and dialects spoken are used

to classify the hill tribes. A majority of them belongs to
six tribes: Karen, Meo, Yao, Lahu, Lisu, and Akha. The
first two are much larger than the other four. Each group
is distinctive not only in language but in costume, the
elevation at which it chooses to live, its religious
beliefs, and the crops they need to cultivate primarily
for their own livings. They also grow opium as a major
crops, which finds it way into the illegal international
trade. This causes much concern to the Thai government and
to international organizations. Secondly, some of the Meo
tribesmen in the northern province near Laos have became
part of communist terrorist groups operating in that area.
The hill tribes became an important part of national
security plan.

As the hill tribes practiced slash-and-burn agricul-
ture to grow their opium, jungles have been burned over
and planted with popies. After a few seasons and a few
harvests the ground is often exhausted and the village
moves to some other site where new fields are planted.[79]
With recommendations from the king, Thanom's and the
following civilian governments tried to demonstrate that
other crops can be profitable substitutes for opium.
Although there were few successes in Thanom's and the
third civilian regime, the third military regime did well
in convincing these people to grow the substitution crops
and to find markets for them. Today many of the hill tribe

villages are making satisfactory progress toward new agriculture crops. The problem of hill tribes is not as pronounced as in the past.

Social Services

Since 1932, the population of Thailand has increased more than five times. The governments under the constitutional monarchy were faced with new demands for social services for better health, better education, more material goods, a more nutritious diet, and wider economic opportunities. To meet the new needs and demands of the Thai people is a tremendous task for the government as natural resources become limited. Even though poor people in Thailand never die from starvation, unfulfilled demands for higher standards of living need to be satisfied.

Historically, social services in Thailand began in the first military regime during the Pibul government. The World Bank Report [80] confirms that the Pibul government made an impressive effort to develop social services in the field of health, housing and social insurance. Thailand's achievements in this field compare favorably with most other countries of Southeast Asia at the same time. Governments after Pibul followed the same policy in social services. However, the rapid population growth made this policy difficult to implement, particularly in the rural areas.

In terms of the government budget, public health and

social services received an allocation of roughly 10
percent of the total budget for decades (see tables 8 and
9, Appendix). As in the case of education, the proportion
remained the same except between 1967-1971, although the
actual amounts were substantially increased. In this light
we can assume that most governments achieved similar per-
formance in the field of social services.

Health Services

The most marked advances during Pibul's regime were
made in health care area. Malaria, smallpox, plague and
some other diseases were brought largely under control
through preventive measures and new types of medical
treatment.[81]

During Pibul's second government, health services
were considerably improved. The number of doctors per
thousand inhabitants increased. Pibul established the
first medical school outside Bangkok. However, health
services available within the Bangkok metropolitan area
greatly exceed those elsewhere in Thailand.[82]

Under Sarit's government the health facilities in
rural areas especially in the northeast increased
considerably. There were major hospitals in every
province. The number of health centers were more than
doubled since the Pibul's government. Nevertheless, Sarit
carried on the policies of the last regime. As Sarit

concentrated his efforts in economic development, health
services were not so attractive to government officials.

After Sarit, the main problems of Thai hospital
service were the insufficiency of staff and equipment and
the concentration in Bangkok and provincial capitals of
such facilities as were available. Only a small proportion
of the total population was served by hospitals.[83] During
Thanom's government, many international organizations such
as UNICEF, WHO, and ICA cooperated with the government on
a program to improve the facilities of the rural health
centers by training personnel, supplying equipment, and
donating drugs.[84] The program was successful and the rural
health service was improved.

When Thanom was ousted in 1973, the civilian govern-
ments faced political crises and did not pay particular
attention to health service. Until 1976 the Thanin govern-
ment asked the public to donate land and money for con-
structing more hospitals in the rural areas. Thanin made
some progress in public cooperation but the basic problem
in administering the health facilities remained.

During the Kriengsak government, a pilot project in
training local female villagers in remote areas to be
village nurses was successful. The project was a part of
the local security program which was a result of the
situation in the eastern border. After Kriengsak resigned,
the Prem government continued this training program. The

program results in the provision of at least minimum
health service for the rural population. However, despite
progress in building public health facilities, many
aspects of the public health situation remain bleak.
Regional inequity in the availability of health care and
resources is still a feature of the overall situation.

Public Housing

Few data relevant to housing are available for this
study. The first government housing program was undertaken
under Pibul's regime in 1948. In 1951, Pibul created the
Welfare Housing Office and later in 1953, the Welfare
Housing Bank. A variety of methods were used, including
loans to approved land owners to build and repair private
houses, and the construction of houses and apartments for
sale via hire-purchase arrangements or for rental.
However, most of Pibul's housing programs were constructed
in the Bangkok metropolitan area.[85]

After Pibul, Sarit concentrated his effort in social
development in the rural area. Several housing projects
were proposed in the national development plan but actual
construction was delayed until Thanom came to power in
1963. Thanom carried on these programs originated in the
Sarit era. Several public housing projects were cons-
tructed in many major provinces.

In the third civilian regime, the public housing
program was taken seriously as Thailand faced a serious

problem of rapid population increase. The massive influx

of the rural people into the urban areas was a result of

urban-rural disparities. Several government housing

projects were constructed but most of them were in

Bangkok. Its population doubled in the past decade. Slums

were wiped out of Bangkok and replaced by apartments for

the poor and middle income population. Apartment buildings

were constructed throughout the nation. The National

Housing Authority was created to plan and supervise the

construction in various regions during this period. These

public housing programs have been carried on through the

third military regime up to the present.

Social Assistance

Before 1954, the government of Thailand had no plan

for public social assistance as there were political

turmoils throughout the transformation period. After World

War II, Pibul was the first Prime Minister to introduce

social assistance by enacting the Social Insurance Act of

1954.[86] This act establishes a general framework for

social insurance, coverage of maternity, large families,

illness, invalidism, old-age and burial. All persons aged

16-60 who are regularly employed and who receive lower

wages could be covered subject to certain specified

exceptions. The law specified no scale of benefits,

however, nor does it establish definite rights to

benefits.

However, in practice the law was inoperative. Since over 80 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture mostly as farmers, while a large proportion of city workers are also self-employed, universal application was difficult. In practice the scheme could only apply to the wage-earning employees in industry, commerce and government.

In 1956, the Labor Act proposed by the Pibul government was enacted. The act contains provisions for improving the standards of safety, health and welfare of workers. The act became the most comprehensive law for the employed workers and is still in use today.

A workmen's compensation insurance law was adopted later during Thanom's regime. However, the coverage is limited to workers in firms of over ten employees. Thanom's government began to control the minimum wage for workers. The wage varied according to region but the highest rate was in the central region, particularly in Bangkok and some near-by provinces.

In 1973, when Thanom was ousted, labor and farmer unions began their articulated campaigns for better insurance and minimum wage from the subsequent civilian governments. The third civilian regime was the most difficult period for civilian governments in responding to the needs of these demands. Labor strikes occurred almost

daily with thousands of workers involved. The civilian governments, especially Kukrit's government established a labor court to settle disputes between workers and employers. However, most labor strikes were settled outside this court. This problem in part caused the decline in foreign investments.

During the third military regime, the situation was improved. More workers and employers use legal methods in settling disputes in the court. But conditions in the area of social assistance to the general public have not been improved. Social insurance is still the privilege of government employees and industrial workers. Self-employed workers and farmers still have to find ways in order to survive in the rapidly changing situation as they were in the past decades.

Education

Since 1932 Thailand has succeeded in providing free elementary education for virtually all its children. During the Praya Mano government, primary education became compulsory for children under certain ages. But higher education was still limited to only the Bangkok area. Education was improved in the first military regime, par- ticularly during Pibul's office, as secondary level educa- tion was expanded to the major urban areas in every province.

The greastest progress in the field of education in

Thailand was during the first national economic and social development*plan created in Sarit's regime. Educational facilities were expanded at all levels from the primary to the university and technical levels. There was more enrollment in the government and private schools throughout the country and more funds were appropriated for education from the central government (see table 8, Appendix). However, as the population growth rate increased, enrollment capacity in secondary schools and in universities fell below the demand. Thanom's government responded by expanding the secondary school system down to district level and establishing one university in each region. At the same time Thanom's government allowed more private schools to open with some control measures from the government. The capacity of enrollment was significantly increased.

The number of students enrolled in university programs increased dramatically in the 1960s and early 1970s (see table 10, Appendix). The tensions that had built up during this period were attributed to the frustration of large numbers of these students who were unable to fulfill professional expectations after graduation.[87] The civilian and military governments after Thanom experienced this problem, but so far no actual policy was formed to cope with the problem as Thailand has limited resources and a small industrial base to absorb the rising

demands of its population.

Urban-Rural Disparities

The urban-rural disparities were particularly a side
effect of the economic boom during the 1960s and 1970s.
The Thai governments before the first national economic
and social development plan did not have this problem as
the basic condition of living was still traditional.

At least five major forces contributed to rapid
urbanization in various towns across the country.[88] (1)
Increasing landlessness resulted from the abolition of the
limits to land ownership during Sarit's regime. Rich urban
people have bought up the pieces of land. (2) The rate of
population increased beyond the capacity of the local
economic system to accommodate the increasing population.
(3) Regional differences in economic opportunities, as the
urban areas offered higher wages and opportunities. (4)
The development of communication and transportation
systems which helped increase urban migration. (5) Various
aspects of social modernization made urban living more
attractive.

Since Sarit's regime, the priority has been given to
economic growth. A lack of concern for distribution had
the serious consequences of adding to social disparities.
As one Thai economic scholar, Puey, states that:[89]

> If we pay too much attention to social justice, overall
> growth would be slowed down, therefore we should put

economic development first. Even the rich will get richer, and the poor get poorer, soon growth will filter down to the poor automatically....we have used this method for 20-30 years now without success.

But it is impossible to expect growth to filter down in societies where there is inequality of opportunity, lack of mobility of labor, unequal levels of education, and wide disparities in present income levels as it has been in the past decade.[90] As a result of official policies permitting relatively uncontrolled profits derived from economic growth, existing social disparities have widened among several groups: (1) between the outlying regions of the country, especially the northeast, and the central plain; (2) between farmers and townsmen within the regions; (3) among villagers themselves--between the small number of better-off farmers, and the larger numbers of tenant farmers, and landless laborers; and (4) among the various strata of urban dwellers and the growing numbers of migrants from depressed rural areas, who live in slums, work as unskilled labor, or scratch a living from casual employment, at the bottom.[91]

The administration of four economic development plans during the second military regime has made Bangkok become the "primate city." The national city is not only the vital center of government and administration and of industry and commerce, it also contains ten percent of the total population in Thailand. Bangkok is about 40 times larger than the second largest city. Bangkok provides

economic and education facilities that are essential for production and recruitment of human resources.

The extraordinary contrast between the concentration of wealth, power, and prestige in the hands of a small number of the people in Bangkok and the dispersion of the poor, uneducated, and under-privileged throughout the countryside is both the strength and weakness of the social system. [92]

In 1975 the Kukrit government announced a special fund of two and a half billion baht to be made available in the rural areas for creating jobs and economic opportunities as a measure to prevent the urban migration. However, the project did not succeed in preventing urban migration which is still as massive as before.

Although the governments in the third military regime tried other measures to reduce social disparities, none of them had much success. Urban-rural disparities have become a difficult and growing problem to the administration of Thailand.

Summary

In assessing the economic and social performance of the Thai civilian and military Prime Ministers, there are two main reasons that we should not overlook in considering: (1) the time spans for the civilian governments in the past were much less than their military

counterpart; and (2) the process of economic development
as well as social development was of such a nature that it
was affected by the international situation through coope-
ration and assistance from international organizations and
several developed countries.

We have discussed the economic and social performance
of the Thai Prime Ministers since 1932. In terms of eco-
nomic performance, the military regimes, particularly the
Sarit government, tried harder than the civilian ones to
achieve economic development as well as modernization, and
they succeeded to a certain extent. At least the most
successful economic planning stage was carried on in the
military regimes while the civilian Prime Ministers were
unable to achieve such results.

In the area of social adaptation, we have discussed
the four main social problems of Thailand: integration,
minority relations, social services, and urban-rural dis-
parities. Generally the military Prime Ministers have
performed better than the civilian ones in terms of social
adaptation. But the civilian Prime Ministers, especially
in the last regime, were keenly aware of the problems.
However, they did not have time to prove themselves as had
the military Prime Ministers.

In the face of changes in the past decades, we can
see that economic and social development requires not only
good government leaders, but also the active commitment of

the local population. Despite the economic gains and social improvements that have been made, the country still needs to be developed in several aspects. It should be noted that there are some social aspects of Thailand and living conditions that have remained basically unchanged, even where some alterations to the social surface have appeared. To a great extent, this results from the fact that both the masses and the elites of Thailand are still reasonably well satisfied with things as they are. Thailand is still an agricultural country with an economy based on a small number of agricultural crops.

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Chapter 7

Role Performance: An Evaluation

Before moving directly into conclusions about the role performance of the Thai leadership and their administrative styles, we will discuss several generalizations drawn from the preceding chapters, for a better understanding of the Thai political system.

For centuries, although Thailand remained free from western colonialism, was ruled by an absolute monarchy. As Mosca[1] suggests, there were two distinguishable classes, those who ruled and those who were ruled. Throughout Thai history, it has been accepted that the highest echelons of the system were considered in every way to be superior to common citizens. The revolution of 1932 brought about some changes in the formal governmental structure but only within the ruling elites themselves. Political turmoil throughout the modern period in Thailand resulted from the struggle for power between strong individuals leading small factions. New leaders always came to power by this pattern. There was little change with regard to the people, the subjects of rule. Although at times, it appeared that a democratic system was constituted, it only lasted for a short period.

The historical experience of the political system continues to have great impact on the continuity of Thai administration. Since 1932, government in Thailand was democratic in form but still authoritarian in spirit and practice. Power was the privilege of a small group of elites. Although democratic institutions existed at the village level, it was an organic democracy seen as the expression of given place, composed of intimate ties and shared experiences which united the people of a small and stable community.[2] It is far from the western democratic model. High policy and national contests for power are subjects remote from the minds of villagers who sit at the base of the pyramidal structure.

The Thai culture suggests that change has been mainly initiated from the ruling class by "decisions from above" with little feedback from the masses below. As Mosel[3] points out, "decision from above" implies obedience from below. Compliance with authority is a carry-over of habits acquired elsewhere in the Thai culture. This has made it easy for the Thais to accommodate themselves to a gradual process of change leading toward development. As a result, the system has gradually adapted itself to the western style under the leadership of the administration.

The Thai political system can be observed to have the following features: (1) concentration of political life in the capital city; (2) rule by personality; (3) adherence

to traditions and culture; (4) absence of political ideo-
logy; (5) a weak political party system; (6) widespread
public apathy toward politics; (7) frequent changes in
constitutions and governing procedures; and (8) the coup
d'etat as an instrument of political change.

Some foreign observers of the Thai political system
argue that the system has unique political characteristics
and orientations in accordance with its traditions,
cultures, and the living styles of its people which make
it totally different from the western system.[4]

Riggs[5] used the Thai administrative system to create
his "prismatic model." This model is based upon the condi-
tions and living styles of the Thai people which have been
carried on since the founding of Sukhothai centuries ago.
His model is the conclusion of the inefficient administra-
tive functions in the bureaucracy as they reflect the
multi-functions in administration. The "prismatic model
has been shaped by traditions and personalities which are
peculiar to the western scholars who consider differentia-
tion to be the most desirable factor in the administrative
function.

In the previous chapters, we found that the political
performance of Thai Prime Ministers in terms of institu-
tionalization reflected the changes of economic and poli-
tical events that occurred continuously since the trans-
formation period from absolute to constitutional monarchy.

The Prime Minister is a political institution that keeps the country from breaking apart. From a comparative view point, the Thai Prime Minister, although possessing some impressive features, is also subject to constant criticism. By and large the Prime Minister is an institution that has been marked by substantial stability over time.

In our research, we divided the Thai Prime Ministers since 1932 into two broad categories: the military and the civilian regimes. Each category displays its own administrative and political characteristics. So far, the military occupied three regimes. Each regime was led by two or more military Prime Ministers. The civilian category also controlled three regimes but the first regime had only one Prime Minister.

The military Prime Minister, as defined earlier, is the Prime Minister who had a previous career in the military service, particularly in the Royal Thai Army. Most of these Prime Ministers came to power through coups, and retained their military positions while remaining in office. The civilian Prime Minister is a non-military politician who assumed office either by constitutional procedure or direct appointment by an authoritative body.

Civilian and Military Elites: Similarities and Differences

This study is intended to investigate the role performance of the leadership in the Thai context. Questions were raised in Chapter 1 concerning the similarities and

differences between the top military and civilian elites.
These questions were based on styles of administering and
policy goals. They can be answered by our findings in the
preceding chapters. We have discovered in this study that
the Thai Prime Ministers, whether military or civilian,
generally have the same individual characteristics in
terms of higher education, personal background, place of
origin and recruitment patterns. There is little to dis-
tinguish them in this regard.   :

From our examination of the general characteristics
and the role performance of the political elites, it was
found that elite status in Thailand was closely related
with educational achievement. This is not unexpected in a
society such as Thailand. All of the Prime Ministers have
had some higher education, about half were western-
trained. Educational achievement is in turn related to
family background and status. The majority of the Prime
Ministers came from high or middle class backgrounds. For
more than half, their fathers had worked with the govern-
ment with about one-fifth from business families. It was
also discovered that geographic location played an impor-
tant part in social mobility to elite status. Most of the
Prime Ministers originated in the capital city of Bangkok.
Statistical tests show that there is a strong correlation
between the age of the Prime Minister and his tenure in
office. The younger the Prime Minister at time of his

first office, the longer he remained in office.

Civilian Regimes

The civilian Prime Ministers displayed similar characteristics. While they came to office by constitutional procedures they served only for a short time in office. Their administrations were accompanied with frequent changes in their cabinets. By looking at Thai political patterns, we observe that every civilian regime came into power during a time of political and economic instability. The first civilian regime was a result of the economic depression after World War I and the social disparity between the common people and the nobility. The king could not manage to cope with the tightening economy resulting in the national budget being cut to almost half of the expenditure in the pre-war years. At the same time the nobility retained their privileged positions in receiving stipends from the government. The situation, in turn, widened the gap between the rich and the poor, the commoners and the nobles that remained since the former regime. The result was the revolution of 1932 and the transformation to a democratic system. Although the military executed most of the revolution, they allowed civilians to run the first government. This lasted only one year, however.

The second civilian regime also resulted from the

world situation. The civilians took over the government to relieve international pressures after World War II. At the same time, like other countries, Thailand suffered the worst economic depression while confronting the British's demands for war reparations. The civilian governments during this period also faced mounting crises. But they successfully solved most of the problems except one, that is the problem of military coups that occurred after all the difficulties were resolved.

After a long period of military rule, the civilian regime once again came in for the third time in 1973, the most violent year in modern Thai political history. This regime was characterized unfortunately by every sort of conceivable instability. It was based upon a series of coalition governments resulting in constant conflict among political parties and cabinet members, labor strikes, demonstrations, civilian unrest and riots, economic depression from the world energy crisis, increasing domestic communist activities and communist neighboring countries threatening from outside. These conditions led to frequent changes of the governments and also ended the regime by a military coup.

These are some of the general characteristics of the civilian regimes. They suggest that the same patterns pertained in different periods since 1932. Although one may argue that there were minor differences between each

of the regimes, the general pattern is still basically the same for all the civilian regimes.

If we take a closer look at the civilian Prime Ministers in these regimes, we should find similar patterns in terms of their background, personalities, behaviors and administrative styles. Most of the civilian Prime Ministers came from middle or high status families. All of them had higher education with a strong background in politics such as coup participators, ministers, members of the National Assembly or Privy Councilors. Most of them earned law degrees and were trained in western countries. With some exceptions, they were active, and enjoyed their terms in office. However, they were generally rated low or moderate in areas of leadership skills, political expertise, organization, and rules.[6]

It should be noted, however, that two civilian Prime Ministers, Pridi Bhanomyong and Kukrit Pramoj, were exceptional. They were accepted as eminent leaders by most of the Thai people as well as by foreign scholars. Pridi was the most influential person in the country between 1932-1947. Kukrit was very popular in the country for his political skills and wit. Both of them held high rating in most areas such as popularity, leadership skill, decision-making, and political expertise including legitimacy.

Military Regimes

Unlike the civilian regimes, military regimes came to power mostly by coups. The regimes are characterized by period of stability, economic growth, and modernization, particularly in the second military regime which governed the country for over a period of twenty-five years.

The first military regime consisted of two governments, one headed by Praya Pahol and one by Pibul. These two Prime Ministers, trained in Europe, attempted to follow the path of the western democratic model. For the most part, they failed. One of the causes of their failures might be the heavy emphasis they placed on nationalism, militarism, and fascism like that practiced in Germany, Italy, and Japan. Nevertheless, this regime improved many areas of society as a basis for modernization. Thailand actually began to change during this period.

The second military regime was a result of the military coup of 1947. Three eminent leaders of the regime were Pibul, Sarit, and Thanom. Pibul came to power once again and began the regime with a new developmental scheme and a democratic perception. This was in sharp contrast to his first regime. Sarit gained credit for directing much of his efforts to modernizing the country. Thanom built upon and expanded these benefits throughout the decade of his rule. This period has been considered to be the most

stable and prosperous period in Thai political history.

The third military regime differed greatly from the first two. This regime offers more in the way of democratic rules and institutionalization. More people had become familiar with the meaning of the imported democracy. More people had participated in the decision-making process of the government which was considered essential to the operation of political system. The regime continued to the present time with every sign of political and economic stability.

This study demonstrates that the military Prime Ministers shared many the common characteristics. All of the military Prime Ministers were educated at Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok. Their former careers were in the service of the Royal Thai Army. All of them were professional soldiers. They were raised to the highest rank and position in the army before they became Prime Minister. Their terms in office were much longer than their civilian counterparts.

In terms of administrative characteristics, most of the military Prime Ministers were active and enjoyed their offices. Their decisions, leadership skill, organization, and rules in most cases were higher than that of their civilian counterparts. Since most of them were in power for a longer period, their popularity was also higher than that of the civilian Prime Ministers. The only rating that

was lower than the civilian Prime Ministers was in terms of legitimacy. With the exception of Pibul in the first regime, all military Prime Ministers received low or moderate ratings for legitimacy.

Both civilian and military Prime Ministers have possessed some similarities and differences as described above. However, if we categorize the distinctive aspects, we can generally conclude that they are similar in personal backgrounds, and different in administrative styles and length in office.

Military Intervention Questions

In chapter 1, our questions concerned those factors in the Thai context that facilitated military intervention into the political system and those factors that supported civilian rule. Since these questions are closely related, we assume that the answer is to be found in the same perspective.

In this study we have found the following reasons accounted for military involvement in politics. (1) The failure of civilian governments. As seen in case of the third civilian regime, when conflict among civilian politicians was high, the civilian governments tended to be unstable and thus unable to manage domestic political conflict. (2) Widespread public apathy toward politics. The ordinary people actually see no difference between the

military and civilian rulers as long as they do not directly affect their lives. They judge "substance" and not "procedure." (3) The military's negative attitude toward the parliamentary system. Coups have occurred in part because the military has maintained a negative attitude over the efficacy of elected members of the National Assembly.[7] (4) Protection of interests. For example, both the foreign and national security policies carry an impact on the military and its well-being. (5) Political gain. Military budget, membership in the National Assembly, and cabinet appointments are direct gains from any military intervention in the political system. The military has continuously occupied these positions since the first coup in 1932. (6) The perceived need for substantial change in the society, such as positive attitude toward the democratic system, increases in literacy, education, and so forth.

As Van Der Mehden and Anderson[8] suggest, there are two broad categories of military intervention: military control of political institutions, and the military as a major factor in national political life. These categories can be applied to the Thai military leaders. In those coups d'etat that took place during 1933-1957, the military was seen as a major, if not dominant, factor in national political life. In 1958 and 1971, it was more likely that the military would assume control of political

institutions, as repeated in the 1976 and 1977 coups.
Since the October 1973 student uprising, the military can
be described as being more reluctant to assume direct
control over the political institutions.

If we view the civilian side, the factors that have
supported the civilian rule can be described as follows.
(1) Only the strongest personalities survived the system.
It suggests that the stronger the personality, the greater
the length of time in office. (2) complex political or
economic crises as in 1944 and 1973 which require civilian
expertise. (3) Strong popular participation and support as
in the period after the crisis in 1973. (4) Solidarity in
the cabinet and in the assembly, as in the case of the
second civilian regime. A united government provides
little opportunity for military intervention. (5) Strong
political party system (which never really existed in
Thailand). (6) The acceptance of the civilian regime by
the military itself, as in the case of Khuang's and
Thanin's governments.

The Impact of Public Opinion

Questions have been asked in chapter 1 concerning the
impact of public opinion in the Thai political system and
the role it played in leadership recruitment and perfor-
mance. To answer these questions, we have presented a
structural map of the political system as well as
patterns of institutionalization in Chapter 4. We can

discuss this issue further.

So far, we have described the pyramidal structure of the Thai political system with the villager at the base. However, this system is far from the formal democracy of the larger nation-state, because personalities counted more than philosophies in the Thai system. From the revolution in 1932 to the early 1970s, most people viewed political events with a feeling of impotence or indifference. High policy and national contests for power were subjects too remote from the ordinary citizen and beyond his comprehension. Moreover, Thailand lacks an active, informed electorate. Voting statistics indicate that only a minimum of the eligible voters exercised this constitutional right. The ordinary Thai citizen typically regards political affairs as beyond his personal abilities and his station in life. Political participation was consistently limited to a small group of interested persons who generally shared elite characteristics.

Thus, there has been no popular demand for political parties with clearly developed ideologies and strong organizations whose purposes would be to mobilize Thai citizens. On the other hand, although there have been many active politicians who have struggled for power, popularity and electoral success are not the chief avenues to power.

As Thailand entered the 1970's, increases in popula-
tion, land shortages, and the influx of migrants to the
capital city began to make their impact on the political
system. The impact gave rise to new currents of social and
political thought. Associated with them was a growing
perception of the dissatisfactions of ordinary Thai and of
the importance of government recognition of and response
to these problems. The emerging consciousness focused on
the needs of the ordinary Thai as measured against the
power enjoyed by those at the apex of the political
structure.

Those among whom it had surfaced, primarily students,
intellectuals, and a few younger military officers,
decried the living conditions of the poorest Thai
peasants. They denounced the absence of the appropriate
channels for popular participation in the political
process. Finally, the movement of these students in 1973
overthrew the military regime. This event, almost without
precedent in modern Thai history, marked the first time
since 1947 that change in power had been brought about by
means other than military coup.

The student uprising of October 1973 opened the way
for resumption of participant politics, which was even-
tually legalized under the new constitution of 1974. The
reform movement, however, was premature insofar as it was
unable to sustain itself and lasted only in a few years.

The nation experienced a disruptive rash of strikes, protests, and other disorders. Civilian leaders were unable to establish an effective government to work on social and economic problems. In turn the military seized back their power in the last quarter of the decade.

To summarize, public opinion has had some impact on the government since 1932. But the lack of a broad institutional base has made the people apathetic about politics. The concentration of popular demands in the 1970s was a temporary result of the student and intelligentsia movements. When the military took over the government again in 1976, these demands began to decline. Since the military stayed in power longer than the civilians, the impact of the public over the military leadership recruitment has been almost nil. Although the constitutional procedure had been used once in a great while, the impact varied greatly for the civilian leadership.

The Implication in Modernization

In this study we have been mainly concerned with one subcategory of Thai political elites or the Prime Ministers. We observed many characteristics of their personal backgrounds, administrative styles by both military and civilian leaders and the impact of public opinion. What is the general implication of these findings? It appears that one implication which we have

observed concerns the modernization of the country.

Many studies of the military has concerned the policy outcomes of the military regime. The dominant theme of scholarly analysis is that the military constituted a modernizing force.[12] Such an interpretation is consistent with the justifications for political intervention offered by the military themselves.

Modernization concerns the desire for a higher standard of living in human perspective. Western scholars such as Pye,[9] Huntington,[10] Rustow,[11] have identified modernization similarly, as a process of changes asso- ciated with man's increasing control over his natural and social environments.

Modernization, as defined in this study, is a systemic process of changes toward an achievement in the political, economic, and social structures of a society, with political participation, economic efficiency, and social equality as the core criteria. These three aspects of modernization are usually complementary. Modernization is really a set of interrelated changes in the political, economic and social realms. An emphasis on any single aspect of modernization may encounter obstacles or may lead to the failure, if other interrelated factors are not addressed.

As we have discussed regarding the military interven- tion, Thailand since 1932, has witnessed the rise of

militarism mainly through the mechanism of the coup
d'etat. The military leaders have participated in poli-
tical decision-making in national affairs. Most military
regimes claimed to be a modernizing force and insisted the
right to rule as appropriate to conditions of the country.

Over the past decades, the most important feature of
modernization in Thailand has been the concentration on
economic development and, to a lesser extent, social
improvement. The military regimes had tried hard to
achieve success in these types of development by creating
many so-called "national social and economic development
plans." From 1961 to 1983, Thailand had five economic
plans which most governments claimed to be successes.
These plans suggest that there have been efforts to
modernize the country.

However, our concern is that economic growth can not
be sustained without a corresponding political development
to accompany it. As we may see, none of the plans recog-
nized the development of a political structure which would
involve greater popular participation in the national
decision-making processes. The absence of this strategy
has been caused by the following. (1) The military regimes
have pronounced their dedication to undertaking the eco-
nomic well-being of the people. It is also the ultimate
goal of every government to provide welfare and well being
for the people. Economic development has become the basic

government policy and has often been used to legitimize
military lrule. (2) Economic development is the most
feasible modernization strategy which the military leader-
ship could adopt. (3) Under the military, political parti-
cipation programs would simply be rejected. For they are
antithetical to the existing political power structure.
That is, the military is generally adverse to indecisive-
ness and delay resulting from the political bargaining
process. (4) The contemporary modernization strategy for
the less developed countries generally places greater
emphasis upon economic growth and welfare with aid from
the more developed countries. It is conceivable that the
economic development program has been internationalized
rather than domesticated.

For civilian regimes, evidence has shown less govern-
mental participation in economic development programs.
Historically most civilian regimes concentrated, to a
greater extent, on various political development schemes.
But their activity was limited due to political turmoil
and problems of conflict management. Civilian regimes
survived only short terms while facing mounting crises.
They had to divert their attention toward solving the
problems at hand. Being in office for only a short period,
the civilian governments received less help or cooperation
from the bureaucracy than did the military. Measurable
success in modernization was never achieved by the

civilian regimes. At least there was that perception.

Economically, the military Prime Ministers achieved some progress in economic growth and partial successes in raising the national economic well-being to a certain level. Their longer terms in office as well as the accumulated technological and management skill may be the principal explanation of the economic growth.

What level of success in modernization did the military actually achieve? Perhaps the most important factor was their contribution and devotion to the development of the country. This attitude is crucial to modernization in a third world country. The economic and social development plans that originated during the military regimes laid down the ground work for progress and set certain goals for the society in general. One of the chief successes was in the art of planning itself--an activity which comes natural to the military.

Performance: An Evaluation

If we look at the political, social and economic performance of the military Prime Ministers in comparison to the civilian ones, we can observe some important characteristics.

The military regimes have some disadvantages in political performance mainly because of the coups they came to power by force. They were viewed as less legitimate in terms of democratic procedures, but they assumed a

"substantive" legality by virtue of their policies in office. Traditionally, an elite group rules while the others are silent. This condition in Thailand has provided an opportunity for the military to rule. The military leaders could not and would not let the legislative body or popular participation function in a normal way, as in other modern nation-states because these processes were antithetical to the regime. As a result, other political institutions could not check and balance the power of the executive when the military controlled government. During the military regimes, constitutional procedures were not seriously regarded as an instrument of restraint but rather an instrument to rule effectively.

In civilian regimes, evidence shows the Prime Ministers were bound to follow constitutional procedures because they had no way to avoid them. The legislative body in the civilian regime was more active than during the military one. However, the case of popular participation was also limited as we can see from the voting patterns. The majority of the Thai people have neglected this basic political right since 1932. We can conclude that since there have been limited popular roles in politics, neither the military nor the civilian leaders fared better in effecting the functioning of political participation.

For the social and economic evaluations, it appears

that the military has possessed more effective means of
employing social and economic schemes, both in national
economic growth, and social adaptation. The economic
conditions during the military regimes were more stable
than their civilian counterparts. People adapted and
adjusted to social conditions under the military easier
than under the civilian. History or tradition may be the
cause of this adaptation, since the Thais are familiar
with absolute leadership. With the cultural influence,
economic and social performance of the military regimes
could achieve better results than the civilian ones.
However, one condition must also be considered, the Thai
military leaders have spent longer time in office than the
civilian leaders.

Most civilian leaders faced political crises during
their short tenures in office. Since popular participation
was limited, most civilian governments ended up as coali-
tions. Fighting and turmoil in the cabinet and National
Assembly were unavoidable and detracted from the govern-
ment's image. No matter how experienced they were, govern-
ments had little time to rearrange economic or social
conditions while the fighting continued. As a result,
these governments were labeled "unstable" and gave way to
the military, which better managed conflict.

In sum, we conclude that: first, military Prime
Ministers have some advantages over civilian Prime

Ministers in terms of economic and social performance but fare worse in political performance; second, military leaders also possess a better style in administration; third, the military leaders, while in office, have also taken advantages of their position to foster their own group interests; and lastly, Thailand has become modernized partly because of the performance of the leadership. But neither the military nor civilian regimes can be assumed to be the true agent of the modernization.

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   Institute, 1981), pp. 71-72

8. Fred Van Der Mehden and Charles W. Anderson,
   "Political Action by The Military in Developing
   Areas," Social Research, Winter, 1960

9. Lucian W. Pye, Aspects of Political Development,
   (Boston, Little Brown and Company, 1966), p. 40

10. Sammuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing
    Societies, (New Haven, Yal University Press, 1968),
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    Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey,
    (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 6-7

12. There have been abundant of studies related to the
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    (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966); Edward
    A. Shils, "The Military in the Political Development
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    The Military in the Political Development of New
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    Robert W. Jackman, "Politicians in Uniform, Military
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    American Political Science Review, Vol.70, 1976;
    Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing
    Societies, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968);
    Eric A. Nordlinger, "Soldiers in Mufti, The Impact of
    Military Rule upon Economic and Social Change in the
    Non-Western States", American Political Science
    Review, Vol.64, 1971; Philippe C. Schmitter, "Military
    Intervention, Political Competitiveness and Public
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    Intervention, Morris Janowitz and Jacques Van Doorn
    (ed.), (Rotterdam, Netherlands, Rotterdam University
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    & William R. Thompson, The Post-Coup Military Spending
    Question, A Pooled Cross-Sectional Time Series
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APPENDIX

Table 1

Chronology of Thai Politics: 1932-1983

Cabinets	Date	Legislative Assemblies/Year
1. Mano(1)	Jun 28, 32 - Dec 10, 32	National Assembly (Appointed, Mano) 1932
2. Mano(2)	Dec 10, 32 - Apr 1, 32	
3. Mano(2)	Apr 1, 32 - Apr 20, 33	
4. Pahol(1)	Jun 21, 33 - Dec 16, 33	
5. Pahol(2)	Dec 12, 33 - Sep 22, 34	National Assembly (Elected, Pahol) 1933
6. Pahol(3)	Sep 22, 34 - Aug 9, 37	
7. Pahol(4)	Aug 9, 37 - Dec 21, 37	
8. Pahol(5)	Dec 21, 37 - Sep 10, 38	National Assembly (Elected, Pahol) 1938
9. Pibul(1)	Dec 16, 38 - Mar 7, 42	National Assembly (Elected, Pibul) 1938
10. Pibul(2)	Mar 7, 42 - Aug 1, 44	
11. Khuang(1)	Aug 1, 44 - Aug 16, 45	
12. Tawee	Sep 1, 45 - Sep 16, 45	
13. Seni(1)	Sep 17, 45 - Jan 31, 46	
14. Khuang(2)	Jan 31, 46 - Mar 24, 46	National Assembly (Elected, Khuang) 1946
15. Pridi(1)	Mar 24, 46 - Jun 1, 46	
16. Pridi(2)	Jun 11, 46 - Aug 23, 46	
17. Thamrong(1)	Aug 23, 46 - May 30, 47	
18. Thamrong(2)	May 30, 47 - Nov 8, 47	
19. Khuang(2)	Nov 10, 47 - Feb 6, 48	
20. Khuang(3)	Feb 21, 48 - Apr 8, 48	National Assembly (Elected, Khuang) 1948
21. Pibul(3)	Apr 8, 48 - Mar 23, 49	
22. Pibul(4)	Jun 24, 49 - Nov 29, 51	
23. Pibul(5)	Nov 29, 51 - Dec 6, 51	
24. Pibul(6)	Dec 16, 51 - Mar 23, 52	

Remark: to be continued.

Table 1 (Continued)

Chronology of Thai Politics: 1932-1983

Cabinets	Date	Legislative Assemblies/Year
25. Pibul(7)	Mar 24, 52 - Feb 26, 57	National Assembly (Elected, Pibul) 1952
27. Pibul(8)	Mar 21, 57 - Sep 16, 57	National Assembly (Elected, Pibul) 1957
28. Pote	Sep 21, 57 - Dec 26, 57	.
29. Thanom(1)	Jan 1, 58 - Oct 20, 59	
30. Sarit	Feb 2, 59 - Dec 8, 63	Constituent Assembly (Appointed, Sarit),1959
31. Thanom(2)	Dec 9, 63 - Mar 11, 68	Constituent Assembly (Appointed, Thanom), 1959
32. Thanom(3)	Mar 7, 69 - Nov 17, 71	National Assembly (Elected, Thanom) 1969
33. Thanom(4)	Dec 18, 72 - Oct 14, 73	National Assembly (Appointed, Thanom), 1972
34. Sanya(1)	Oct 14, 73 - May 22, 74	National Assembly (Appointed then elected, Sanya) 1973
35. Sanya(2)	May 27, 74 - Feb 21, 75	
36. Seni(2)	Feb 22, 75 - Mar 16, 75	
37. Kukrit	Mar 27, 75 - Apr 16, 76	National Assembly (Elected, Kukrit) 1975
38. Seni(3)	Apr 17, 76 - Oct 4, 76	National Assembly (Elected, Seni) 1976
39. Seni(4)	Oct 5, 76 - Oct 6, 76	
40. Thanin	Oct 22, 76 - Oct 20, 77	National Assembly (Appointed, Thanin), 1977

Remark: to be continued.

Table 1 (Continued)

Chronology of Thai Politics: 1932-1983

Cabinets	Date	Legislative Assemblies/Year
41. Kriengsak(1)	Nov 11, 77 - May 22, 78	
42. Kriengsak(2)	May 22, 78 - Feb 29, 79	National Assembly
43. Prem(1)	Feb 29, 79 - May 83	(Elected, Kriengsak), 1979
44. Prem(2)	May 1983 - Present	National Assembly (Elected, Prem) 1983 .

Source: 1. Likhit Dhiravegin, The Bureaucratic Elite of Thailand: A Study of Their Sociological Attributes, Educational Backgrounds and Career Advancement Patterns, (Bangkok, Wacharin Press, 1978), p. 196

2. Bancha Keokettong, Colonel, Samsib hok ratabal nai rabob prachathipatai kong thai, (Thirty Six Governments in the Thai Democratic System), (Bangkok, Roong Ruang Tham, 1976)

Table 2

Thailand's Population, 1930 - 1983

Year	Population ('000)	Population Growth Rate
1929	11,506	2.2
1937	11,464	3.0
1947	17,443	1.9
1956	20,095	3.2
1960	26,258	2.7
1970	34,397	3.3
1980	47,500	1.8

Source: 1. Based on information from U.S. Department of
           Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Country
           Demographic Profiles. Thailand, Washington,
           April 1978, p. 5
        2. United Nations Department of International
           Economic and Social Affairs and Fund for
           Population Activities, Population Policy
           Compendium. Thailand, January, 1975, p. 1

Table 3

GDP Growth Rate, 1960-1976
(in constant 1962 price)

	1950/55	1960/65	1965/70	1970/77	1960/77
Agriculture	1.8	5.2	5.7	3.8	4.9
(Crops)	1.7	4.7	4.5	3.9	4.3
Industry	3.8	11.3	10.4	8.5	7.4
(Manufacturing)	3.7	10.7	10.3	9.6	10.8
Services	6.1	7.8	8.9	6.8	8.1
GDP	5.0	7.6	8.2	6.4	7.6
GDP per capita	2.7	4.2	4.9	3.7	4.4

Remark: 1977-1982 GDP rate of growth = 6.1

Sources: 1. Based on information from Oey Astra Meesook,
Income, Consumption and Poverty in Thailand,
1962/63 to 1975/76, (World Bank Staff Working
Paper No. 364), Washington, 1979
2. Thailand, Bureau of the Budget, Thailand
Budget in Brief, 1982, (Bangkok, Bopit Karn
Pim, 1982)

Table 4

Gross National Product and Population

Year	GNP (Billions Baht) (at constant 1962 prices)	Population (Millions)	GNP per Capita (Baht)
1951	33.5	20.2	1,743
1953	39.5	21.5	1,930
1955	43.2	22.8	2,000
1957	48.2	24.1	2,000
1959	53.6	25.6	2,094
1961	58.9	27.2	2,165
1963	69.1	28.9	2,391
1965	79.5	30.7	2,590
1968	102.7	33.7	3,047
1969	112.4	34.7	3,239
1974	271.4	41.3	6,571
1975	297.2	42.4	7,615
1976	337.5	43.2	7,813
1977	383.1	44.3	8,648
1978	464.6	45.2	10,278
1979	546.5	46.1	11,855
1980	672.4	47.0	14,306
1983	785.9	48.3	16,271

Sources: 1. James C. Ingram, Economic Change in Thailand, 1850-1970, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1971), p. 222

2. Government of Thailand, Thailand's Budget in Brief, 1980, (Bangkok, Bopit Karn Pim, 1980), p. 86

Table 5

Investment and Saving, 1960-77
(as a percentage of GNP)

	1961-65	1966-70	1971-77
Private investment	13.6	16.7	16.5
Public investment	5.6	7.5	6.2
Change in stocks	0.7	1.5	1.9
Total	19.9	26.7	24.6

Source: Based on information from Oey Astra Meesook,
Income, Consumption and Poverty in Thailand,
1962/63 to 1975/76, (World Bank Staff Working
Paper No. 364), Washington, 1979, p. 9

Appendix

Table 6

Gold and Foreign Exchange Reserve as Percentage of Notes in Circulation

As at End of Year	Percentage
1945	8.1
1946	16.1
1947	19.8
1948	29.4
1949	48.8
1950	78.3
1951	87.2
1960	95.1
1965	90.3
1972	88.6
1975	84.2
1979	89.1

Sources: 1. Adapted from James C. Ingram, Economic Change in Thailand 1850-1970, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1971)
2. Thailand, Office of the Board of Investment, Key Indicators of Thailand, (Bangkok, 1978)

Table 7

Sources of Foreign Aids
(in million dollars)

Year	United States	Other Countries
1951-60	131.8	.7
1961	7.1	.5
1962	13.0	.6
1963	16.3	.7
1964	12.2	.7
1965	18.7	1.4
1966	43.6	2.2
1967	55.0	3.9
1968	47.3	3.3
1969	37.9	3.2
1970	30.7	4.7
1971	23.0	3.4
1975	14.7	30.2
1976	10.2	28.9
1977	3.5	26.9
1978	5.1	50.5
1979	3.5	68.5
1980	2.8	89.8
1981	8.3	104.2

Remark: U.S. $1 = 20.45 baht.

Source: 1. Robert Ho and E. C. Chapman (eds.), Studies of
Contemporary Thailand, (Canberra, Australian
National University, 1973)
2. Thailand, Bureau of the Budget, Thailand Budget
in Brief 1982, (Bangkok, Bopit Karn Pim, 1982)

Table 8

Selected Government Expenditures
(in billion baht)

Year	Defense	% Budget	Education	% Budget	Health	% Budget
1930	.18	20.0	.06	7.0	-	-
1935	.23	27.0	.93	11.0	-	-
1941	.57	36.0	.17	10.0	-	-
1945	2.11	51.0	.21	5.0	-	-
1949	4.50	28.0	1.70	11.0	-	-
1955	9.62	21.1	7.97	17.5	-	-
1962	18.41	19.8	21.11	22.7	-	-
1967	37.92	18.2	47.92	23.0	3.06 *	11.2 *
1971	54.20	19.9	76.64	26.4	3.31	11.6
1972	56.42	19.5	54.47	18.9	3.35	11.5
1973	65.1	20.3	59.53	18.6	3.57	11.1
1974	71.66	18.4	70.23	18.0	4.09	10.5
1975	82.89	16.4	102.88	20.4	5.25	10.4
1976	105.70	16.9	132.26	21.1	6.96	11.1
1977	131.01	19.1	148.41	21.6	8.18	11.9
1978	164.05	20.3	163.58	20.2	8.80	10.9
1979	190.66	20.7	180.04	19.6	9.92	10.8
1980	223.84	19.5	225.58	19.7	-	-
1981	277.23	19.8	279.33	20.0	-	-
1982	316.18	19.6	323.65	20.1	-	-

Remark: * = 1970

Sources: 1. 1930-49: James C. Ingram, Economic Change in
Thailand: 1850-1950, (Stanford,
Stanford University Press, 1971)
2. 1955-82: Thailand, Bureau of the Budget,
Thailand's Budget in Brief, 1980,
1982, (Bangkok, Bopit Karn Pim, 1980,
1982)

Table 9

Social Services in Thailand

Item	1933	1938	1950	1960	1965	1970	1977
Population	11.5	12.5	20.2	26.3	30.7	36.2	44.3
Annual rate of growth	2.2	3.0	2.0	2.7	3.1	3.3	1.9
Life expectancy							
: Male	50.4	52.5	53.4	53.6	55.2	62.8	57.6
: Female	54.5	56.3	58.0	58.7	61.8	68.9	61.0
Infant mortality rate	-	-	-	48.9	31.2	25.9	46.0
Doctors per 10,000 of population	1.10	1.16	1.27	1.30	1.41	1.05	1.39
No. of hospitals/ health centers	85	236	388	817	907	1,976	3,755
Literacy rate	43	52	61	68	70	72	81

Source: The World Health Organization, A Decade of Health
Development in South-East Asia, (WHO Regional
Publication, South-East Asia Series, No. 7, 1977),
p. 51

Table 10

School Enrollment at Primary, Secondary and
University Levels 1961 and 1975

Level	1961	1975
Preprimary	50,640	224,620
Primary		
Government schools	3,582,227	5,944,950
Private schools	510,029	741,527
Total Primary	4,092,256	6,686,477
Secondary		
General		
Government	129,062	653,100
Private	141,694	303,327
Total Secondary General	270,756	956,427
Vocational		
Government	53,687	105,692
Private	22,423	n.a.
Total Secondary Vocational	76,110	105,692
University	28,691	136,263
Total	4,518,453	8,109,479

Sources: 1. Adapted from Thailand, Office of the Prime
Minister, National Statistical Office,
Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Vol.24, No.3,
September 1976, pp. 17-19
2. United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization, World Survey of
Education, IV, Higher Education, New York,
1966, pp. 1082-83

Table 11

Distribution of the Poor by Region and Location

Region	As percent of total poverty group			% of total population in 1976
	1962/63	1968/69	1975/76	
Northeast				
Urban	2	1	1	1
Rural	46	58	50	33
Total	48	59	51	34
North				
Urban	3	–	1	2
Rural	22	20	22	19
Total	25	20	23	21
Central				
Urban	2	1	1	2
Rural	14	7	8	20
Total	16	8	9	22
South				
Urban	1	–	1	1
Rural	8	11	11	11
Total	9	11	12	12
Bangkok	2	2	5	11
Kingdom				
Urban	10	4	9	17
Rural	90	96	91	83
Total	100	100	100	100

Remark: The poverty line is defined as 1,981 baht per
person in the household per year in rural areas,
and 2,961 baht in urban areas in 1975-76 prices.

Source: Based on information from Oey Astra Meesook,
Income, Consumption and Poverty in Thailand,
1962/63 to 1975/76, (World Bank Staff Working
Paper No. 364), Washington, 1979, p. 63

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