

FOREIGN POLICY DETERMINANTS AND DIRECTIONS  
OF CONTEMPORARY THAILAND

By

PRACHYA DAVI TAVEDIKUL

Bachelor of Arts

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

1970

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College  
of the Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS  
July, 1972

FEB 7 1973

FOREIGN POLICY DETERMINANTS AND DIRECTIONS  
OF CONTEMPORARY THAILAND

Thesis Approved:

*Clawed V. Sore*

Thesis Adviser

*Richard L. Dick*

*Raymond G. G. G.*

*D. Blusham*

Dean of the Graduate College

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his gratitude and sincere appreciation to his major adviser, Professor Harold V. Sare, for his guidance and assistance throughout this study. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to Professor Raymond N. Habiby for his helpful comments and criticisms; and to Professor Clifford A. L. Rich, without whom, the writer would never have been able to pursue a graduate degree at Oklahoma State University.

A note of thanks is given to Mrs. Vilaiwan Anantasiri for her assistance in supplying governmental documents from Thailand. In addition, appreciation is extended to Mrs. Linda Hunter for her assistance in typing the final draft. Finally, special gratitude is expressed to my wife, Lakhana, for her understanding, encouragement, and many sacrifices.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. BAMBOOS BEND WITH THE BREEZE . . . . .	12
III. THE ENEMY OF AN ENEMY IS A FRIEND . . . . .	40
IV. THE POLICY OF ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST . . . . .	62
V. IN SEARCH OF AN ASIAN CONCERT . . . . .	90
VI. CONCLUSION . . . . .	118
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	124

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In the international politics of the past and present centuries Southeast Asia has interacted with the major political forces of the times. Starting with the era of European colonialism which dominated the area in the nineteenth century, the international relations of this region were determined in the far-away capital cities of France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States. Nineteenth-century colonialism, even with its idealistic aspects, produced political, and in many respects, economic, social, and cultural patterns that lacked the elements of permanence. Wiped out by the Japanese army during World War II, and coupled with the rise of its greatest foe--nationalism of the twentieth century--the European powers, including the United States, had to adjust for better or worse to the loss of all or most of their possessions in Southeast Asia.

The Philippines, Burma, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and South and North Vietnam have joined Thailand in the family of sovereign nations. As these countries achieved their independence, a new pattern of international relations emerged in Southeast Asia after the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> A power vacuum was created because of the declining influence of the Western powers. In an effort to fill this vacuum in the latter part of the 1950's and throughout the 1960's, United States power has replaced that of the British and the French in the area as

Southeast Asia came to be an active region in the struggle between the Communist and Western forces. The Korean war from 1950 to 1953 and the Indochina war from 1946 to 1954 were international conflicts that had a significant impact on Southeast Asia. For the first time the people of this region came to realize how big-power conflicts threatened their interests. This threat became even more profound when the Vietnamese civil war broke out in the early 1960's.

The United States' foreign policy toward Southeast Asia has been the major obstacle against the threat of Communist states in the area; it has been successful in the sense that today there are still a number of "free" states that have been able to evade Communist take-over. The United States' foreign policy has been designed to deny China the rich resources of the area, to preserve the independence of the established states, both old and new, and to promote foreign policies favorable to the Western bloc by the governments of the Southeast Asian states. But the United States' commitment to protect this region has been too costly, both in terms of manpower and material resources. Thus, changes in American foreign policy are evolving. The Nixon Doctrine<sup>2</sup> is a manifestation of these changes. The Doctrine calls for a long overdue re-examination of the recent past and reveals the intention to work out a new set of relationships with allies, friends and erstwhile foes on the basis of perceived United States interests. This is evident in the more recent rapprochement with the People's Republic of China. The United States has made it clear that the defense and development of other countries must be, first, the responsibility of the individual state and, second, of the region that the particular state concerned belongs to.<sup>3</sup> If United States interests are involved, military and

economic aid may be extended, but only to governments that demonstrate a capability of surviving the crisis they confront. The commitment of American soldiers to any government confronted with a crisis is to be made only if vital interests require it. In fact the commitment of United States troops to bolster governments in Southeast Asia is very unlikely in the future. The United States under this policy is reducing its military presence in Southeast Asia.

The American move to reduce its military commitment in Southeast Asia has definitely caused considerable anxiety among the leaders of certain countries of the area which have become dependent upon the United States for the survival of their regimes. Thailand is among them. Its relationship with the United States dates back to the days of Abraham Lincoln. Although troop withdrawal or a reduced presence in Asia need not significantly alter American basic interests in the region, it signals American intention to reduce its involvement in the area and suggests a reluctance to maintain a forward position that might require military action. The enunciation of the Nixon Doctrine, the diminishing role in Southeast Asia, to which the Thai are most sensitive, and the American negotiations with Peking, all indicate a United States disengagement. The Thai leadership, of course, fears that once American troops are withdrawn, the United States may be unable or unwilling to give direct support in an instance of Communist aggression. An extraordinarily complicated and delicate task of reconsidering foreign policy strategies confronts the Thai leaders, who for a long time have been dependent upon the United States. The important question facing the Thai leaders now is whether recent developments in Southeast Asia, as well as complicated political events within the country,<sup>4</sup> have

impaired the government's ability to adjust without incurring major sacrifices.

When nations formulate their foreign policies, it is generally believed that they act in accordance with whatever their national interests might dictate. The national interests of a nation are said to be the raw materials out of which a foreign policy is made.<sup>5</sup> Yet the concept of "national interest" is quite an illusive one. It is not a term that can be defined with definite clarity. If governmental institutions are stable and the governing leadership is secure, then a viable foreign policy reflecting vital interests is possible. Before a foreign policy can be determined national interests must be perceived. \* In the case of the United States, the Nixon Administration has determined that it is no longer in the interest of the United States to play a dominant role in solving the internal problems of the states in Southeast Asia. Its perception of national interest in the area has changed. No longer does the Communist penetration in Southeast Asia manifest a monolithic force. Instead, the Communist leaderships are competing among themselves for position, and in the process it is conceivable that reasonably viable states can, under these circumstances, maintain themselves with a minimum of assistance. Also, the United States has determined that even with an extensive commitment of military forces it is difficult to succeed in problem areas where the governing regimes are very weak and unstable. Internal political forces in the United States also have to be taken into account. In this regard there is considerable resistance to long-term and extensive involvements in areas some distance from the United States.



Confronted with this position of the United States, the Thai leadership is faced with the difficult task of adjustment. For a time the national interests of Thailand and the United States converged; both states pursued the same policies of opposing and frustrating Communist moves any where in the region. Thailand today still considers the Communists to be a threat to its national security and well-being, but the United States no longer perceives the threat as constituting a danger to its vital interests. Thailand is forced to adjust.

This study will investigate policy alternatives open to Thailand under the assumption that the United States is drastically reducing its commitment to the region. There are four lines of policy at the present time that might be pursued by the government of Thailand in order to realize its national interests. The first alternative is accommodation with China; Thailand is well known for the use of this strategy since it was one of its traditional policies. Since China has always enjoyed a major influence in Asia and is now developing a significant position of power, it is in a good position to fill any vacuum left by the withdrawal of the United States. The second alternative is alignment with the Soviet Union, which recently has expressed some interests in the area and has proposed a new security arrangement designed primarily to check rising Chinese influence in Asia. The third alternative is neutralism. This is the so-called "Thai-ist" independent policy presupposing absolute neutrality. It was also one of Thailand's traditional foreign policies. However, it was discarded in the early 1950's after the military regime returned to power in the 1947 coup. The last alternative is regionalism. This would require working closely with other states in the Asian and Pacific region. In recent years Thailand has

become one of the centers of political activities in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok's foreign relations currently have important implications for the region as a whole. Moreover, as a former United States Ambassador to Thailand puts it,<sup>6</sup> Thailand has now become the "key link" between Northeast and Southeast Asia in a growing network of political, economic, cultural, and military exchanges among governments, private organizations, and regional institutions. The efforts so far have enjoyed some success in terms of social, economic, political, and cultural matters. Should the scheme evolve to include a military alliance, which is conceivable, it could respond to any threat that might come from the powers that challenge the status quo of the region.

The task of foreign policy analysis is to explore the behavior of the state in the international arena. An essential preliminary step in this task is to conceive foreign policy as a process related to a limited number of very fundamental factors. In analyzing the behavior of Thailand, certain factors will be taken into account. These factors, or the foreign policy "determinants", will be restricted to four major categories in order to make the study manageable. The factors chosen for the study are: (1) historical factors--which will be discussed in terms of what policy alternatives, based on the past performance of Thailand in its response to European colonialism, Japanese colonialism, and Chinese involvement in the region, are available; (2) geographical factors--the influence of Thailand's proximity to China, the Indochinese area of political and military turmoil, and to significant countries of the region such as India, Australia, and Indonesia on Thailand's foreign policy; (3) economic factors--the impact of Thailand's pattern of trade that might alter foreign policies of the region and the world; and

(4) political factors--the relationships between internal political forces and foreign policy patterns, and the impact of external political forces, primarily in reference to the structure of relationships among the large power, on Thailand's foreign policy.

Having identified the policy alternatives available and also the major factors that seem to have an important bearing on foreign policy choices, this study will then proceed to examine the alternatives that these factors seem to support.

The following hypotheses are suggested for this study: (1) given the ideological characteristics of the Thai ruling elite and its relative stability, Thailand's past relationship with China, and the pattern of Thailand's international economic relations, Thailand is not likely to align with the People's Republic of China; (2) while Thailand may be more inclined to align with the Soviet Union than China because of the nearness of China and its intense interests in Southeast Asia, the ideological characteristics of the Thai leadership, its economic interests, and the fear of Soviet dominance render alignment with the Soviet Union unlikely; (3) although the Thai leadership has previously pursued a policy of neutralism, which would be satisfying for a small state like Thailand providing the large powers would "leave it alone," it is not likely that the leadership will pursue such a policy in the near future. The uncertainty of big-power relationships in the region, the political instability of the surrounding states, and the threat of internal insurgency render this policy alternative of dubious value to the current political leadership. Experience with neutralism in the region has not been beneficial to the states (such as Burma and Laos) that have attempted it; and (4) the ideological characteristics of the Thai

leadership, the fear of Chinese and Soviet power, the orientation of Thai economic development, and the need for external assistance to solve problems that insurgent groups benefit from will require the Thai leadership to opt for regionalism as a major foreign policy position. The United States under the Nixon Doctrine, Japan because of its economic interests, and Australia because of security considerations, are expected to give substantial assistance to governments in the region which conscientiously and cooperatively attempt to solve their major domestic political problems. Thailand is already participating in such arrangements as the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC).

While regionalism seems to be the most logical choice for Thailand in its future policy, one still cannot be sure that this approach will be strong enough to contain China, which seems to have a natural affinity for the area and influence in it. Thailand will have to be flexible and pragmatic and not be dogmatically bound to a single policy pattern. The United States has already indicated a willingness to play a constructive role as it withdraws militarily in an effort to bring about peace to Southeast Asia. Other states, because of their economic and/or security interests, will be involved too.

In order to test these hypotheses, it will be necessary to examine each alternative, one at a time, and determine its usefulness to Thailand. Therefore, the chapter structure will be organized according to the alternatives. Chapter II will attempt to present the danger of an accommodation policy as well as the benefits it might offer. Generally it will describe the impact of such policy on internal stability and

progress. Chapter III will examine the possibility of an alignment with the Soviet Union. The feasibility of a new security system suggested by the Soviet Union will be explored. Chapter IV will discuss Thai traditional policy in reference to its present situation. The changing international environment and problem of insurgency in the region will be considered in terms of Thailand's national interests. Chapter V will attempt to assess the strength and weakness of regionalism in terms of Thailand's national interests. Assuming that the policy of regional cooperation will have a real abiding value, Thailand may be expected to pursue a policy of regional security. At the same time, Thailand may be expected to pursue a flexible and pragmatic line of relations with China and North Vietnam. Chapter VI will analyze Thailand's national interests and set forth an explanation of the policy direction that Thailand is embarking on with the withdrawal of the United States' military forces from the region.

The nature of this task requires an analytical and descriptive methodology. This study will depend upon limited primary sources such as the Press Releases from the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok and Collected Statements (1968-1970) of former Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, as well as other government publications. In combination with the above primary sources, secondary sources will be utilized from various professional journals concerned with Asia such as the Asian Survey, Pacific Affairs, The World Today, Current History, China Quarterly, Foreign Affairs, World Politics, and Far Eastern Economic Review, as well as other newspapers and magazines such as the New York Times, Christian Science Monitor, Time Magazine, the Asian Student, and Thailand's Siam Rath Weekly.

The selection of the topic for this study was not made at random. It followed, initially, from the writer's personal acquaintance with the area and years of study and concern over the developments that are now taking place in Thailand. Other considerations make the topic well suited for present study. Whatever happens in Southeast Asia in the 1970's will have a significant impact on the region and most probably the world as a whole. A better understanding of the politics of this region is, therefore, important to future international relations. This study will attempt to serve those purposes.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Russell H. Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958 (New York, 1958), p. xi.

<sup>2</sup>See Richard M. Nixon, U. S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: Building for Peace (Washington, D. C., 1971), pp. 10-21.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Thailand is now facing the threat of an insurgency, an economic slump, and an internal political difficulty associated with the recent coup d'etat.

<sup>5</sup>Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations (New York, 1967), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>Kenneth T. Young, "Thailand and Multipolarity," Current History, Vol. 61, No. 3586 (December, 1971), p. 365.

## CHAPTER II

### BAMBOOS BEND WITH THE BREEZE

Thailand is the only Southeast Asian country that has maintained its independence in the face of European and Asian colonial powers; often it has been regarded as a successful model of small-nation diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> While all the other Southeast Asian states fell into the hands of some European power in the nineteenth century, Thailand alone escaped. Thailand's experience was quite unique. Its political status during this period can be explained in part by the desire of both Britain and France to avoid confrontation and for a buffer state separating their respective territories (Burma, Malaya, and Indochina);<sup>2</sup> and by the astuteness and ability of the Thai leaders in the persons of Kings Mongkut and Chulalongkorn. The story might have been different if these Thai leaders had not displayed a remarkable cleverness in diplomacy. A preferred policy strategy of the past has been to seek accommodation with the predominant powers of the region in order to maintain the basic foreign policy objectives of preserving the geographical boundaries and the minimizing of outside interference in internal affairs. In the nineteenth century Burma was first to resist the British and was defeated, and was finally annexed to the British empire. This example of Burma served as a lesson to its neighbor, and Thailand soon learned that it had to be cautious in dealing with the Western countries. Confronted with European expansion in Southeast



Asia, Thailand was forced to adopt the policy of accommodation.

When King Mongkut came to the throne in 1851, he initiated the Thai foreign policy of making limited concessions to the dominant states in the area. There was no point in resisting the British because the Thai knew they were bound to lose. Several commercial treaties were signed between Thailand and Britain; all these treaties worked to the advantage of the British at the expense of Thailand. These treaties provide extraterritorial rights for British subjects in Bangkok. Thailand also concluded similar treaties with other European powers under pressures. After the British came the French; in 1867-1868, Thailand made its first concession of land to them in Cambodia. King Chulalongkorn, Mongkut's successor, continued this policy of concession, granting treaties and relinquishing territories to the neighboring French Empire in Indochina and to the British Empire in Malaya (Laos and the rest of Cambodia to France in 1873-1907; four northern Malay states to Britain in 1909).<sup>3</sup> These concessions were granted in an effort to preserve Thailand as a sovereign entity. The Western states were thereby appeased. Failure may be suggested by these acts since Thailand had to give up so much of its territories, but Thailand did not vanish as an independent state. After the last concession in 1909, Thailand reached a stage where Britain and France agreed to make it a buffer state. No doubt a smaller nation has to make sacrifices under these circumstances; and Thailand did so, but was able to minimize the loss. These events prompted Thailand to take steps to modernize itself.<sup>4</sup> A mere diplomacy of "survival" was not enough; the Thai needed to bring the country to a position of equality with Western nations in order to preserve the country's independence and erase the feeling of inferiority that educated Thai

felt as they confronted Western skills and powers. Some accomplishments were registered by the end of King Chulalongkorn's rule in 1910.

Thus, this accommodating gesture of Thailand during the nineteenth century, or the "bend-with-the wind" approach in foreign policy, did not come about without problems. Thailand did lose a substantial part of its territories to Britain and France in its effort to preserve the heart of the nation which constitutes the Thailand of today. Thailand did bend like a bamboo, but it did not break. For a while after 1910 Thailand was able to pursue a neutralist policy--the first country ever to do so in Asia. However, when Japanese pressures began to be felt all over Asia in the 1930's, Thailand bent once again like a reed in the wind.

Thailand's World War II diplomacy of cooperating with Japan and its accommodation with the Allied powers when the Japanese were defeated is often cited as proof of the cunning and resourcefulness of its leaders. When the Japanese tide was rising over all of Asia, the Thai government under the leadership of Field Marshal Pibunsongkharm envisaged a new role for Thailand under the Japanese umbrella in Southeast Asia. The Japanese scheme of "Asia for Asians" or the "Asian Co-prosperity Sphere" was not without support in Thailand. Also, Pibun was interested in reimposing Thai leadership over the neighboring states. This view was also shared by Pibun's arch-rival, Pridi Panomyong. One of the prime targets was to regain the "lost" territories in Laos and Cambodia,<sup>5</sup> and Thailand did so by precipitating a war with the French. A crisis was reached in 1940 over the dispute with French Indochina. The Thai government took advantage of the fall of France in Europe to demand readjustments of the Thai-Indochina border. This led to a state of war

between France and Thailand, and it gave the Japanese an excuse for intervention. At the peace conference in Tokyo in 1941 with Japan as the arbiter, France agreed to return to Thailand territories taken in 1904 and 1907, with the exception of the bulk of Cambodia. Later Thailand also received from the Japanese the Shan state (which is today a part of Burma) and the four northern Malay states lost earlier to the British in payment for its war efforts. Circumstances during World War II forced Thailand to cooperate with the Japanese; it had no choice but to accept the Japanese demand for passage to Burma.<sup>6</sup> The Japanese presented an ultimatum on December 8, 1941 to open the country or face destruction; the Allies were too occupied to help Thailand. Thus, Thailand cooperated. Cooperation with the Japanese evolved into a full partnership when Thailand declared war on the United States and the Allies in January, 1942.

Cooperation with Japan was beneficial to Thailand, which once again was able to evade destruction which might have been brought about by war with the Japanese. Also, the country remained an independent entity and it did recover its "lost" territories. Japanese troops, of course, were stationed in Thailand, but they were there on a "friendly basis" and in partnership with Thailand and not as occupation forces. The Thai, however, were never wholeheartedly with the Japanese. Field Marshal Pibun reportedly made a remark to his Chief of Staff in 1942: "Which side do you think will be defeated in this war? That side is our enemy."<sup>7</sup>

Thus, it can be seen that Thai foreign policy was pragmatic and quite flexible during World War II; indeed, because of this, Thailand was able to preserve its identity. Thailand, also, was prepared to adjust to an inevitable Allied victory. After the Bangkok government

declared war on the United States and other Allied powers, the Thai delegation in Washington under Ambassador Seni Pramoj refused to deliver the declaration of war. Instead, Seni organized a "Free Thai" group aimed at removing the Japanese forces in the country and asked the United States for support. In wartime Thailand, Pridi withdrew from the Pibun Cabinet to become the Regent and principal leader of the "Free Thai" organization.

The Free Thai failed to establish a government-in-exile which could acquire recognition from the Allies, but this did not prevent the post war Thai leadership from creating options that quickly resulted in the rehabilitation of Thailand into the community of nations following the war. When the government decided to go to war on the side of Japan in 1942, Pibun could do little more to advance Thai interests than wait for the outcome of the war. During the closing days of the war the Pibun government could not survive because of the Japanese defeat. The man who seemed to be in the best position for leadership at this time was Pridi Panomyong. Pridi was able to force the resignation of Pibun in 1944. The United States was sympathetic to Thailand and supported Pridi for the leadership in Bangkok politics. The Americans admired Pridi's heroic role in the 1932 coup<sup>8</sup> as well as his leadership of the Free Thai underground movement inside occupied Thailand.<sup>9</sup> The intimate contacts between the O.S.S. and the Free Thai movement, and the special relationship between Seni in Washington and Secretary of State Hull of the United States did much to win the cooperation of the United States at the end of the war.<sup>10</sup> In short, the United States was willing to see Thailand emerge from the war on the Allied side.

The British were less sympathetic, however. They acknowledged the Thai declaration of war and wanted to treat Thailand as a defeated enemy. However, with American support Thailand was able to reconcile differences with the British. The territories gained prior to and during the war had to be returned. Thailand also had to make some payments as a result of cooperation with Japan. These payments, however, were minimal.<sup>11</sup> Thailand, also, had to recognize the Soviet Union as a price for being admitted into the United Nations. The laws of the Pibun regime which discriminated against the Chinese minority also were relaxed in order to appease China. These concessions enabled Thailand to maintain itself as a member of the community of sovereign states.

Internal politics resulted in the establishment of a civilian government (1944-1947). Pibun was forced to step down from the office of the Prime Minister by Pridi and his group. Pibun had played the role of the villain. Had the Japanese emerged from the war victorious, Thailand would have been victorious with them. As it happened, the Japanese lost but the Thai did not. Pibun was soon permitted to go free without conspiratorial charges being brought against him, and he retired privately to his home in Bangkok. By 1948, however, he was in power again. In the meantime, Pridi was indeed the "hero" of Thailand. Yet he declined an offer for the position of Prime Minister. Knowing that if he was to be Prime Minister, the people would expect the impossible out of him as the nation was experiencing some hardships resulting from the war-torn economy. Thailand's success after the war was at least in part due to the United States, whose postwar policy in Southeast Asia at the time favored the emergence of free and independent nations rather than the re-institution of colonial empires.<sup>12</sup>

After Pridi's interlude (1944-1947) during which time Thai foreign policy can be described of neutralist, Pibun led Thailand to the United States' side. To a certain extent it could be described as another "bend-with-the wind." United States power was replacing that of the British and the French in the area. Domestically, however, Pibun needed the support of the United States for his leadership. In his second comeback as Prime Minister his power was not as strong as it was before the war. The 1947 coup that brought down the civilian government under Pridi<sup>13</sup> was staged by a group in the army composed of junior officers. These men were not competent enough to form their own regime. After two brief interim governments, Pibun was invited to return to office. But this time he was dependent on forces other than his own. The government virtually was run by three men; it became known as the triumvirate regime. General Phao Sriyanond of the police force and General Sarit Thanarat of the army were two of the men who enjoyed substantial power. Pibun, who had nothing but a popular name, was caught between the two. To secure his position, Pibun had to play one against the other, and at the same time develop popular support. He did so by getting the United States to publicly recognize his leadership. Incidentally, it was the time that the "Cold War" between the United States and the Communist countries had already set in. The United States thus found Pibun's nationalistic sentiments and anti-Communist outlooks compatible with American foreign policy objectives in Southeast Asia.<sup>14</sup> The United States even refused to grant Pridi, the man whom it admired earlier, political asylum and he went to China. In effect, the United States was supporting the man who during World War II was its enemy, for a leadership role in Thailand. Because of this support, Pibun was able to

maintain his position for about ten years. During this period Thailand allied itself closely with the West, and particularly with the United States. It abandoned its original policy of caution and limited concessions, and gambled on a dependent relationship with the United States. Pibun's successors, also, have followed this policy even though other powerful forces have been active in the region.

A quick look at these historical events reveals that there has been a rather consistent pattern of behavior in Thailand's response to the international environment. The "bend-with-the wind" approach is widely recognized as a viable policy by leading Thai foreign policy strategists. Mention must be made, however, that each time the "bend-with-the wind" was adopted, Thailand generally followed a neutralist pattern. As it may be seen in the periods prior to accommodation with France and Britain, and from 1910 to 1939, prior to the Japanese invasion, and during Pridi's interlude (1944-1947), Thailand's foreign policy was of a neutralist stance.<sup>15</sup> Generally speaking, then, it was only when Thailand ran out of options that the government resorted to the "bend-with-the wind" tactic. The differences can be detected in the Pibun era after World War II, however. The bending toward the United States appeased domestic forces on behalf of Pibun and he used this tactic of dependence on the United States as a measure to ensure his own survival. It was not that Thailand had run out of options in foreign policy. The situation in the 1950's was quite different from that of the 1860's and the early 1940's in which, had Thailand refused, serious consequences might have followed.

Observers of the contemporary scene are speculating that Thailand will seek a rapprochement with China and the Soviet Union when the

United States withdraws from the region. . . An accommodation policy of this nature is not unique; several states today, such as Finland, Cambodia (under Sihanouk), and, to a lesser extent, Burma, are employing it. While the present changes in Thai-United States relationship are not likely to bring about a complete termination of the alliance, Thailand does confront a growing Chinese influence and must consider accommodating it. The recent visit of President Nixon to Peking indicates that Washington has acknowledged that no lasting solution to Southeast Asian international problems (specifically, the Vietnam war) can be derived without China's cooperation. Thus, in the event that the United States should leave the region, China, in competition with the Soviet Union, will attempt to fill the vacuum left by the withdrawal of the United States. The political wind is shifting; undeniably the upcoming wind is that of China or the Soviet Union.

Traditionally, China has always maintained a superior status vis-a-vis Thailand. The Thai lived in southern China before migrating southward to the Indochina area. About the seventh century (A.D.) the Thai created in Unnan (southern China) a powerful kingdom known as Nan Chao (some 500,000 Thai still live there); they challenged Chinese supremacy for more than one hundred years before making peace with China. They accepted vassal status in the ninth century. Thereafter, a steady flow of Thai moved southward in order to escape Chinese power. The founders of the Thai kingdom set up capitals at Sukothai (1238-1350), Ayutthaya (1350-1767), and finally at Bangkok (from 1767 onward). These kingdoms, too, found it necessary to normalize their relations with China. Fearful of their big and powerful neighbor, a pattern was soon set for tributary missions to China from the beginning of Sukothai to about 1853.



This was done at fairly regular intervals--averaging one mission every ten or twenty years. These tributes were acknowledgment that China was culturally and politically influential over Thailand. But it would be wrong to regard this relationship as a precedent for a satellite system. The tributes ceased in 1853 after the Thai learned that China was itself falling prey to the European powers.

Past relationships with China brought about commercial exchanges and cultural influences. In order to maintain a friendly relationship with China, the Thai had to accept Chinese migrants whose purpose for coming into Thailand was mainly trade. Within Thailand today the Chinese make up about 10 percent of the total population, and almost 50 percent of the population of Bangkok.<sup>16</sup> The Chinese have been fairly well assimilated. Because of their economic vigor and commercial capability, they have gained a position of great economic and financial power within the country. While the assimilated Chinese in Thailand may not think in terms of loyalty to their mother country yet, they constitute a major concern for the Thai leadership. Obviously, with significant elements of this economically powerful minority characterized by ties with and pride in the culture of their traditional homeland, there are serious possibilities of subversion. This was one of the major factors that was used to justify the coup of November 17, 1971 which resulted in the abolition of the Parliament, the Cabinet, the Constitution, and the imposition of martial law. Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, the leader of the coup, justified the actions by this statement:

We are not certain how many of them [Chinese] sympathize with China, now that Peking is in a position to exert powerful influence all over the world [having been admitted to the United Nations]. If a lot of them do, then the possibility that they can assist the Communist terrorists cannot be ruled out....<sup>17</sup>

Since the United States seems determined to lessen its role in Indochina, the Thai leaders obviously believe that they must be prepared to adjust their policies to the changing situation. Thailand, of course, could bend toward China in order to appease it. There are countries in Southeast Asia which have done that. Cambodia, under Sihanouk, was one of them. Yet the Cambodian case was different from that of the Thai. The Cambodians resorted to this tactic not because China was an immediate threat to them. In fact, China might not have an interest in direct expansion into Cambodia. Cambodia was face to face with its traditional foes, with Thailand on the one side and the two Vietnams on the other. Its more immediate external problems derived from these countries rather than China. Sihanouk could not count on Western backing to meet threats from Thailand and South Vietnam. Besides, the United States made it clear in the Manila Protocol (SEATO) that its obligations were limited to instances of Communist aggression.<sup>18</sup> Sihanouk undoubtedly believed that he must seek other sources of countervailing power to meet the renewed threats from these traditional foes, and China was quick to promise assistance. Thus, he initiated a policy of balance, whereby the forces of one camp in the Cold War might check the forces of the other. He evidently was hoping that Peking would exercise a measure of restraint over North Vietnam and provide a guarantee against attack from Thailand and South Vietnam. At the same time, he planned to maintain a neutralist attitude toward the United States, hoping that the United States, too, would exercise the same kind of restraint over its allies, Thailand and South Vietnam.<sup>19</sup>

As for Thailand, China has made it public that it is its next target for bringing about a revolutionary change. Ever since the Communists

came to power in China in 1949, there has been nothing but open antagonism toward the Thai government. For example, the government of Field Marshal Pibunsongkharm was variously styled during this period as "criminal", "fascist", and "lackey of Wall Street".<sup>20</sup> In the mid-1960's the increasingly harsh tone of China's propaganda attacks on Thailand, including Foreign Minister Chen Yi's off-hand remark to a visiting Westerner that "we hope to have a guerrilla warfare going in Thailand before the year [1965] is out",<sup>21</sup> highlighted a major threat to the Thai government. Full-scale guerrilla warfare has yet to develop, but there have been sporadic terrorist activities ever since.

The Thai leaders are now looking for a peaceful way to solve this problem. Their efforts started with the announcement of President Johnson's decision to halt the bombing of North Vietnam in 1968. This was perhaps an indication to the Thai leadership that the common interests of Thailand and the United States in resisting the Communists no longer existed and that the Thai government could no longer implicitly rely upon American power. Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman took the initiative in making overtures to China. He announced in a Tokyo television broadcast in February, 1969, that Thailand was considering a Thai-Chinese dialogue.<sup>22</sup> This took the other Cabinet members and even his closest subordinates by surprise. In a way, it was seen as one step toward a possible detente between Thailand and China. It was Thanat's view that a small country could not afford to wait and face trouble when it comes, but must go to the source and try to meet the contingencies which may arise.<sup>23</sup> However, Peking officially ignored this overture. The military members of the Cabinet, including Minister of Economic

Affairs, Boonchana Attakorn, were known to disagree strongly with Dr. Thanat.

While in Bangkok in the summer of 1971, the writer had an opportunity to talk to some military officers and public officials concerning a possible change in relations with China. Most of them expressed opinions that they saw nothing wrong in a rapprochement with China. In fact, they indicated that this might prove to be a plausible way to ease or improve racial relations within the country, as well as lessen the probability of Chinese-inspired subversion against Thailand. After all, those assimilated Chinese who now live in Thailand plan to stay in Thailand. When they make profits in their commercial activities they invest their money back in the Thai economy. They do not send their profits back to their home country as do the Japanese. Between the Chinese and the Japanese, the Thai are inclined to have more favorable attitudes toward the former. At the present time 35 percent of Thailand's foreign trade is with Japan.<sup>24</sup> Already the Thai are complaining about "unfair business practices" imposed by the Japanese.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Thailand's deficit in the balance of trade with Japan is now very big. For example, from a negligible deficit of \$5.1 million in 1955, Thailand's deficit trade with that country rose to \$138.9 million by 1965, and to a gigantic \$416.8 million by 1970.<sup>26</sup> At the moment, Thailand has yet to establish a regular trade pattern with China. Only in November, 1971, the ban on trade with China was lifted. By normalizing relations with China, it is hoped that the Chinese in Thailand will feel more secure about their status and thus will be willing to contribute more to the growth of the Thai economy.

In view of Japan's increasing influence in Asia, there is a possibility of a Thai-Japanese alliance. The Japanese, however, have not significantly developed their military power since World War II. The Thai could not count on the Japanese in case of a Chinese attack unless Japan decides to rearm. Another country that might play a role as a countervailing power to China is India. India, however, has been preoccupied with its relations with Pakistan. The Indian armed forces seem to be capable of defending India against Pakistan, but under present circumstances India is hardly able to play a major power role in Southeast Asia. Actually, in terms of the limited military power of India and Japan, Thailand does not have many options. Also, if the Soviet Union does not want to get involved in Southeast Asia, the result is that China must be dealt with without an offset by Japan or India or the Soviet Union.

Foreign Minister Thanat and his Deputy, the Prime Minister's brother, are known to have seen Pridi, the Thai senior statesman who has lived in China almost continuously since 1949.<sup>27</sup> The meeting was understood to be private, but it has been speculated that the Foreign Minister was exploring the improvement of relations with China through Pridi as an intermediary.<sup>28</sup> The details of the meeting were not made public. The Thai government has constantly denied that the meeting between Pridi and the Foreign Minister was of a political nature.

The year 1971 marks significantly the beginning of a trend to change Thailand's relations with China. Thailand cannot unnecessarily alienate China. Evidence of the new orientation is found in the reluctance of Thailand to enter the Cambodian conflict after Colonel Lon Nol took over the government in Phnom Penh. Some military members of the

Thai government were known to support intervention.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, Foreign Minister Thanat's position prevailed. Also, there was an official silence on Thailand's part in the American-supported South Vietnamese incursion into Laos.<sup>30</sup> Prior to this invasion, Laos was regarded by the Thai leadership as having a strategic importance to Thailand's security.<sup>31</sup> Communist dominance in Laos was viewed as being detrimental to Thailand's security. Thus, a softening of a previously hard-line policy was evolving. Thailand in the past voted with the United States on the issue of seating the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. More recently it adopted a two-China policy in the United Nations, and finally abstained from the voting when the issue was voted on in the General Assembly in 1971.

Throughout 1971 and until the coup in November, Bangkok kept saying that it would welcome open discussions with Peking on "any" subject. Moreover, a permanent task force was established in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to study the possibility of ending the ban on trade with China. From time to time there were reports that Thanat claimed there had been some favorable responses from China and that prospect for a dialogue had developed.<sup>32</sup> The Thai government ordered a halt in its radio attacks on Peking, and China, in return, was beginning to reduce aid to the insurgents inside Thailand.<sup>33</sup> After the November coup, however, Dr. Thanat and all other Cabinet members were ousted. The coup, however, did not appear to deter the path to a new approach in Thai-Chinese relations, even though it was understood that the Chinese minority in Thailand was causing some internal problems. Government stability was not threatened because of Chinese relations alone. The more important problems included a conflict between the government and

the Parliament over the national budget, a discovered "plot" by some MP's to vote no-confidence in the government, and lastly, increasingly strong arguments with Dr. Thanat's foreign policy within the Cabinet.<sup>34</sup> With regard to Dr. Thanat's China policy, however, the ruling National Executive Council (NEC)<sup>35</sup> finally decided, after considerable considerations, to lift the ban on trade with China.<sup>36</sup> Since the ousting of Foreign Minister Thanat, the NEC has yet to repudiate the initiatives with respect to China taken by Dr. Thanat. It is possible, however, that Dr. Thanat might rejoin the Cabinet once the NEC decides to form one in the near future.

Internal political events within Thailand at the moment are confusing. The dangers and uncertainty in which Thailand now finds itself resembles the circumstances of nearly a century ago, when the nation was threatened by Great Britain and France. Today Thailand is being threatened, at least by words, by China and, to a lesser extent, North Vietnam. Thailand's past performance suggests that once the nation is seriously threatened, it usually resorts to accommodation with the power that is threatening it. However, accommodation in the past was largely the result of a "force majeure", or, in other words, when Thailand had to choose between destruction or survival. In the nineteenth century, the French and, during World War II, the Japanese sailed into Bangkok harbor and delivered their ultimatums. Thailand complied. At present time, the threat to Thailand from China is serious but limited. For many years it most likely will be confined to infiltration and subversive operations. Large-scale overt aggression from China is discouraged by a modest industrial capacity, a meager transportation system, a lack of certain strategic minerals, a rugged, inhospitable terrain, and the

enormous retaliatory power of the United States.<sup>37</sup> The Peking regime has often voiced bitter ideological threats and has promised a revolution in Thailand; yet in practice it has followed a more cautious policy of psychological warfare and has not engaged in bold acts of direct aggression.

One other significant difference between the present situation and Thailand's flexible diplomacy in earlier periods lies in the interaction between foreign policy and domestic politics. As stated earlier, the alliance with the United States harmonized with the domestic considerations of the ruling elite and served to strengthen its internal position, especially during the Pibun era. It may be recalled that Pibun, at that time, needed United States support for his leadership. Since World War II the United States has continued to support the military governments. Rapprochement with a Communist country, on the other hand, is expected to have, at best, no impact and, at worst, limited negative effects on the internal position of the present elite. The larger and the nearer the Communist country is, and the closer the relationships with it, the more adverse the perceived consequences. It is doubtful, if relationships between the two countries were to be forged, that China would tolerate the military regime of Thailand. Some scholars in Thailand do not believe that a long-time enemy such as China could really be an ally of Thailand.<sup>38</sup> In order to really "appease" China, the military elite perhaps may have to go. This is an almost impossible condition, at least for the time being.

The military leadership of Thailand, past and present, has been known for its nationalistic sentiments against the Chinese minority within the country. For more than forty years the Chinese community



has been a source of fear and anxiety to and an object of pressure and regulation from the Thai government and the ruling class.<sup>39</sup> Since the advent of the Communist regime in China, the attitude toward China rests in part on the official assumption that militant internal dissidence in Thailand is supported by Peking. It is recalled that a "Thai Autonomous People's Government" was established in southern China in 1953 as a formal government in exile,<sup>40</sup> and that the Thai Patriotic Front broadcasts periodically from there and in 1965 designated Thailand as the next country to be liberated.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the Thai have had a traditional fear for China.<sup>42</sup> Most Thai today, even though propaganda has undoubtedly exaggerated Chinese power and ambition, still believe that the Chinese are setting out to do exactly what they have said.

The average Thai citizen also has a deep fear of Communism. It is generally believed that if Communism were to prevail in Thailand, the two pillars of the Thai society--Buddhism and Monarchy-- would be destroyed. These basic beliefs are taught in schools, and the government discourages the attempt to discuss Communism in depth or analytically. Thus, it seems difficult, if not impossible, to change these beliefs. Since China turned Communist, Thai fear has increased. It would indeed require some long-range modifications of the political structure as a whole. Not only the military leadership will have to revise its basic assumption concerning China, the attitudes of the people must also be changed if China is to be accepted as an ally of Thailand.

Nevertheless, an accommodation policy with China has not been without support in Thailand. Some circles<sup>43</sup> in Thailand contend that perhaps China is seeking a status quo situation in Southeast Asia. They believe that China is not interested in expansion, but only in the

removal of foreign troops and bases. When this is realized relationships between the two countries can improve. This contention seems to be consistent with Chinese Communists' behavior since 1950 which, when carefully analyzed, reveals a cautious and pragmatic stance on foreign policy issues.<sup>44</sup> Some American analysts argue that China's policy is essentially defensive and in reality is a reaction to the provocations of other powers, including the United States.<sup>45</sup> China is seen as willing to live in peace with the Southeast Asian nations that do not associate themselves closely with the United States.<sup>46</sup> Assuming the correctness of this line of reasoning, China, of course, has reasons to act with hostility against Thailand. Thailand does have American air and naval bases and soldiers on its soil. At the same time Thailand refuses to recognize the People's Republic of China, but does maintain cordial relations with Taipei.<sup>47</sup> These are the factors that must be reckoned with when one considers China's behavior toward Thailand. Under these circumstances if foreign bases and soldiers are removed, an accommodation with China may be expected to produce a satisfactory outcome.

Similarly, Thailand could strike a deal with the North Vietnamese, but Thailand probably has less to fear from North Vietnam than China. Also, if accommodation with China is reached, Thailand may expect China to exercise a measure of restraint against the North Vietnamese. It should be pointed out that Thailand has already had a dialogue with North Vietnam concerning the repatriation of 40,000 North Vietnamese refugees in Thailand. During the recent meeting of the representatives of the two countries in Bangkok, the head of the Vietnamese delegation insisted on "the age-old friendship between the Vietnamese and Thai peoples." Thailand in return promised to recall the 12,000 Thai troops

in South Vietnam.<sup>48</sup> This indicates a further softening of Thailand's hard line against the Asian Communist states.

While the above thesis concerning Chinese behavior seems plausible, the lessons learned from other countries' relations with China have produced concern and fear. Other Southeast Asian countries, such as Burma and Cambodia, have tried hard to avoid provoking China. Yet, in mid-1967 Peking began to call for the complete overthrow of the Ne Win government of Burma. Cambodia also experienced the same difficulty, although not directly from China.<sup>49</sup> In fact, Sihanouk's accommodation policy toward China and North Vietnam proved to be the major cause for his own downfall. In maintaining this policy, Sihanouk had to provide the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese troops sanctuaries for their operations in South Vietnam. This had been going on for more than five years. Not only the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese were given an easy access to Saigon, they at times turned against the host country and gave Sihanouk some internal problems.<sup>50</sup> The Cambodian military was displeased with such developments. They finally staged a coup against Sihanouk.

Indonesia was another Southeast Asian country that experienced similar difficulty in dealing with China. Indonesia for a short while swung to China's side and, consequently, an abortive Communist coup supported by China was staged against the government in 1965. It was suppressed by the military and the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) was demolished. Given these experiences, the Thai government would probably be very hesitant to work closely with the Chinese. One should not forget that China is the traditional great power of the region with a long history of influence. Southeast Asia has been viewed by both the

Nationalist and Communist Chinese alike as part of the traditional Chinese "Middle Kingdom." Therefore, a design of territorial aggrandizement should not be ruled out. An accommodation policy might facilitate rather than prevent Chinese expansion into Thailand.

There is no doubt that China is behind the internal insurgency in Thailand. While there is some evidence that the "poo-kawgan rai," or the so-called Communist terrorists, are people who are striking at the maladministration of the provincial governments rather than making an effort to establish a Communist system,<sup>51</sup> the Thai government usually terms these dissidents "Communists." Most of Thailand's social problems result from conflicts with minority peoples, economic hardships, and poor social conditions.<sup>52</sup> In the northeast it is the Laotian minority; in the north the hilltribe or the "Meo"; and in the south it is the Malay/Muslim minority. The well-integrated part of the country, the central plain, does not experience major difficulties. The Communist leadership has been taking advantage of the discontent in these minority areas. The situation can be improved if the Thai government would solve the real problems. During recent years an effort has been made to improve the economic and social conditions in these remote areas. Military suppression can be a temporary solution at best. The issues causing the conflicts must be dealt with if long-term stability is to be realized.

An accommodation with China is not likely to satisfy the present military leadership of Thailand. As stated earlier, the impact on the internal position of the elite may be in the negative. China itself probably is not willing to tolerate a regime that has been strongly anti-Communist and nationalistic as Thailand's ruling regimes have been.

Also, this policy would tend to alienate other Southeast Asian states against Thailand. We may recall that Cambodia felt this pressures when it switched to the pseudo-neutralist position, proclaiming China as its "great friend." Should Thailand go with China, it would imply that other lines of policy would be closed, especially that aimed at regional cooperation, of which Thailand has been the prime exponent since the early 1960's.

Thailand has now opened its trade door with China, but the extent of trade to be established is not yet known. As far as Thailand is concerned, however, the government foresees no possibility of opening political communication between the two countries.<sup>53</sup> Even in trade, the potential is limited. For example, former Minister of Economic Affairs Boonchana Attakorn stated that Thailand has few commodities the Chinese need.<sup>54</sup> China itself is not yet an industrialized nation. Peking already duplicates the primary producer economy of Thailand, and Bangkok is unable to supply China's industrial needs. Therefore, the two economies are mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, there is an area where the two economies seem to dovetail, and that is rubber. The sluggish Thai rubber market coincides neatly with the seemingly insatiable demands of the burgeoning Chinese tire industry. So far, however, the Chinese rubber needs are very well met by Malaysia. Furthermore, the Thai government has announced that it would trade with China only on a basis more favorable to Thailand than China. In other words, Thailand would import less than it exported to China.<sup>55</sup> As of this date very little has materialized. This will not significantly promote the major economic policy objective that could lead to a political rapprochement with China.

Thailand's economic development is closely tied to the United States. The spectacular rate of economic growth of about 11.8 percent per year during 1966-1968 can be explained in part as a result of the United States military spending in Southeast Asia.<sup>56</sup> Already the economy is facing a slump as the United States reduces its aid and withdraws militarily from the region.<sup>57</sup> China evidently is not in the position to help Thailand in its economic development. In the economic realm it does not seem likely that Thailand would be forced to orient itself toward China.

From the preceding analysis and despite some tempting historical analogies and Thailand's present behavior toward China, it would seem that the possibility for accommodation with China is quite limited. There is no doubt that the Thai government is re-assessing the relationship between external events and national security. Concerning the present trend of relations toward China, the writer is inclined to think that it should be interpreted to be no more than the general desire to change basic policies, and perhaps a warning to the United States that it should not withdraw from the region. Thailand in the past has displayed a "flexible" diplomacy; perhaps it is time now to do it again. However, this is still far from going "all the way" with China. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is still unable to monopolize the country's foreign policy. As noted, powerful military leaders were highly displeased with Dr. Thanat's move; and it is they who wield power and make decisions for Thailand. In any case, successful adoption of this policy of accommodation requires more than just Thailand's interest. There must be some degree of interest from the larger power in seeking such a relationship and at present there is little interest shown by China.

Thailand itself has yet to face a "force majeure" or the situation where there is a clear lack of choice. And lastly, there must also be a degree of harmony between domestic political considerations and foreign policy. For the last reason alone, the adverse effects on the internal political structure are probably more than the benefits that this policy would bring.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Astri Suhrke, "Smaller-Nation Diplomacy: Thailand's Current Dilemmas," Asian Survey, Vol. 10, No. 5 (May, 1971), p. 429.

<sup>2</sup>Amry Vanderbosch and Richard Butwell, The Changing Face of Southeast Asia (Lexington, Kentucky, 1966), p. 283. See also Donald E. Nuechterlein, Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia (Ithaca, New York, 1965), pp. 21-23.

<sup>3</sup>Walter F. Vella, The Impact of the West on Government of Thailand (Berkeley, California, 1955), p. 326.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., Chapter II.

<sup>5</sup>Nuechterlein, p. 69.

<sup>6</sup>Sir Josiah Crosby, Siam: The Crossroads (London, 1945), p. 127.

<sup>7</sup>Net Khemayothin, Ngan Tai Din Khon Phan-ek Yothi ("The Underground Work of Colonel Yothi"; Bangkok, 1957), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>The event that transformed Thailand into a constitutional monarchy.

<sup>9</sup>Frank C. Darling, Thailand and the United States (Washington, D.C., 1965), p. 37.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>These payments were made in a form of one and a half million tons of rice.

<sup>12</sup>Richard Butwell, "Southeast Asia: A Survey," Foreign Policy Association, Inc., No. 192 (December, 1968), p. 54.

<sup>13</sup>Pridi did not become Prime Minister until 1946. During the period between 1945-46, it was Seni Pramoj, the former Thai Minister in Washington, who was Prime Minister while Pridi remained influentially in the background. In 1946, however, due to domestic and international difficulties, Pridi was forced to step out and reluctantly assumed the leading office himself. He was in office for only four months, and then King Ananda was found in his bed with a gunshot wound in his head. This mysterious death of the King forced Pridi to resign, and he did so in favor of his own choice, Thamrong Navasawatdi. The Thamrong government was subsequently overthrown in 1947. Pridi then fled the country.



- <sup>14</sup> Darling, Chapter II.
- <sup>15</sup> This will be appropriately discussed in Chapter IV.
- <sup>16</sup> Daniel Wit, Thailand: Another Vietnam (New York, 1968), p. 5.
- <sup>17</sup> Far Eastern Economic Review, November 27, 1971, p. 6.
- <sup>18</sup> A Report by a Chatham House Study Group, Collective Defense in Southeast Asia (London, 1956), p. 8.
- <sup>19</sup> Michael Leifer, Cambodia: The Search for Security (New York, 1967), Chapter IV. See also Roger M. Smith, Cambodia's Foreign Policy (Ithaca, New York, 1965), Chapter V.
- <sup>20</sup> David A. Wilson, "China, Thailand, and the Spirit of Bandung," China Quarterly, No. 31 (July/September, 1967), pp. 154-155.
- <sup>21</sup> Robert Carr McCabe, Storm Over Asia (New York, 1967), p. 97.
- <sup>22</sup> The announcement was made in an apparently off-the-cuff speech on the occasion of ASPAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Tokyo.
- <sup>23</sup> An Address by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman to member of the Thai-American Technical Cooperation Association, Bangkok, on March 31, 1969. "Post-Vietnam Period--A New Era for Asia?" in Collected Statements (1968-1969), (Bangkok, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1971), p. 10.
- <sup>24</sup> Suhrke, p. 436.
- <sup>25</sup> Eugene Black, Alternatives in Southeast Asia (New York, 1969), p. 83.
- <sup>26</sup> Far Eastern Economic Review, November 13, 1971, p. 39.
- <sup>27</sup> Pridi is now living in Paris.
- <sup>28</sup> There were reports that Thanat claimed China has responded favorably to the Thai feelers through some third parties, but he declined to identify who the third parties were. See the New York Times, May 15, 1971, p. 36. Specifically about Pridi see Far Eastern Economic Review, July 10, 1971, p. 14.
- <sup>29</sup> For example, Minister of Defense Praphas Charutsathien voiced his approval for intervention and to use force, if necessary. See "Thailand's Attitude Toward the Present Cambodian Conflict," Siam Rath Weekly, October 5, 1970, pp. 14, 41-42. Also Far Eastern Economic Review, June 8, 1970, p. 14; and November 14, 1970, pp. 29-31.
- <sup>30</sup> The New York Times, February 16, 1971, p. 1.
- <sup>31</sup> L. P. Singh, "Thai Foreign Policy: The Current Phase," Asian Survey, Vol. 3, No. 11 (November, 1963), p. 536.

<sup>32</sup>"As a matter of fact they did not deny, but it is just that they followed their own way. They did not reject our proposal ..." Interview given by Dr. Thanat Khoman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Arnold Abrams of the Seattle Times and Michael Parks of Baltimore Sun, Bangkok, July 28, 1971. Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information.

<sup>33</sup>The New York Times, April 13, 1971, p. 10; May 15, 1971, p. 36; and May 16, 1971, p. 16.

<sup>34</sup>David Morrell, "Thailand: Military Checkmate," Asian Survey, Vol. 12, No. 2 (February, 1972), pp. 156-167.

<sup>35</sup>The coup leadership of November 17, 1971.

<sup>36</sup>Far Eastern Economic Review, November 24, 1971, p. 6.

<sup>37</sup>Sukich Nimmanheminda, "The Chinese Threat to World Order," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 372 (July, 1967), pp. 59-63.

<sup>38</sup>Siam Rath Weekly, January 31, 1971, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup>Wilson, p. 150.

<sup>40</sup>Edwin F. Stanton, "Spotlight in Thailand," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 33, No. 1 (October, 1954), pp. 72-85.

<sup>41</sup>Suhrke, p. 439.

<sup>42</sup>As the popular saying goes, "they have pushed out of Yunnan two thousand years ago, and they have been pushing us toward the ocean ever since".

<sup>43</sup>For example, former Minister and now leader of the leftist party, Thep Chotinuchit, and M. L. Kukrit Pramoj, owner of the most influential newspaper and magazine Siam Rath.

<sup>44</sup>Fred Greene, U. S. Policy and the Security of Asia (New York, 1968), pp. 202-205.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>46</sup>David P. Mazingo, "Containment in Asia Reconsidered," World Politics, Vol. 19, No. 3 (April, 1967), pp. 366-377.

<sup>47</sup>Recently two governments agreed on a joint venture in economic cooperation. See Free China Weekly, February 6, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup>The New York Times, October 6, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup>For details on China-aided insurgency within these two countries see Justus M. van der Kroef, "Peking, Hanoi, and Guerrilla Insurgency in Southeast Asia," Southeast Asian Perspective, No. 3 (September, 1971).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-31.

<sup>51</sup> Louis E. Lomax, Thailand: The War That Is, The War That Will Be (New York, 1967), p. 9.

<sup>52</sup> Peter F. Bell, "Thailand's Northeast: Regional Development, Insurgency, and Official Response," Pacific Affairs, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Spring, 1969), pp. 47-54.

<sup>53</sup> Speech by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman to staff members of Chulalongkorn University on January 14, 1971. "Trade Problems with the Communist Countries." Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, (mimeo.).

<sup>54</sup> Far Eastern Economic Review, January 9, 1971, p. 9.

<sup>55</sup> Siam Rath Weekly, November 21, 1971, p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Experience of the Government of Thailand in Achieving Social and Economic Changes for the Purposes of Social Progress. Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, Press Release No. 4, New York, February 18, 1972.

<sup>57</sup> See an article "Paradise Lost" in Time Magazine, August 2, 1971, p. 60.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE ENEMY OF AN ENEMY IS A FRIEND

Discussions concerning Southeast Asia and the major powers often focus on the extent of United States and Communist Chinese involvement in the area without the same attention being given to the activities of the Soviet Union. Yet there are clear indications that the Soviet Union has a continuing and growing interest in Southeast Asia. While Soviet interests can be traced back to the first years of the Russian Revolution, intensive activity in Southeast Asia began in 1955.<sup>1</sup> Moscow at this time abandoned its hostility toward unaligned nations such as India, Egypt, and Indonesia. Southeast Asia, until 1955, did not engage Moscow's attentions as persistently as Western Europe; the nature of Soviet activity depended much upon local conditions. When local conditions can be exploited, Russian activity became apparent. With the advent of the Khrushchev leadership, however, Russian interest in Southeast Asia became more decisive. This becomes evident as one studies the development of the Laotian crisis of 1962.<sup>2</sup> Toward the end of Khrushchev's rule, however, Russian interest waned considerably. The growing difficulties with China forced Soviet policy-makers to reappraise their attitudes. The intensification of the war in Vietnam since 1964,<sup>3</sup> Soviet trade with the more prosperous economies of Southeast Asia, particularly with Singapore and Malaysia,<sup>4</sup> the increasing importance of the Indian Ocean to the Soviet space effort and to Soviet naval

power in Asia,<sup>5</sup> and the struggle for leadership of the national liberation movements in the developing areas as a whole,<sup>6</sup> suggest the increasingly important position South and Southeast Asia occupied in Soviet thinking after 1955. It seems that the Soviet attitude to and relations with the area have assumed a far greater urgency in recent years. Although the Russians already participate in the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) under the auspices of the United Nations,<sup>7</sup> the region has never acquired the same priority in Soviet policies toward the third world as has the Middle East which, because of its proximity to the Soviet Union, plays an important role in Soviet foreign policy.

Contemporary Soviet foreign policy in Southeast Asia seems to have four prime aims. First of all, the Soviet Union favors stability in the area and the establishment of a suitable climate in which to pursue what it terms its "policy of peaceful co-existence" and to extend its political and economic influence further. Vis-a-vis the Chinese, the Russians have more to gain by promoting stability than by fomenting revolution, which would redound to Peking's benefits. This can be seen in the decision of the Indonesian government in 1966 to end its confrontation policy with Malaysia. The Soviet reaction was favorable and, consequently, improvement in Soviet relations with both Malaysia and Singapore became possible. Secondly, and directly linked to the first point, the Soviet Union seeks to limit American and other Western interests, without at the same time damaging irreparably its rapprochement with the United States. Thirdly, the Soviet Union sees itself as the leader of the Afro-Asian liberation struggle and is anxious to disprove the Chinese accusations that Soviet "revisionism" is working hand in

glove with American "imperialism." Finally and of increasing importance, there is the desire to contain and replace Chinese influence by Soviet influence, not only in Southeast Asia, but in the third world as a whole.<sup>8</sup>

It is the last aim that has really turned Soviet attention toward Southeast Asia. The extension of Chinese influence, particularly as it was manifested in such a potentially wealthy and strategically important state as Indonesia (under Sukarno), and the gradual expansion of Chinese influence in wars of national liberation in other Southeast Asian states such as South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand pose a serious threat to Soviet interests. The prospect that the whole revolutionary movement will come under Peking's hegemony is regarded as a real danger.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the Russians and Chinese are themselves traditional enemies. Even today there are border territories that China and the Soviet Union dispute. Also, Chinese aggressiveness in recent border clashes suggests that Peking is recuperating from the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution and that Chinese leadership is in a position to speak authoritatively in terms of power vis-a-vis Moscow. Thus, a direct threat to the security of the Soviet Union is involved. Without doubt the Russians have been trying to find a way to curb rising Chinese influence and power.

Granting the above interests, the course of international relations between the Soviet Union and one of the more viable countries in Southeast Asia--Thailand--becomes a matter of importance. For the first time since World War II it seems that the interests of the two countries are converging. This development suggests a second alternative for Thailand, which also views China as a major threat.

Historically, Thailand once looked to Czarist Russia for protection against European colonialism which was creeping in around it in the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> The relations of the two countries developed because of the personal friendship between the two monarchs, King Chulalongkorn and Czar Nicholas II.<sup>11</sup> King Chulalongkorn in his clever tactics in dealing with the European imperialists asked for Russian assistance in preventing the continuing encroachments by France in Indochina. Czar Nicholas was interested in extending help, but his effort was not successful. Yet, the relationships of the two countries continued to be warm. A number of young Siamese noblemen, including one of Chulalongkorn's own sons, were sent to Russia to study.<sup>12</sup> Some were to remain in Russia and serve in the Imperial armed forces. The warm relations continued until, 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution.

With the rise of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, relationships between Thailand and Russia were severed. The older Thai generation still recalls their abhorrence of the 1917 Russian Revolution, and more particularly the massacre of the Czar and his family by the Communists. These historical-traditional sentiments were superimposed on anti-Communist beliefs. Communism was then seen as the antithesis to Buddhism and the Monarchy, the two pillars of Thai society.<sup>13</sup> The new Soviet government displayed little or no interest in Thailand in terms of developing diplomatic relations. However, scholarly circles in the Soviet Union continued to reflect an interest in the political developments of the country. This interest focused upon the 1932 Revolution in Thailand, the role of Pridi Panomyong, and a very far-sighted concern with the growing influence of Japan in the area in the 1930's.<sup>14</sup>

The Russians regarded the Thai Revolution, perhaps accurately, as having no significant impact upon the political power structure of the Thai society. To them, Thailand was still "one of the most characteristic kingdoms in the Orient;" the so-called coup d'etat of 1932 had not altered the status of the Siamese king as the "absolute ruler."<sup>15</sup>

Pridi, who was regarded by many within Thailand at the time as a Communist, was brought to trial because of his "Communist" economic proposals of 1933, which were almost an exact copy of the Soviet constitution. He did not receive much attention from the Soviet leaders, however.

Pridi was treated sympathetically, but not as a Communist. The Soviet government at no time indicated an interest in the resumption of diplomatic relations. Perhaps in the 1930's conditions in Thailand were in no way conducive to the expansion of Soviet ideological influence.

Soviet leaders did become concerned over the increasing role of Japan in Southeast Asia in general and Thailand in particular during the 1930's.<sup>16</sup> Because of Thailand's strategic location vis-a-vis British Malaya, British Burma, and French Indochina, it could serve as a valuable springboard for Japanese expansion. In this respect the importance of Thailand was recognized.

Political developments during the early stages of World War II required some changes in Soviet strategies. France capitulated to Nazi Germany in 1940. This represented a direct threat to the security of the Soviet Union even though it had a non-aggression pact with Germany. In an effort to secure itself against a possible invasion from the East while its Western borders were threatened, the Soviet Union decided to improve its relations with Japan.<sup>17</sup> Soviet relations with Japan inevitably involved Thailand, which was already working with the Japanese.



The Soviet Union adopted a neutral position on the Thai-Indochinese war (with France), and established diplomatic relations with Thailand on March 12, 1941.<sup>18</sup> During the early part of the 1940's Thailand generally followed the example of Japan, the self-professed Asian leader in the Pacific; this policy was dictated by the Government of Field Marshal Pibun Songkharm. As the fortunes of Japan in the Pacific began to wane, Pibun was forced out of office. The civilian government that took over felt less constrained to follow the Japanese course. In 1945, the Soviet Union undertook hostilities toward Japan, but its attitude toward Thailand was unclear.<sup>19</sup>

Pibun was forced out of power toward the end of 1944, and Pridi assumed the reins of power in Thailand. Shortly after coming to power as Prime Minister on March 24, 1946, Pridi cautiously opened the question of reestablishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

During a press conference in May he said:

Politics and diplomacy are two entirely different things. Whether we agree with another's beliefs has nothing to do with diplomatic relations. I wish to insist that Siam can never be a Communist country, because our customs, conventions, and history differ greatly from that of Russia. Before the Soviet Revolution peasants and the poorer class in Europe were tools of the landowners and capitalists. The hardships which these people had to suffer gave rise to Communism. I have studied enough economics to be in a position to say that Communism can never happen in this country and that we have nothing to fear about that. I wish to make this point clear because I was once branded a Communist...<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps Pridi's accession to power was an event favoring the resumption of relations with the Soviet Union. It should be noted, however, that although relations had been formally reestablished in 1941, they did not in reality materialize during or immediately after the war. Thailand's most pressing problem after the Japanese defeat was to regain

the status of an honorable member of the community of nations and to restore its prestige with the Allied Powers with whom it had, at least formally, been at war.<sup>21</sup> In order to realize this objective Thailand sought admission to the United Nations Organization, and in this respect, Soviet cooperation was badly needed. Finally, the Soviet Union agreed to support Thailand. Yet, more than a year was to elapse before a diplomatic exchange actually occurred. For the most part the Soviet Union displayed marked indifference toward Thailand. Probably, the most important explanation for the Soviet Union's willingness to reestablish relations with Thailand was commerce.<sup>22</sup> Yet commercial intercourse between the two countries has been statistically insignificant.

With Marshal Pibun back as Prime Minister for the second time in 1948, difficulties in the relations between Thailand and the Soviet Union once again developed. The Pibun regime, committed to the United States, was no longer sympathetic to the Soviet Union and the commercial venture collapsed. It was found out that the Soviets were using the embassy in Bangkok as an important propaganda center.<sup>23</sup> In 1952, Soviet publications were banned,<sup>24</sup> and during the same year there were rumors that the Thai government was threatened by a Soviet mastered plot.<sup>25</sup> Relations between the two countries deteriorated. The Soviet Union's denunciation of Thailand as a puppet of Washington has been a regular theme. By the end of 1960, as the Laotian crisis deepened and the Soviet Union supported the leftist forces with an airlift from Hanoi, reconciliation between the two countries became even more unlikely. In May, 1962, United States troops were dispatched to Thailand to prevent any spill-over from Laos. This was congruent with the Rusk-Thanat Communique of March in which the United States pledged to defend Thailand

bilaterally without waiting for "prior agreement" from other SEATO members.<sup>26</sup> Later, as the United States intensified its war efforts in Vietnam through the use of American air bases in Thailand, Thai-Soviet relations continued to cool. Actions by the Thai government against Soviet espionage activities and the continued surveillance of Soviet personnel in Thailand revealed the tense relations between the two countries during the 1960's.

The changes in American foreign policy as expressed in the Nixon Doctrine, however, forced the Thai leadership to reappraise its position toward the Soviet Union. The phasing down of United States involvement in Vietnam, and statements by American leaders about a reduced military presence in Southeast Asia suggested the need for change in Thai foreign policy. On top of these developments came the British announcement of their intention to withdraw from "East of the Suez" (meaning primarily Singapore) by 1971.<sup>27</sup> Simultaneously, the Soviet leadership indicated an increased interest in Asia.<sup>28</sup> In South Asia particularly there has been an intensification of Soviet economic and diplomatic activity, which is reflected in several high-level visits to the area by Soviet statesmen. Kosygin visited Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan in the spring of 1969 and went back to India again in September en route to attend the funeral of Ho-Chi Minh. Marshal Grechko, the Soviet Defense Minister, went to India and Pakistan in March of 1969, and a Soviet delegation visited Afghanistan in July of the same year.<sup>29</sup>

Apart from these well-publicized tours by Soviet leaders, other Soviet officials also have visited Southeast Asia. The Soviet Trade Minister, for example, visited Malaysia, Cambodia, and Singapore in March, 1969. It was understood that the visit to Kuala Lumpur was to

negotiate Soviet credits and technical aid, and the visit to Singapore was to promote commercial as well as diplomatic relations.<sup>30</sup> In addition, M. Kapitsa, Head of the Southeast Asia Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, visited Laos and Thailand. Thailand also welcomed a Soviet cultural delegation in June of 1969. An economic and technical mission was sent to Indonesia to discuss economic cooperation, especially the completion of Soviet aid projects and the difficult question of Indonesian debt payments. Finally, it should be noted that a cultural delegation and Pravda's Tokyo correspondent, Biruyakov, visited the Philippines. Soviet leadership is interested in opening diplomatic relations with that country.<sup>31</sup>

Speaking of Soviet activities in Asia in a television interview in Bangkok following President Nixon's visit to Thailand, the Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman, hinted that Thailand might pursue a more independent foreign policy. A proposed trade agreement with the Soviet Union was the subject of renewed talks in 1969 (it had been discussed off and on for ten years). Similarly, considering the present Soviet interests in Southeast Asia, Dr. Thanat told an American audience at the University of Minnesota in November, 1969:

If you avoid a tiger [China] and come [face] to face with a crocodile [the Soviet Union], it is not much of a change.... If we do not have any other alternatives, maybe we will have to live with the crocodile.... This is exactly the international pattern that may emerge if and when the United States has to yield to the pressure of completely withdrawing from this part of the world....<sup>32</sup>

Also, in his address to the Asian Society in New York in early 1970, Dr. Thanat reiterated a possible Thai independence foreign policy, including the possibility of alignment with the Soviet Union.<sup>33</sup>

It should be recalled that earlier in June of 1969 at the Communist Summit Conference held in Moscow the most spectacular development was Chairman Brezhnev's call for a mutual defense pact against Chinese expansionism and "imperialism." The split between China and the Soviet Union has long been known. The dispute between them has become so serious that the Soviet Union has decided to contain China "militarily." Soviet policies thus have shifted from the passive plane of ideological contest, occasionally sharpened by border clashes, to more active measures to contain Chinese activities as reflected in the proposed security arrangement for Asia. In justifying the Soviet position, Communist Party Chairman Brezhnev explained:

Peking's practical activity on the international scene convinces us increasingly that China's foreign policy has, in effect, departed from proletarian internationalism and shed its socialist class content. That is the only possible explanation for the persistent efforts to identify the Soviet Union with U. S. imperialism. What is more, the spearhead of Peking's foreign policy at the present time is aimed chiefly against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries....<sup>34</sup>

Thus, it would seem that the Soviet Union has come to the conclusion that the Sino-Soviet dispute is no longer a product of personal animosities or ideological differences, but has reached the level of national frictions with important national interests at stake which warrant concrete measures for their protection. Since the primary Soviet objective seems to be to prevent China's achievement of dominant influence in Southeast Asia, any Thai attempt to improve relations with the Soviet Union could be interpreted as recognition of a mutual political interest to contain China. In any case, Moscow probably intended, by reference to a security arrangement, to signal to the independent nations of Southeast Asia that the Soviet Union has interests that are

compatible with their interests. Thailand officially received the Brezhnev proposal for a security pact, but it has yet to show anything more than a polite interest in the Soviet proposal for an Asian security system. However, the Soviet leadership has left the scheme largely undefined. Asian reactions to the scheme have varied from lukewarm interest to outright objection.<sup>35</sup> It was understood that Brezhnev was speaking of "collective efforts of all states of Asia and of the globe in their common interests" with details to be discussed at a later date.<sup>36</sup> In early 1970, however, Moscow stated that the proposal had no "military overtures." It was presented as a kind of non-aggression pact to "unite all the peace-loving forces in Southeast Asia.... [It is to constitute] a unity of forces not for war but to preserve peace."<sup>37</sup> Moscow thus confused the Asian nations even more. Consequently, the world has still no clear understanding of what the Soviet Union has in mind.

Thailand has been skeptical of multi-national security systems because of its experience with SEATO. SEATO has not lived up to Thai expectations and for the most part it has proved to be a total failure. Foreign Minister Thanat has frequently expressed his government's belief that military pacts are "obsolete."<sup>38</sup> The history of Thai commitment to security systems indicates a marked decline in their attractiveness. Rather, the interests of Thailand have been better served through bilateral political guarantees by Great Powers (such as the Rusk-Thanat Communique of 1962) or informal groupings (regional understandings) of like-minded smaller states that can assert stronger pressure during crises than any single member. Nevertheless, Thailand has adopted a "wait and see" attitude on the matter. At the same time Thailand has

made cautious diplomatic moves toward the Soviet Union. Past Thai-Soviet relationships have not been smooth, but this does not mean that future relationships will not be productive. In fact, cultural exchanges between the two countries have been taking place more frequently since 1966 than before.<sup>39</sup>

From the economic standpoint Thailand has recognized the importance of trading with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. This was reflected in part during 1969 when there was an interest in concluding technical agreements with the Soviet Union. Trade agreements with Bulgaria and Romania were signed in March, 1969. In December, 1970, after a long period of discussion, a trade agreement with the Soviet Union was signed.<sup>40</sup> However, Thai trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries has been quite small, representing less than one percent of the total Thai exports,<sup>41</sup> and the potential for expansion is quite limited. The Soviet Union and the Eastern European states are not likely to provide Thailand with a substitute for the Japanese market, which has been Thailand's principal market for the last twenty years. Such trade will not significantly promote the major economic policy objective of diversifying trade and reducing Thai dependence on Japan, and it should not significantly alter Thai foreign policy in such a way that one could claim that an orientation toward European Communist countries is emerging.

Specifically, what does the Soviet Union hope to accomplish by its direct approach to the Southeast Asian governments in reference to security? Is the proposed security system necessary or feasible? Whatever the Soviet Union may have in mind, it is clear that the prime purpose of Brezhnev's proposal is to win Asian sentiment to the Soviet side, both

as a weapon in the Sino-Soviet dispute and in Soviet efforts to erode American influence in Asia.<sup>42</sup> The Sino-Soviet dispute is bound to distort the view that the Soviet-American rivalry exists in the Middle East and Indochina. In effect the Soviet Union, by reference to the new security system, is bringing its own Cold War with both the United States and China into the Asian region. It seems that the Soviet Union, like the other Western powers, may be defending only its interests rather than providing any real measure of mutual benefit to the other states involved. The prevailing mood among the Asian nations, tempered by the experience of the existing pacts involving Asians and the turmoil in Vietnam, indicates a strong reluctance to accept similar responsibilities and possible liabilities inherent in joining coalitions sponsored by Great Powers.

Moscow is in a considerably stronger position vis-a-vis India than other Asian countries. Since Mrs. Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister, she has steadily developed close links with Moscow. The relations between the two countries since 1965 Indo-Pakistani War have been very cordial; economic collaboration has been the theme of the day. The Soviet Union has built a second steelworks, has provided 300 million roubles in credit for the fourth Indian economic plan and in December, 1970 signed a commercial treaty with India.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, military collaboration has been intensified. The Soviet Union has supplied armaments, aircrafts, warships, and submarines to India.<sup>44</sup> Economic and military collaboration between India and the Soviet Union finally resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation in August, 1971.<sup>45</sup>



It was not apparent in 1969 that India was prepared to accept the Russian security scheme without reservations. At the time, the way that the Indian government saw it was that the Russians were more interested in economic cooperation, to which India was not averse, than in a military alliance.<sup>46</sup> The official position, repeatedly asserted by Mrs. Gandhi, was that in India's opinion no vacuum will follow American and British pull-outs from Asia and, should one arise, the countries of the region themselves would fill it.<sup>47</sup> The situation is much different today since India has moved even closer to Moscow. Although the treaty of August, 1971, might not commit India to a formal or automatic military alliance with the Soviet Union, there is no doubt that the Soviet Union is in a better position to impose its influence on India. India might not be as free to pursue its own policy of nonalignment even though the Soviet Union has recognized it in the treaty.<sup>48</sup>

There were some indications, however, that the treaty has not met with full approval in India.<sup>49</sup> To some, the Indo-Soviet treaty will antagonize China, and might very well mark a new Cold War in this part of the world with India in the eye of the storm.<sup>50</sup> The Indo-Soviet friendship pact, though long in preparation, is mainly intended as a countermove to American and Chinese "ping-pong" diplomacy.<sup>51</sup> The signs of a Sino-American thaw have caused some concern in Moscow and thus the Soviet leadership decided to offset it by signing a treaty with India. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that Moscow has successfully consolidated its position in South Asia.

When the Soviet Union first announced its plan for a new security system, Pakistan's opposition to it was very precise. There was no likelihood at the time (and even now) of its joining an anti-China

alliance. Yet, recently the Soviet Union has supported a summit meeting between India and Pakistan.<sup>52</sup> Pending the upcoming summit, it seems clear that the scope of Soviet interests include an attempt to reconcile Indo-Pakistani differences. Without the two potential powers of the region, the Soviet scheme probably would not work. At the present time it does not appear that India and Pakistan will fully cooperate. This would render the task of protecting the region against Chinese moves more difficult.

The Soviet Union has also made some significant inroads into South-east Asia. Recently it has attempted to promote diplomatic and trade relations with Singapore and Malaysia. When the Russians announced their plan, Malaysia seemed interested.<sup>53</sup> The proposal was well in line with Malaysia's quest for a three-power guarantee for the neutralization of Southeast Asia.<sup>54</sup> But the Russians have taken the idea no further. Nevertheless, relations between the two countries are slowly developing. In Singapore, however, the situation is different. The small Republic does not seem to carry enough international weight to make it a major target of Soviet interests even though trade between the two countries is flourishing. On the other hand Soviet relations with Indonesia have significantly improved. Their differences on debt payments have been settled and the Russians have agreed to extend more aid to Indonesia.<sup>55</sup> Among the Southeast Asian countries, Thailand is probably the country where Soviet activities are least in evidence.

On a bilateral basis, Moscow's campaign around Asia already is beginning to pay off. Today there is remarkably less hostility on the part of Asian nations toward the Russians than a few years ago. This is probably what the Russians wanted to do any way when they talked of a

"new Asian security system." Yet, there is less Soviet interest in Thailand than in other countries. For practical purposes, it is doubtful that the Soviet Union regards Thailand as a particularly valuable ally in its dispute with China. Larger, more prestigious Asian nations (e.g., India, Pakistan, Indonesia) would probably rate higher in Moscow's priorities.

At the present time discussions concerning an Asian security system have subsided, since the Soviet Union has accomplished a great deal without it already. It is true that Moscow probably has the power and means to undertake such a far-reaching engagement in Asia, but it is doubtful that Moscow is willing to assume the burdens of such a commitment. Moreover, the Soviet scheme actually grew out of the Soviet Union's desire for greater cooperation with its southern neighbors. During his tour of South Asia, Kosygin on more than one occasion stressed the importance of increasing cooperation between India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Soviet Union.<sup>56</sup> This behavior of the Soviet leadership suggests that Southeast Asia may not be as important as South Asia in the Soviet Union's list of priorities.

In reality, for an Asian security system to be successful, it could hardly exclude China. Without China, as the United States has discovered, no genuine peace and stability in Asia can evolve. It has been suggested that the Soviet Union would not be averse to China's eventual participation in the proposed system and, in fact, has invited China to join it.<sup>57</sup> But if China does, perhaps it would mean that China and the Soviet Union would have resolved their more important differences. The scheme then would lose its vitality, since it is based upon the premise that China is the menace to peace in Asia. Should the two erase their

differences, the threat of co-domination by both China and the Soviet Union in Asia is imminently increased.

Whatever the case may be, most Southeast Asian governments today have recognized the dangers that too close an association with a major power can entail. This is the reason why many Asian countries were hesitant to accept Brezhnev's offer at the beginning. Thailand has fully committed itself to the position of the United States, and is now confronted with some difficult problems because the United States has decided to withdraw from the region. A close association with a major power too often results in a loss of autonomy over international and domestic affairs. An undesirable dependency upon the major power is difficult to avoid. The Soviet Union is, of course, capable of doing what the United States has done in resisting China's penetration into Southeast Asia, but it is not likely that Thailand would follow the same road it has travelled before.

On a bilateral basis, nevertheless, it seems that there is a greater possibility of Thailand becoming aligned with the Soviet Union rather than through the security system proposed by the Soviet Union. From the domestic point of view, alignment with the Soviet Union on this basis would seem to have a less damaging impact on the internal position of the present military leadership even though there are ideological differences. The Soviet Union is much further away than China and has little or no connection with the insurgency movement currently in progress in Thailand. As far as insurgency is concerned, the present ruling elite is less antagonistic toward the Soviet Union than it is toward China and North Vietnam.<sup>58</sup> Yet the question remains: if Thailand were to align itself with the Soviet Union, would the latter be prepared to

offer the Thai government assistance against Communist revolutionaries within the country? The Soviet Union currently is not in a position to restrain the major Communist parties in Southeast Asia which are in rebellion against the established governments.

Whether or not Thailand decides to align itself with the Soviet Union depends to a large extent on external factors. At the present time a feeling of real urgency and crisis on the part of Thailand does not exist. The fighting in Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam has yet to expand into Thai territories. Thus, the incentive to seek alternative alliances or active accommodation with outside powers is accordingly reduced. Moreover, the possibilities of restructuring foreign policy are limited by the interests of the large powers. At the present time the Soviet Union has not shown much interest in Thailand. The Thai leadership may accommodate itself to the interests of the Soviet Union, but this is unlikely. In recent years the military leadership has shown its strong opposition to any attempt to make a "deal" with Communist states. Of course, there is a desire for more flexibility in foreign affairs, but this is limited both by the lack of external options and by domestic restraints.

In the final analysis, the Soviet Union's presence in Asia has provided Thailand with another alternative. As far as the proposed Asian security system is concerned, it seems that the proposal has been treated as a diplomatic reality rather than all shadow and no substance. The diplomatic aspect of it has already paid off for the Soviet Union; the Russians now have more friends than ever in Asia. On Thailand's part, there is an awareness that changing patterns of international relations are emerging in Southeast Asia; but as far as Thai relations

with the Soviet Union are concerned, the developments are as yet embryonic and contain more questions than certainties. It is doubtful that Thailand will be led in the Soviet direction. Yet, it is a possibility that cannot be ruled out.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Charles B. McLane, Soviet Strategies in Southeast Asia: An Exploration of Eastern Policy Under Lenin and Stalin (Princeton, New Jersey, 1966), p. viii.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Arthur J. Dommen, Conflicts in Laos: The Politics of Neutralization (New York, 1966).

<sup>3</sup>Kurt L. London, "Vietnam: A Sino-Soviet Dilemma," The Russian Review, Vol. 26, No. 1 (January, 1967), pp. 26-37.

<sup>4</sup>"Soviet Relations with Malaysia and Singapore," Mizan, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January/February, 1968), pp. 27-37.

<sup>5</sup>Ernst Kux, "India and the New Tsarism," Swiss Review of World Affairs, Vol. 21, No. 10 (October, 1971), p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>Bayce F. Denno, "Sino-Soviet Attitudes Toward Revolutionary Wars," Orbis, Vol. 11, No. 4 (Winter, 1968), pp. 1193-1208.

<sup>7</sup>Although not a member of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Soviet Union has been interested in the activities of ADB which is the outgrowth of ECAFE of which the Soviet Union is a member.

<sup>8</sup>Peter Howard, "Soviet Policies in Southeast Asia," International Journal, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Summer, 1968), p. 436.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Paul R. Shirk, "Thai-Soviet Relations," Asian Survey, Vol. 9, No. 9 (September, 1969), pp. 683-684.

<sup>11</sup>Prince A. Lobanov-Restovsky, Russia and Asia (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1951), p. 210.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>For a discussion on these beliefs see Donald Hindley, "Thailand: The Politics of Passivity," Pacific Affairs, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Fall, 1968), pp. 355-371.

<sup>14</sup>McLane, pp. 188-189.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

- <sup>17</sup>David J. Dallin, Soviet Russia and the Far East (New Haven, Connecticut, 1948), Chapters IX and X.
- <sup>18</sup>Shirk, p. 685.
- <sup>19</sup>McLane, p. 341.
- <sup>20</sup>Quoted in Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, The Left Wing in Southeast Asia (New York, 1950), p. 71.
- <sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 70.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup>Max Bellof, Soviet Policy in the Far East 1944-1951 (London, 1956), p. 239.
- <sup>24</sup>The New York Times, April 3, 1952, p. 20.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., November 11-14, 1952, pp. 5, 11, 17, and 12.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid., March 1, 3, and 11, 1962, pp. 1 and 13, 2, and 1 and 2.
- <sup>27</sup>This position, however, was later reversed by the Conservative government in 1970. Great Britain will remain in Southeast Asia for an indefinite period but has made clear that it will not be involved in internal insurgency. See Far Eastern Economic Review, July 2, 1970, pp. 7-8.
- <sup>28</sup>Far Eastern Economic Review, January 29, 1970, p. 19.
- <sup>29</sup>Peter Howard, "A System of Collective Security," Mizan, Vol. 11, No. 4 (July/August, 1969), p. 200.
- <sup>30</sup>Ernst Kux, "The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Asia," Swiss Review of World Affairs, Vol. 19, No. 81 (August, 1969), p. 11.
- <sup>31</sup>Howard, "A System," p. 200.
- <sup>32</sup>Quoted in Astri Suhrke, "Smaller-Nation Diplomacy: Thailand's Current Dilemmas," Asian Survey, Vol. 11, No. 5 (May, 1971), p. 438.
- <sup>33</sup>Far Eastern Economic Review, March 26, 1970, p. 25-26.
- <sup>34</sup>Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol. 16 (1969-1970), p. 23437.
- <sup>35</sup>For a discussion of Asian reactions see Peter Howard, "A System of Collective Security," Mizan, Vol. 11, No. 4 (July/August, 1969), pp. 199-204; also Far Eastern Economic Review, July 24, 1969, pp. 204-205 and 245-247; and Lawrence L. Whetten, "Moscow's Anti-China Pact," The World Today, Vol. 25, No. 9 (September, 1969), pp. 385-393.
- <sup>36</sup>Quoted in Howard, "A System," p. 199.



- 37 Far Eastern Economic Review, January 29, 1970, p. 19.
- 38 James A. Joyce, "Thai Foreign Minister Suggests New Course," Christian Century, Vol. 86, No. 27 (July 2, 1969), pp. 908-909.
- 39 Reported in Siam Rath (Bangkok), January 4 and 6, 1966. Quoted in Shirk, p. 692.
- 40 Suhrke, p. 437.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Howard, "A System," p. 200.
- 43 Kux, "India and the New Tsarism," p. 10.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Text of the Treaty may be found in the Overseas Hindustan Times (New Delhi), August 14, 1971.
- 46 Reported by the Indian Information Service. Quoted in Howard, "A System," p. 204.
- 47 Far Eastern Economic Review, July 24, 1969, p. 245.
- 48 The Overseas Hindustan Times (New Delhi), August 14, 1971, p. 4.
- 49 For a survey of Indian attitudes on the treaty see Rakshat Puri, "Second Thought on the Indo-Soviet Treaty," South Asian Review, Vol. 5, No. 1 (October, 1971), pp. 1-4.
- 50 The Overseas Hindustan Times, August 21, 1971, p. 6.
- 51 Kux, "India and the New Tsarism," p. 10.
- 52 Far Eastern Economic Review, April 15, 1972, p. 10.
- 53 Ibid., March 20, 1971, p. 29.
- 54 This policy was initiated by Prime Minister Tun Razak. See Marvin C. Ott, "Foreign Policy Formation in Malaysia," Asian Survey, Vol. 12, No. 3 (March, 1972), p. 237.
- 55 Far Eastern Economic Review, March 20, 1971, p. 30.
- 56 Reported in Pravda, May 5 and June 6, 1969. Quoted in Howard, "A System," p. 202.
- 57 Far Eastern Economic Review, March 20, 1971, p. 21.
- 58 Frank C. Darling, Thailand: New Challenges and the Struggle for a Political and Economic "Take-Off" (New York, 1969), p. 10.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE POLICY OF ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST

"Why should we inherit the hatreds of others? It is bad enough that we have our own burdens."<sup>1</sup> These words of Mr. Nehru's convey the essence of the policy that has come to be known as "nonalignment." Many of the newer and less powerful states opted for a foreign policy of non-alignment as the two major powers--the United States and the Soviet Union--competed for position in the international arena after World War II. They were suspicious of the former colonial powers including the United States and they were not sure that their national interests could be served by an alliance with the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> The two Great Powers became entangled in conflicts and tense situations in all continents. The United States and the Soviet Union continue to compete in the world environment today. However, it appears that neither side can completely win against the other. This reflects the peculiar condition of a world in which two major powers vigorously compete while at the same time they try to avoid a direct confrontation that might lead to a holocaust. This is the so-called "Cold War." To some Asian leaders, such as Mr. Nehru, the Cold War is basically a big-power problem. Yet, the countries of Southeast Asia have been caught in the middle of the conflict and have paid a high price for it. The United States, the leader of the so-called "Free World" camp, has tended to see Southeast Asia as the frontline in the struggle against Communist Chinese

"aggression" and "subversion," while the Chinese have viewed the continuing Western armed presence as an overt threat to their security and as the final desperate effort of "imperialism" and "neo-colonialism" to subjugate the region. Both sides have exerted various kinds of pressures in the pursuit of their ends. A number of the states of the region in an attempt to protect themselves have espoused "nonalignment."<sup>3</sup>

Today, nonalignment is simply the name used to describe the foreign policy of any government which tries to preserve its independence and secure its internal stability without adhering to a military bloc or relying upon armed intervention by one of the major powers during time of crisis.<sup>4</sup> It is simply an effort to "opt out" of direct involvement in the major power struggle, a refusal to "stand up and be counted" for either camp.<sup>5</sup> At the same time this attitude reflects aspirations toward the greatest measure of independence, not only in international relations, but in internal affairs.<sup>6</sup> Nonalignment is of two types. The first type which the writer prefers to call "negative nonalignment" is that foreign policy of a state which completely isolates itself from the outside world. The state which espouses such a foreign policy usually refrains from taking an active part in international affairs. The terms "neo-isolationism" or neutralism might very well describe such behavior. Examples of states in this category include the United States in the 1800's<sup>7</sup> and present day Burma. On the other hand, "positive nonalignment" is that foreign policy of a state such as India which continues to take an active interest in world politics but wants no part of the "Great-Power struggles." The state that espouses "positive nonalignment" (or what India calls "positive neutralism") is anxious to trade

with everyone, including the Great Powers. It welcomes grants, loans, technical, economic and military aid from both of them, but without any "strings" attached. Nonalignment, therefore, should not be confused with the concept of neutralism. It has certain "positive" aspects in an effort to promote peace and to prevent war,<sup>8</sup> whereas neutralism is the condition of a state at peace and not actively involved in international affairs.<sup>9</sup> A state is forced to accept the condition of neutralism either because of its own restraints such as tradition and geographical locations or by the other powers.<sup>10</sup> States enjoying a neutral status must be recognized as neutral by the large powers. Experience from the past indicates that this status is not self-executing. If a power decides to violate the neutrality of another state, other powers in the region can be expected to do the same. Neutrality, thus, does not suitably describe the policies of contemporary small states who are non-aligned but do respond to the big power-rivalry in terms of their national interest. Nonalignment has been popular with a number of the new states. It reflects an attempt on the part of the new states to maintain an independent status vis-a-vis all other states, particularly the former colonial powers.

Initially, nonalignment was not accepted by the United States or the Soviet Union. Stalin and John Foster Dulles, the late Secretary of State of the United States, both attacked the nonaligned countries. Over a period of time, however, the attitude of the two Great Powers toward nonalignment (sometimes known as "positive neutrality" or "neutralism") was modified. Under the leadership of Khrushchev, the Soviet Union advocated a policy of peaceful co-existence, and with it the Soviet Union attitude toward Asian nonalignment changed. Massive Soviet

aid to India and Indonesia was an indication of the revised position. Even though Dulles was antagonistic toward nonalignment, the United States began under his Secretaryship to respond to the nonaligned states. Also, the People's Republic of China has tolerated the nonalignment of the Asian states. Especially in the mid-1950's, during the so-called Bandung period, China adopted a much more moderate and flexible strategy aiming at the promotion of friendly relations with a wide variety of non-Communist countries.<sup>11</sup> Since China is now moving toward a more cooperative position in its relationship with the United States, the Southeast Asian states, especially those allied with the United States, are encouraged to adopt a more flexible position toward China. In the light of the performance of certain nonaligned states (such as India) in the area, this presents the Thai leadership with another alternative in planning its foreign policy strategy. Disillusioned with the failure of military pacts, the Thai government does not seem interested in an alternative military pact or in revitalizing the existing one with the United States.<sup>12</sup> This being the case, nonalignment is another possibility open to the Thai government as it responds to changes in the international environment.

Historically, Thailand, like other Asian states, was suspicious of European motives and recognized the dangers of European expansion into Asia. Yet it could not avoid contacts with the West. The first contact between Thailand and the West occurred in 1518, and the first European nation ever to set foot on Thai soil was Portugal. The main purpose of the Portuguese was trade, and they were given generous commercial and trading facilities in Ayutthaya, the capital of the Kingdom at that time. Other European nations included the British, represented through

the East India Company, and the Dutch. They were given the same privileges as the Portuguese. In addition, these Western nations were also permitted to establish Christian missions in Thailand. Dutch influence grew so rapidly that they gained a large measure of control over the economy. Because of this, the British found it unprofitable to continue their trade in Thailand. Dutch influence penetrated various levels of Thai life; on one occasion they even assisted the Thai King (Prasart Thong) in his accession to the throne by promising him support against his enemies.<sup>13</sup> Later on when another King (Narai) came to the throne, he found that Dutch influence was so extensive that he decided to curb it by attempting to align the country with other European nations. First, he turned to the British and tried to conclude an agreement with them which would provide military assistance in case of hostilities with the Dutch. Great Britain, however, was interested only in obtaining long-term trade concessions, and the East India Company was induced to reopen its factory in Ayutthaya. The King then turned to France, and through his Greek adviser, Constantine Phoulkon, Thailand was able to get a letter from Louis XIV that hinted at the possibility of an alliance between France and Thailand against the Dutch. However, France appeared to have been interested far less in aiding the Thai against the Dutch than in turning Thailand into a Christian Kingdom.<sup>14</sup> In 1664, French missionaries were given permission to establish a church and a seminary and to extend their work to other parts of the Kingdom. They were also trying, but in vain, to convert King Narai to Catholicism. This caused a great deal of resentment among Thai noblemen, and eventually they planned to rid Thailand of Western influence through a "coup d'etat". As the King became fatally ill in 1688, these Thai

"nationalists" carried out their plan and the first "coup d'etat" occurred in Thailand.<sup>15</sup> Subsequently, a new King came to the throne, and the French and all other Foreigners were driven out of the country. Thus, in seeking trade and alliance with Western powers, the Thai ended up with foreign intrigue in the internal affairs of the state. For the next one hundred and thirty years the succeeding governments for all practical purposes shut out the Europeans.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, Thailand had practically isolated itself from Western contacts and influences. This resulted from suspicion directed at the Westerners, a legacy of the period after 1688. Also, the Thai government felt no compelling need to trade with the West.<sup>17</sup> After the Kingdom was established at Bangkok, it became one of the most powerful states in Southeast Asia. Its position was threatened, however, by the steady advance of the British into Malaya and Burma as well as by the French encroachments into Indochina. Once more the country was forced to open its door to Westerners and several commercial treaties were concluded with them. In 1851, relations with the West were at a critical juncture. The British had now gained control of the Malay states up to the area of Thai influence. There was a possibility that they might use force to accomplish their objectives in Thailand. With the ascension of King Mongkut to the throne, the independence of the country was preserved by making concessions to the encroaching Western powers.<sup>18</sup>

Thailand's success in maintaining its independence amidst the encroachments of the imperialist powers during this period can be attributed to a combination of several factors: the clever and opportunistic diplomacy of their leaders, Thailand's relative isolation from the major centers of European penetration in Southeast Asia, and the mutual

agreement by the British and the French to permit Thailand to serve as a buffer state.<sup>19</sup> The latter factor was the most important. The fact that Thailand was located between Britain's and France's spheres of influence provided Thailand with a unique opportunity to survive as a sovereign state. The Thai tried to establish close relations with both France and Britain in the 1850's and the 1880's respectively, with the hope that France would counteract the growing economic and political influence of Great Britain and vice versa.<sup>20</sup> These attempts were of no avail because neither imperialist power reciprocated. Neither was willing to defend Thai interests at the risk of bringing on a war with the other.<sup>21</sup> Because the two imperialist powers feared the consequences of common borders, a guarantee of the integrity of Thailand as a buffer between the two was agreed to in 1896. Thailand's independence consequently was preserved.

Because of its geographical location and the fact that Western powers had no interest in forging an alliance with it, Thailand was forced to adopt a policy of neutralism toward the external powers. The United States, the only country that maintained a sympathetic attitude toward Thailand throughout this difficult period, was not interested enough to help and instead took a neutral position.<sup>22</sup> In the meantime, Thailand was confronted with the problems of internal modernization and administrative reorganization. Recognizing that administrative weaknesses and internal disorder encouraged imperialist intervention as in and Vietnam,<sup>23</sup> The Thai leadership was confronted with the difficult task of political development. The period prior to World War I was one of internal modernization and administrative reorganization.<sup>24</sup> By 1910,



reforms had been undertaken throughout the administration, and numerous changes confronted the old bureaucrats.<sup>25</sup>

Thailand also struggled to rid itself of the infringements on its sovereignty which various European powers had imposed during the nineteenth century. Mostly, these took the form of extraterritorial rights imposed by the Europeans. However, prior to World War I and also during the interwar period, "the traditional foreign policy of Siam," states Sir Josiah Crosby, a British Minister for the Far East, "has been one of studied neutrality."<sup>26</sup> When World War I broke out, Thailand declared its neutrality. Great Britain and France were anxious to have it join the Allies, because of the large quantities of food it could contribute and because both Allied powers could then withdraw troops from Southeast Asia to be used at the Western front.<sup>27</sup> Most Thai tended to be sympathetic toward the Germans, since they had never infringed on Thai sovereignty. The Germans had been good traders and had assisted Thailand with its internal development, notably in building its railroads. By 1917, however, it was clear that the Allies would win--particularly after the United States declared war on Germany and Austria. King Wachirawut, who ascended the throne in 1910 and was sympathetic to Britain as a result of long schooling in that country, found the time opportune to join the Allies. His primary objectives were to gain international recognition for Thailand's independence and its boundaries and to regain full control over the foreign nationals living within its borders. Thailand then declared war against Germany on the pretext of its unrestricted submarine warfare. The outcome of the war did Thailand much good; it enabled Thailand to accomplish both objectives. After the war, Thailand earned the right both to be represented as an equal at the

Paris Peace Conference and to participate as a charter member in the League of Nations. Its international status had improved enormously over what it had been a decade earlier, and the stage was set for negotiations with the European nations to terminate the extraterritorial rights and "special privileges" provisions of those treaties concluded in the 1850's and the 1860's.

The period after World War I, however, witnessed Thailand returning to a neutralist policy. King Wachirawut continued his father's policies of modernizing Thailand, centralizing government control, and preserving the monarchy. In addition, he introduced the important Western concept of nationalism into the Thai political environment. He was a fervent propagandist for Thai nationalism. Throughout his reign Thai politics focused on the activities of forging the beliefs and symbols of Thai nationalism. The King even introduced anti-Chinese sentiments into the political environment. It has been argued by a Thai writer that from this point in time the Thai and the Chinese became antagonistic toward one another.<sup>28</sup> Great sums of money were spent on elaborate functions and royal tours for the glorification of Thai nationalism. Wachirawut, also, carried on his father's policy of social reforms. The whole country was preoccupied with internal developments and national image building. Thai foreign policy remained neutralist in orientation.

Domestic considerations dictated the continuation of this policy after the death of King Wachirawut in 1925 and until the Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia. Wachirawut's successor, King Prachatiwok faced a serious deficit in the national budget as a result of his brother's extravagance and lavish spending. The national economy also suffered because of the world economic depression of the 1930's. The King had to

pare government expenses wherever he could. As a result, many government officials--both military and civilians--lost their jobs.<sup>29</sup> This worsening financial situation, coupled with the rise of democratic ideas from the West among Thai intellectuals who had been educated in Europe, led to the 1932 Revolution which ended the control of the Royal family over the government.<sup>30</sup> The government was reestablished on a new basis--that of a constitutional monarchy. From 1932 to 1938 the leadership of the People's Party, the group of middle-level officials in the military and civil services who organized the Revolution, engaged in the task of consolidating their power and position. It should be noted that the so-called "Promoters" (as the leaders of the People's Party called themselves) of the coup were divided into a variety of groups which in subsequent years quarrelled and struggled with each other for political power. There were a number of coups and countercoups during this period. By 1938, the government leadership appeared to be firmly in the hands of the military. In the realm of foreign affairs, however, Thailand still maintained a neutralist position. In fact, it was the first Asian nation to express a neutralist position toward the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in the 1930's.<sup>31</sup>

As one American observer points out, Thailand's post-1932 foreign policy may be summed up as one of strict impartiality and friendliness to all in times of peace, and safe neutrality or alliance with the victors in times of war.<sup>32</sup> The Siamese regard themselves as members of a small country and by nature are nonaggressive people, and, thus, they must be the friend of all, or the friend of the victors.<sup>33</sup> In the 1930's, Japanese power and prestige was rising throughout Asia. Presumably, Field Marshal Pibun was inclined toward the Axis powers.<sup>34</sup>

Nevertheless, there was little evidence that Thailand intended to abandon its traditionally neutral policy. Pibun might have personally favored joining the Japanese, but the main elements in the Cabinet desired to retain neutrality as the basic foreign policy. The government during this period frequently announced that it would vigorously resist any invader.<sup>35</sup> Yet, Thailand was forced to cooperate with the Japanese in 1941. However, as Sir Josiah Crosby has observed, Thailand was by no means committed to the Japanese cause. It was only when Thailand was finally convinced in December, 1941, that no help was forthcoming from the Allied Powers (Britain in particular) that Pibun decided to comply with Japan's requests and to become its ally.<sup>36</sup>

The Pibun government was forced out of power soon after Japanese defeat became apparent. The civilian government that took over faced a difficult task of adjusting to an eventual Allied victory. The British demanded retribution from Thailand. At this stage, Thai foreign policy became clear: the British were to be played off against the Americans.<sup>37</sup> The United States was sympathetic to Thailand and, because of this, Thailand was able to emerge from the war on the side of the Allies. Once again Thailand reverted to a neutralist policy.

It should be noted, however, that the Cold War was in the making and at this time had not reached Asia. The civilian government maintained a policy of nonalignment and neutralism which Thailand had practiced in earlier years. Pridi, during this period immediately following World War II, cultivated relations with other states of the region. He foresaw that the nationalist forces in Burma, Indonesia, and Indochina would soon replace the weakened colonial powers in the area. He believed that Thailand's long history of independence and political

stability and its success in dealing with European powers made it a natural leader among these emergent nations. In this regard, Pridi was moving toward an anticolonialist policy and had laid a framework for regional cooperation. Before he could put this policy into effect, however, the civilian government under his control was ousted by an army coup d'etat in November, 1947, and he went into exile. The military was back in control of the government, and Pibun was returned to rule the country once more.

Shortly after Pibun's return to power, the red flag was hoisted in Peking.<sup>38</sup> Thai foreign policy under Pibun underwent a significant change in 1950 when he departed from the traditional neutralist policy by aligning Thailand with the United States. The People's Republic of China was the major factor that brought about this change. Pibun was convinced that the main threat to his country's security came from the north and could be met only with the support of Communist China's strongest adversary--the United States.<sup>39</sup> The emergence of a Communist revolutionary threat from the Chinese mainland and surrounding states in Southeast Asia caused the Thai leadership considerable concern. In 1953, the Chinese formed the so-called "Thai Autonomous People's Government" in the southern part of China. This suggested the existence of plans aimed at the Thai in Southeast Asia.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the Thai leaders thought or believed that China was the most serious threat to Thailand's security.<sup>41</sup> In 1954, Thailand accepted without hesitation United States Secretary of State Dulles' invitation to join the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a defense pact against the Communist powers in Asia. In justifying this position in September, 1954, Prince Wan Waithayakorn, the Foreign Minister, said:

For the preservation of peace and security Thailand has tried many policies in the past, such as those of neutrality and of nonaggression treaties but found that they did not work, nor can any reason be seen why they should work now....<sup>42</sup>

This indicated the thinking of the Thai leaders about the limitations of neutralism. In the past, neutralism and nonalignment only left them with nominal freedom to go about their external affairs. Now that China in its propaganda was threatening Thailand, the Thai leaders believed that their security needs could best be served by allying with the West.

This policy of alliance with the West and the United States in particular has brought numerous benefits and advances to the Kingdom, but it has also brought certain risks, embarrassment, and uncertainties. The alliance with the United States has been responsible for much of the economic progress of the country. As of 1967, American economic aid to Thailand had totalled \$464,400,000.<sup>43</sup> United States firms and corporations were encouraged to make investments in Thailand, and to date more than 100 of them have invested \$130,000,000.<sup>44</sup> Thai defenses have been greatly strengthened. The United States has provided arms and equipment, while the Thai government has supplied personnel. The Thai forces have expanded from 60,000 to 140,000 men. The United States military assistance program trained another 60,000 in the police force. Since the outbreak of the Vietnam war and of the Communist insurgency in northeast Thailand, the United States has stepped up its efforts in training and equipping Thai units to meet these threats. The annual cost of American military aid is currently estimated at \$60,000,000.<sup>45</sup> The total expenditure by the United States in the military aid program since 1950 has been \$591,700,000.<sup>46</sup>

While the United States has provided numerous benefits, it has also created problems. Today, Thailand is dependent upon the United States both economically and militarily; it has lost considerable autonomy in its foreign affairs. The policy line in Washington, D. C., under these circumstances, becomes the policy position of Thailand. There has been little alternative. Thailand has antagonized China since 1950 because of its open alliance with the United States. Today, its territories contain American bases which are used in the Vietnam war effort. Obviously, this has antagonized some of Thailand's neighbors, notably North Vietnam. This alliance with the United States has provided security in the short run, but in the long run as the containment coalition breaks up, has created problems for Thailand. Thailand, under the alliance with the United States, has been unable to adjust to the changing international conditions in Southeast Asia. It does not enjoy much flexibility. An abrupt termination of the alliance with the United States would leave Thailand in a highly exposed position vis-a-vis the Chinese threat. While this has not yet happened, the United States has indicated that it has no intention of remaining permanently in Southeast Asia once the Vietnam war is settled. The way the Vietnam war currently is being managed inhibits a flexible Thai response to China.

The Thai-United States alliance was once put to a test during the Laotian crisis in the early 1960's and, much to the dismay of the Thai, the latter found that it did not work to their satisfaction. Laos has always been regarded as vital to Thai security. The government of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat desired the establishment of a right wing government in Laos, and in this regard tried to cooperate with the United States in bolstering the forces of General Phoumi (Sarit's cousin) in

the struggle against the leftist Pathet Lao and the neutralist forces of General Kong Le. The United States, however, failed to uphold its commitment to preserve a pro-Western government in Laos and succumbed to pressures from Great Britain and France to promote a neutralist regime. SEATO was called upon by the Boon Oum-Phoumi government for assistance, but France and Britain opposed the position of Phoumi and the proposal was ultimately rejected.<sup>47</sup> This lukewarm attitude of some SEATO members irritated the Thai leaders and they began to question the utility of the alliance with the West. For the first time since 1950 the Thai leaders voiced a desire to revert to a neutralist course.<sup>48</sup> However, an agreement negotiated in 1962 between the United States Secretary of State Rusk and Foreign Minister Thanat provided a new and more satisfactory interpretation of United States commitments. The United States agreed to come to the assistance of Thailand in the event of Communist aggression without waiting for the "prior agreement" of the other SEATO members.<sup>49</sup> This understanding helped to reassure Thailand, and the inclination toward neutralism dissolved.

Again, the Thai-United States alliance is being put to the test. While the Thai government has not taken any serious action leading to a neutral position in the struggle against the Communists, there are high level officials who are exploring the possibilities. As early as 1962, for example, Interior Minister Praphas Charutsathien, the country's number-two man, openly advocated a revision of Thai foreign policy requiring a break with the United States and a return to traditional neutrality. He frankly declared:

We should have a policy that is all our own, peculiarly Thai--a Thai-ist policy that is based on Thai history, Thai culture, and Thai interests. In ancient times, our forefathers from King Ramkanhaeng, the Great, and King Naresuan,



the Great, to King Chulalongkorn, the Great, managed to maintain the independence of Thailand with a policy peculiarly Thai.... Why can't we carry out such a policy of our own?<sup>50</sup>

Today General Praphas, the most likely successor to the Thanom government, is still advocating such policy. However, it is difficult to assess precisely what he means by a "Thai-ist" policy. His comments can be interpreted to mean something different than the traditional neutralist policy. He probably means that Thailand should pursue a policy based strictly on Thai interests, and that it should not allow another country to dictate to it. Perhaps the alliance may be maintained, but Thailand would have more freedom in determining its external and internal affairs without having to give in to its partner--meaning particularly the United States. This should be called an "independent" policy. Thailand, under these circumstances, would maintain the alliance with the West if it suited Thai national interests, and Thailand could discard it when it did not. However, when a country wants to pursue an independent policy, it does not necessarily have to scrap its military pacts with other countries or revert to a strict neutralist course. During recent years Thailand has shown inclination toward an independent position in its relations with Communist countries, and at the same time it has maintained its alliance with the United States. In 1969, for example, Thailand negotiated with Romania and Bulgaria a long-term trade pact, and in the following year a Thai mission toured the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to explore the possibility of establishing mutually beneficial relationships. By 1970, a trade agreement with the Soviet Union was concluded. Also in 1969, the Thai government for the first time publicly indicated its willingness to open channels of communication with Communist China, North Vietnam, and North Korea.

Thai negotiations with North Vietnam concerning the repatriation of Vietnamese refugees was conducted in 1970. In November, 1971, the Thai government also decided to lift the ban on trade with China.

A new position is undoubtedly evolving in Thai foreign policy. Yet, this hardly can be described as a policy of neutralism or nonalignment. The Thai, of course, could revert to a neutralist policy. Some of its neighbors today profess neutralism. Burma, for example, has pursued neutralism since the British granted it independence. Burmese neutralism is more than just simple nonalignment. At times, Burma's behavior has been isolationist vis-a-vis both East and West. For a number of years Burma practically closed its door to all foreign powers. There were many contributing factors to this response to the international environment. Inexperience in foreign affairs was one factor.<sup>51</sup> Also, the close proximity to Communist China induced such a policy. For Burma, the United States was far away and while the United States government was benign and friendly, Mao Tse-Tung and his Chinese hordes were near at hand and no Burmese leader could guess the moment when the olive branch of peaceful coexistence would be lost in a deluge of China's millions moving south.<sup>52</sup> It should be noted, however, that Burma had only limited immediate difficulties with Communist China. The Burmese did not fear Communism as an ideology so much as they feared the day when China's masses would seek living space in their underpopulated country.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, the Burmese sincerely believed that internal problems would so occupy Chinese Communist efforts that Peking would have neither the heart nor the capability for concerted action in or against Burma. Instead, the Burmese government found that it was the remnants of the Kuomintang troops that continued to be a problem for the

country. To some extent, the presence of the KMT troops represented a direct threat to Burma's security.<sup>54</sup> The Chinese Communists did not intervene in this matter. Burma's relationship with Communist China continued to be cordial despite the fact that Burma had to give up part of its territories to China in a border dispute in 1956. It was not until 1967 that Communist China started to call for the overthrow of the Ne Win government. Even so, the Burmese leaders believed then, as they do now, that nonalignment is the foreign policy that best serves Burmese national interests.

Another country that also professes nonalignment and merits some considerations is India. India's policy of nonalignment has been conditioned by factors different from those of Burma's. Indian nonalignment is often seen as the special creation of Mr. Nehru, who often emphasized that his country's foreign policy was based on India's circumstances and past thinking.<sup>55</sup> However, the most important factor, probably, in determining India's nonalignment policy has been the belief that alignment represents a loss of independence, influence, and prestige.<sup>56</sup> The Indian people regard themselves as a potentially strong power, and believe that participation in alliances would destroy this potential. Furthermore, the greater proximity of the Soviet Union and China has made alliance with the West unwise. India is potentially a strong country, and it has been regarded by the Western powers as a key country in southern Asia. Nonalignment enables India to benefit from relationships with both of the major powers.

Thailand's position is similar to that of India and Burma. Yet, the Thai government has been allied with one large power bloc against another. The Thai leadership has always viewed China as a serious

threat to its security. Peking's propaganda has been threatening. All references to the Thai government in the Chinese press and radio have been antagonistic to its submission to the imperialists--the United States.<sup>57</sup> The Chinese propagandists have also called for the overthrow of the Thai government.<sup>58</sup> Under these circumstances the Thai leadership has been unable to switch to neutralism or nonalignment. Although there is some evidence that China's position toward Thailand is changing at this time,<sup>59</sup> the uncertainties make a definite policy change impossible. A "go-it-alone" policy at this stage could be very detrimental. Thailand would lose the material benefits of the alliance with the United States and at the same time be unable to establish beneficial relationships with China or the Soviet Union. The Vietnam war continues to promote instability on Thailand's eastern borders. Also, the Communist-supplied insurgencies within the country provide a situation that prevents the Thai leadership from seriously giving up sources of support for as long as they can possibly make them last.

To date, little progress has been made in solving the insurgency problem. Recently, the Thai government has secretly launched a major offensive against the insurgents, virtually wiping them out in four provinces of the north and the northeast.<sup>60</sup> Military suppression, however, can be only a temporary solution at best; these insurgents are bound to return. It seems doubtful that Thailand will be able to solve this problem in the near future. A high-level official has already acknowledged it. In a press conference in Bangkok in December, 1971, General Praphas Charutsathien openly stated that the insurgency problem was increasing. He said at the time that the intensity and the scale of war was expected to increase in the near future as the insurgents

obtained more and more modern weapons from external powers.<sup>61</sup>

The outcome of the Vietnam war is vitally important to Thai security. A professor in political science at Thammasat University has stated:

The impact of the Vietnam war on Thailand is total. It relates directly to our security, it has altered our way of life and swollen our economy. It should not surprise anyone that we are vitally concerned about what happens there....<sup>62</sup>

Thailand's concern with the outcome of the war was manifested when the government decided to send Thai units to Vietnam in 1967. The number rose to about 12,000 men in 1968. In addition, six airbases and a giant naval base were provided to the United States within Thailand from which to conduct the war, and Bangkok became a rest and rehabilitation center for American troops stationed in Vietnam. In 1969, the number of Americans in Thailand totalled 47,000 men. These soldiers have never been engaged in fighting the insurgents. The Thai government has never requested American soldiers to assist in solving this problem. It has always been Thai policy that the principal responsibility for internal security rests with the Thai government.<sup>63</sup> However, American soldiers in Thailand are being withdrawn. The Thai government, too, is contemplating the withdrawal of Thai troops in Vietnam. At the time of this writing, Thai troops are still stationed there. These soldiers represent the Thai government's grave concern about the future of Vietnam. The possible Communist domination of all of Vietnam is viewed by the Thai leadership as a major threat to the security of Thailand.

Generally speaking, the Thai leadership would rather pursue a non-alignment or neutralist policy. A neutralist policy is well known to them because of past experience; but there were certain conditions that

facilitated this policy. It seems that when it worked for Thailand it was also suitable to the large powers in the region and at the same time was compatible with the internal political situation. But, today external political forces and the domestic situation render this policy untenable. The days of the happy buffer state between Great Britain and France are gone, and the leadership finds the Communist threat within Thailand too closely linked with the external pressures that Thailand confronts. A shift in the power balance is taking place in Southeast Asia as the United States withdraws. Instead of finding itself in a buffer position as in the past, Thailand itself is becoming another battleground as the Vietnam war widens. Still militarily weak, Thailand cannot afford to "go-it-alone" as it did in the past.

If Thailand were to adopt a neutralist policy after the United States withdrawal is completed, it would be seriously exposed to Chinese pressures and would not be able to maintain a truly neutralist policy. A small power cannot be neutral unless certain international power relationships exist which enable the small state to function as a buffer between or among the large states. If the United States withdraws and the Soviet Union does not fill the vacuum, Thailand will be forced to lean toward China. The Thai leaders understand this.<sup>64</sup> Also, neutralism would not guarantee Thailand against direct attacks from China or North Vietnam. Thus, Thailand must be extremely cautious in its consideration of policy alternatives.

Thailand still needs assistance for its internal economic and social development. It is possible that, by maintaining a neutralist policy, Thailand may be able to acquire aid from countries other than the United States, including those dominated by Communist governments.

However, foreign assistance is more difficult to negotiate now than it was previously. The United States is becoming much less inclined to provide assistance. Competing large powers possibly cannot be depended upon for aid under a neutralist policy. It is conceivable that aid may be forthcoming from limited sources and then only if foreign policy concessions are made. Under the alliance with the United States generous amounts of aid have been provided. This entailed commitments, however.

One other alternative would be for the Great Powers to neutralize Thailand and provide it with an international guarantee for its independence. At the present time, strict neutralization applies only to two states: Austria and Laos. The Austrian example points to the possible benefits of neutralization; Laos to its dangers and difficulty. To be effective any neutralization agreement requires two basic requisites--a degree of consensus within the government concerned, and the agreement among the interested powers surrounding the state to respect the neutralized status.<sup>65</sup> The Thai leadership strongly opposed the neutralization of Laos. Its failure<sup>66</sup> has confirmed the problem of establishing a neutral state in Southeast Asia. This experience discourages the selecting of the neutralization option for Thailand.

Neutralization of the whole Southeast Asia region is a possible alternative to neutralization on a country basis. It is conceivable that if the whole region were neutralized, Thailand's interests could be realized under this structure. General De Gaulle of France proposed this as a solution some time ago, but Thailand at the time rejected it. Perhaps this approach should be reconsidered. In the ASEAN meeting of November, 1971, at Kuala Lumpur, the Thai leadership discussed the possibility of neutralization of the whole region. Thailand did sign a

neutralization declaration indicating its support.<sup>67</sup> More discussion on the subject is to be forthcoming at the next meeting. It seems now that the ASEAN is moving toward that direction.<sup>68</sup>

Any discussion of neutralism of any one of the Southeast Asian states, or even the neutralization of the whole area, can hardly overlook the significance of Communist China. The emergence of China as a major power has made it more difficult for the Southeast Asian states to adjust to the changes introduced by the new triangle of power and the ensuing local and regional disturbances.<sup>69</sup> In the old detente in which the United States and the Soviet Union were parties it was comparatively simple. It enabled the small countries to play off one major power against the other. In the emerging pattern there is much uncertainty. China is not the major power that a small country like Thailand can confront with ease. Up to the present time China has not shown any interest in the neutralization of Southeast Asia. China, of course, has interests in the area. If there is no countervailing large power in the region willing to offset Chinese power, Thailand cannot rely on neutralism as a possible approach.

It is from the preceding analysis that the writer believes Thailand is unlikely to adopt neutralism as a major policy position. Neutralization of the whole region is a prospect, but it is still in the early stage of development. This chapter has shown that an "independent" policy is being considered in Thailand, but it should not be interpreted as a move toward neutralism. Thailand is bound to be influenced by its traditional policy. However, the present political situation renders the traditional alternative unlikely. This is not to deny that some future Thai government may choose or be forced to opt for a neutralist



course as a result of changes in the balance of power in Southeast Asia; it merely states that the time is not yet right for Thailand to pursue such policy.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Interview in the Hindu (New Delhi), April 1, 1954. Quoted in Coral Bell, "Nonalignment and the Power Balance," in Davis B. Bobrow (ed.), Components of Defense Policy (Chicago, 1955), p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> George P. Jan (ed.), International Politics of Asia: Readings (Belmont, California, 1970), p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> M. Caldwell, "Nonalignment in Southeast Asia," in J. W. Burton (ed.), Nonalignment (New York, 1966), p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Bell, p. 69.

<sup>6</sup> Leo Mates, "Nonalignment and the Great Powers," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 48, No. 3 (April, 1970), p. 525.

<sup>7</sup> See Alan F. Westin, "We, Too, Were Once a 'New Nation'," The New York Times Magazine, August 19, 1962, pp. 16-17 and 54-58.

<sup>8</sup> India's behavior in the 1964 Congo Crisis is a case in point.

<sup>9</sup> Burton (ed.), p. 22.

<sup>10</sup> Switzerland is an example of neutrality by tradition and Belgium before World War I was an example by agreement among the powers in the region.

<sup>11</sup> A. Doak Barnett, "The Foreign Policy of Communist China," in George P. Jan (ed.), p. 171.

<sup>12</sup> Far Eastern Economic Review, December 26, 1970, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> D. E. G. Hall, A History of Southeast Asia (New York, 1968), p. 360.

<sup>14</sup> Donald E. Nuechterlein, Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia (Ithaca, New York, 1965), p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> For account of the revolution see E. W. Hutchinson, 1688 Revolution in Siam (Hong Kong, 1968).

<sup>16</sup> Nuechterlein, p. 8.

- <sup>17</sup>Walter F. Vella, Siam Under Rama III (Locust Valley, New York, 1957), p. 115.
- <sup>18</sup>See Chapter II.
- <sup>19</sup>Frank C. Darling, Thailand and the United States (Washington, D.C., 1965), p. 45.
- <sup>20</sup>Nuechterlein, p. 22.
- <sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 23.
- <sup>22</sup>David A. Wilson, The United States and the Future of Thailand (New York, 1970), p. 24.
- <sup>23</sup>J. S. L. Girling, "Thailand's New Course," Pacific Affairs, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Fall, 1969), p. 350.
- <sup>24</sup>Walter F. Vella, The Impact of the West on Government of Thailand (Berkeley, California, 1955), Chapter II.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 349.
- <sup>26</sup>Sir Josiah Crosby, Siam: The Crossroads (London, 1945), p. 92.
- <sup>27</sup>Nuechterlein, p. 25.
- <sup>28</sup>Quoted in Vella, Impact, p. 353.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 356-360.
- <sup>30</sup>David A. Wilson, Politics in Thailand (Ithaca, New York, 1962), pp. 11-12.
- <sup>31</sup>Thanat Khoman, "A Positive Foreign Policy for Thailand," Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, August 14, 1971, p. 2, (mimeo.).
- <sup>32</sup>John Coast, Some Aspects of Siamese Politics (New York, 1953), p. 10.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup>Vella, Impact, Chapter V.
- <sup>35</sup>Coast, pp. 16-17.
- <sup>36</sup>Crosby, p. 127.
- <sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 30.
- <sup>38</sup>Incidentally, Pridi appeared in China after his unsuccessful attempt of a counter-coup in February, 1949.

<sup>39</sup>L. P. Singh, "Thai Foreign Policy: The Current Phase," Asian Survey, Vol. 3, No. 11 (November, 1963), p. 535.

<sup>40</sup>Edwin F. Stanton, "Spotlight in Thailand," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 33, No. 1 (October, 1954), p. 79.

<sup>41</sup>Donald E. Nuechterlein, "Small States in Alliances," Orbis, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Spring-Summer, 1969), pp. 605-606.

<sup>42</sup>Quoted in Russell H. Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958 (New York, 1958), p. 231.

<sup>43</sup>Frank C. Darling, Thailand: New Challenges and the Struggle for a Political and Economic "Take-Off" (New York, 1969), p. 28.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>45</sup>Quoted in ibid., p. 39.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>For details of American and Thai involvement in the Laotian crisis... see Donald E. Nuechterlein, Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia, Chapters V, VI, and VII.

<sup>48</sup>The New York Times, May 6, 1961, p. 30.

<sup>49</sup>The Rusk-Thanat Communique was agreed to in March, 1962. See previous citations in Chapter III.

<sup>50</sup>Reported in the Bangkok Post, September 6 and 10, 1962. Quoted in L. P. Singh, pp. 540-541.

<sup>51</sup>William C. Johnstone, Burma's Foreign Policy (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1963), p. 41.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., Chapter V.

<sup>55</sup>Quoted in Norman D. Palmer, South Asia and United States Policy (Boston, 1966), p. 162.

<sup>56</sup>P. J. Eldridge, "India's 'Nonalignment' Policy Reviewed," in George P. Jan (ed.), p. 136.

<sup>57</sup>See David A. Wilson, "China, Thailand, and the Spirit of Bandung," China Quarterly, No. 31 (April/June, 1967), pp. 154-155.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>The New York Times, April 13, 1971, p. 10; May 15, 1971, p. 36; and May 16, 1971, p. 16.

<sup>60</sup>This information was derived from a relative in Bangkok through a personal letter.

<sup>61</sup>Far Eastern Economic Review, January 15, 1972, p. 8.

<sup>62</sup>The New York Times, April 14, 1968, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup>Interview with Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, Far Eastern Economic Review, June 12, 1969, p. 608.

<sup>64</sup>This was evident in an interview with Dr. Thanat in 1963. See Far Eastern Economic Review, May 16, 1963, pp. 369-370.

<sup>65</sup>Peter Lyon, War and Peace in Southeast Asia (London, 1969), p. 170.

<sup>66</sup>Laos' failure in neutralization was facilitated in part by the refusal of the leftist faction (the Pathet Lao) to cooperate with the coalition government, and the inability of the coalition government to cope with its internal problems. These events led to intervention by the big powers.

<sup>67</sup>David Morell, "Thailand: Military Checkmate," Asian Survey, Vol. 12, No. 2 (February, 1972), p. 165.

<sup>68</sup>This will be appropriately discussed in Chapter V.

<sup>69</sup>See, for example, Leo Mates, "Nonalignment and the Great Powers," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 48, No. 3 (April, 1970), pp. 525-536.

## CHAPTER V

### IN SEARCH OF AN ASIAN CONCERT

When the power and prestige of the major European nations began to erode in confrontation with nationalist movements in Southeast Asia at the end of World War II and afterwards, the international relations of Southeast Asian states inevitably had to change. The advent of independence meant that the emerging Southeast Asian states would need to develop patterns of relations both with their neighbors and other nations of the world, including their former rulers. The years immediately following World War II (1945-1958) were formative years for the new Southeast Asian states in the determination of foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> The task was not easy. Partly, this was because the ruling elites were inexperienced in foreign affairs; but, also, because the peoples in Southeast Asia under colonial control had been isolated from each other.<sup>2</sup> The peoples of the area hardly knew each other. The linguistic and religious diversities caused misunderstandings. Century-old animosities between certain peoples aroused fear and suspicion, and were manifested in the relationships between the newly established states.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, rather varied approaches to foreign policy emerged in Southeast Asia.

Thailand in the 1950's switched from a neutralist stance to a firm pro-American policy and participated in containment programs designed to prevent Communist expansion in the region. Cambodia and Burma emerged as neutralists. Indonesia, suspicious of Western powers, also opted for

neutralism and tried to make a serious bid for leadership in the area. Malaysia and Singapore clung to their former ruler, Great Britain. Laos has remained a pseudo-independent state, and its foreign policy has been subject to the will of its stronger neighbors. Vietnam was partitioned into two parts--North and South. North Vietnam is under the leadership of the Communists who have sought to reunite the two parts. South Vietnam, heavily dependent upon the United States, has been involved in a bloody encounter with Communist forces seeking to reunite the two parts under Communist leadership. Southeast Asia, as these events indicate, has been confronted with constant political turmoil. Certainly, during the formative years following World War II there was little opportunity to establish regional unity.

However, when one looks closely at the foreign policy objectives of these various countries, one finds similarities in interests. These states have been primarily concerned with the problem of establishing national identity and preserving independence.<sup>4</sup> Most of them have been fearful of wars between the major powers and concerned over specific events that could lead to such a war. The leaders of these small and weak states understand fully the dangers of major war. They would like to keep themselves free of commitments that would involve them, but this is difficult when big powers are so competitively active in the region. Also, to develop a viable state economic development and modernization is necessary. A measure of political stability is required and much assistance from the richer states has been sought. However, military and economic aid from the large powers has entangled the smaller states in the "Cold War" and has endangered their survival. When great powers become involved they seem to have a way of complicating these problems.

The United Nations has been looked to as an alternative,<sup>5</sup> but it is weak and not able under Cold War conditions to help solve the problems of the individual smaller states. It is not capable of decisive action when a major security problem arises and it is also unable to provide large quantities of economic and technical assistance. Thailand, among other nations, belongs to the United Nations and it has acquired limited assistance from it.

Southeast Asian states must find an alternative to excessive entanglement with the big powers and a too heavy reliance on the United Nations. They must exploit the opportunities that might possibly exist in the changing relationships among the big powers that would permit regional initiative and development. The states in the region, if this is to happen, must dissolve communication barriers and plan coherent patterns of regional cooperation.

A great deal has happened in Southeast Asia since the beginning of the 1960's. During this time the basic foreign policies of key countries in the region have crystallized. Many of the problems, such as the Communist threat from North Vietnam and China, the failure of neutralization in Laos, and the ousters of Sukarno in Indonesia and Sihanouk in Cambodia, have shed new light on the foreign policy strategies of these various states. While changes in foreign policy are in the making, for all Southeast Asian states basic goals remain the same. These goals--economic development, political stability, freedom from outside interference, and self-determination--continue to be the basic domestic and foreign policy objectives of these states, and will remain so for many years to come. The leaders of the Southeast Asian states are beginning to seek ways to work together in solving major problems.



and realizing common objectives. They are talking about Asian solidarity. Thailand is a key state in the region. Thai foreign policy is oriented toward building regional solidarity to enable Southeast Asian states as a group to be more self-reliant and less dependent on the super powers. Regional cooperation seems to be the most logical option available to Thailand.

Regionalism is not a new concept in the area. For two years following the collapse of Japan in 1945, Thai foreign policy was largely determined by Pridi Panomyong. Pridi had definite ideas about the role that Thailand should play in Southeast Asian affairs. While maintaining good official relations with the victorious Allies, particularly the United States, Pridi was also interested in making Thailand the leader of the independent nations in this part of Asia.<sup>6</sup> He foresaw that sooner or later colonialism would end, and that Thailand should be prepared for a larger role in this region. In his initial attempts Pridi advocated a "Pan Southeast Asia Union," which would be sponsored by France and Thailand. This Union would initially consist of Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam as free and independent states. Burma, Malaya, and Indonesia would be invited to join later. In effect, Pridi was advocating, probably for the first time in Thailand's history, a foreign policy of regional cooperation.<sup>7</sup> Pridi believed that Thailand's long history of independence and its success in dealing with the European powers made it the natural leader among these emergent nations. It was an ambitious program of an extraordinary man who seemed to have unlimited faith in his ability to guide Thailand. However, France did not reciprocate, and the scheme was ultimately rejected.

Toward the autumn of 1947, a Southeast Asia League was formed in Bangkok. Pridi was moving toward an anti-colonialist policy in an effort to align Thailand with the emerging states of Southeast Asia. This organization was significant in that it came into existence after the Dutch "police action" in Indonesia. A number of Pridi's followers were members of this organization as well as exile leaders from neighboring states who wanted to expel the colonial powers from their homelands.<sup>8</sup> It did not progress far because of the coup of November, 1947, which overthrew Pridi's government. The succeeding regime was not interested in the organization, which was soon dissolved.

Since 1950, increasing international tension as well as domestic difficulties forced Thailand to the side of the United States. In 1950, in commitment to the anti-Communist cause, the Pibun government signed a treaty with the United States which brought to Thailand military and economic aid. In an effort to promote regional security, Thailand in 1954 became one of the three Asian members in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).

SEATO did not live up to Thai expectations, however. In reality membership created a dilemma for Thailand because the treaty was based to a large extent on the anti-Chinese attitude of the United States. As an Australian scholar once put it, "the viability of Thailand's stand depends vitally on the United States position. If that position were suddenly reversed and accommodation reached with China, Thailand would be left out on a limb."<sup>9</sup> SEATO has been a multilateral alliance more in appearance than in actuality; it has not been able to cope with the political and military problems of the region. Thai suspicion of the alliance began to grow during the Laotian crisis of 1962.<sup>10</sup> In spite of

its many shortcomings, however, SEATO has provided an additional channel for economic and technical development within Southeast Asia; and Thailand cannot deny the benefits it has derived from the alliance. The alliance also encouraged the involvement of other states in the region. Australia, and to a lesser extent, New Zealand, became active through SEATO in Southeast Asian affairs.

Fearful of the change in the course of American foreign policy,<sup>11</sup> the Thai leaders have attempted to develop more intimate economic, cultural, and social contacts with other non-Communist nations in Asia. In spite of numerous cultural, historical, and economic obstacles to regional unity, the Thai leaders believe that cooperation among the nations in the area is possible. The Thai Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman, has been the principal architect of the policy of Asian "regionalism," which has earned him the informal title of "father" of Southeast Asian unity.<sup>12</sup> The announced withdrawal of the British east of Suez by 1971<sup>13</sup> and the uncertainty regarding the American commitment to defend the region intensified Thai concern. In its quest for what Thanat calls a "positive foreign policy," important initiatives and constructive measures have been taken by the Thai government to build a new structure for regional cooperation in the political, economic, social and cultural fields.<sup>14</sup> They are intended to consolidate national freedom and independence by bringing together the activities of countries which share common stakes and interests. No plans for military cooperation have been proposed.<sup>15</sup>

The first step in Southeast Asian regional cooperation was the formation of the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) in 1961 by Thailand, Malaya, and the Philippines, on the basis of the Bangkok Declaration of

July of that year. Its purpose was to promote cooperation in economic, social, scientific, and administrative affairs and to provide machinery for mutual assistance in exploiting natural resources, developing agriculture and industry, and expanding trade.<sup>16</sup> The organization stressed the absence of ties with any outside power or bloc. Both the United States and China, however, barely recognized the Association's existence.<sup>17</sup> The Association of Southeast Asia was unable to achieve its objectives. Apart from the repercussion of the Vietnam war, it also suffered from conflicts within the region, such as the confrontation between Malaysia and the Philippines. Only when, through Thailand's efforts, reconciliation was achieved among these countries in 1966, was the way opened again for developing regional cooperation. Thailand used ASA as a base upon which to build broader approaches to regional cooperation.

The Association of Southeast Asia was enlarged to include Indonesia and Singapore in a new regional organization called the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which was established in a meeting at Bangkok in 1967. Efforts were made to bring in other Asian nations such as Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Ceylon in order to include more nonaligned states. Indonesia is the only nonaligned member. Although emphasis in the new organization is economic and social cooperation, the door is open to political and military cooperation.<sup>18</sup>

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations offers hope for cooperation among the Southeast Asian nations. It is strictly an Asian endeavor. The structure should have great attraction for the Asian states. It appeals to the nationalist yearnings of their educated elites to exercise an independent voice in world affairs. As of late 1971,

however, despite standing invitations for membership, Burma, Cambodia, and Ceylon have not joined the organization. The absence of these states should not hamper the work of the organization, however.

The ASEAN members have agreed to cooperate in the fields of food production, commerce and industry, civil aviation, tourism, and communication.<sup>19</sup> Also, they have used the organization in efforts to settle political problems. Under the auspices of ASEAN, the Djakarta Conference on Cambodia in May, 1970, was convened by the government of Indonesia in an attempt to deal with the problem created by the North Vietnamese general offensive against the Khmer forces.<sup>20</sup> This was the first time that states in Asia (from Australia to Japan) were able to assemble in an effort to find Asian solutions to Asian problems. In spite of the fact that nothing concrete resulted, this was an indication that Asian states are attempting to cooperate in efforts to solve regional problems. In terms of participants alone, it was a remarkable development. For the first time in 25 years, the Japanese Foreign Minister met with most of the other nations for the announced purpose of discussing a security problem. This marked Japan's increasingly frank concern with the politics and security of Southeast Asia.<sup>21</sup>

As the United States moves closer to a detente with China and the Soviet Union, the Southeast Asian nations are forced to move closer together. In November, 1971, the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN states met in Kuala Lumpur for a discussion of the possibility of neutralizing the whole Southeast Asian region. In the November meeting, the ASEAN "Southeast Asia neutralization" declaration was signed.<sup>22</sup> It appears that Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines have developed a closer working relationship.<sup>23</sup> This became apparent at the

fifth annual ministerial conference in Singapore in April, 1972. At this particular Conference, the five members agreed to give their association a political as well as an economic orientation.<sup>24</sup> Among the more important subjects discussed was the proposal for the neutralization of Southeast Asia which the ASEAN countries jointly declared in Kuala Lumpur in the November meeting. In an interview in Bangkok concerning the subject, Dr. Thanat hinted that the major powers appeared to be interested.<sup>25</sup> However, the plan is still in the early stage of development and it will take some time before it can be fully implemented.

The Soviet Union's attitude toward Southeast Asian neutralization appears to be negative. The Russians simply do not believe that neutralization can become operative because the countries concerned do not occupy a neutral position.<sup>26</sup> Thailand, for instance, is taking an active part in the Vietnam war, and the Philippines, although not directly involved in that war, continues to belong to SEATO. Perhaps the Soviet Union is more concerned with rising Chinese influence than with other aspects of Southeast Asian politics. To date, China has not responded to the neutralization scheme. It seems that certain advantages would be realized by China. The immediate advantage of neutralization to China would lie in the removal of some, if not all, United States military forces from the area. At the same time it would prevent the Soviet Union from expanding further into Southeast Asia. Neutralization, if adopted, would require China to refrain from supporting pro-Communist revolutionary forces in the neutralized area. This would conflict directly with the revolutionary commitment to "wars of national liberation" entertained by the present leadership in Peking. On the

other hand, it is possible that Peking would be more interested in getting the "two superpowers" out of the region than in directly involving itself in the politics of states within the region.

Neutralization should merit serious consideration within the United States government. Since the United States is contemplating withdrawal from the region, some guarantee of the status quo in Southeast Asia can be provided through neutralization. At least neutralization seems to be in line with the Nixon Doctrine which stresses a retrenchment of United States' involvement in the area.

Regional collaboration is also promoted through the Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC), which is comprised of South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Nationalist China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and South Vietnam, with Laos as an observer. Formed in 1966, ASPAC seeks greater mutual assistance and solidarity among Asian and Pacific countries in their endeavors to protect themselves from the Communist threat and in the development of their respective economies.<sup>27</sup> ASPAC is significant because it includes as members Japan and Australia. By 1969, in the economic, social, and cultural fields, ASPAC's modest but encouraging achievements comprise the establishment of a Registry of Experts in Canberra, and an ASPAC Social and Cultural Center in Seoul, a Food and Fertilizer Center in Taipei, and, in principle, an Economic Cooperation Center in Bangkok.<sup>28</sup> Equal significance should be given to the usefulness of ASPAC as a forum for close consultation and frank exchange of views on political matters of interest to Asia. This purpose has not thus far been marred by political differences among the member countries.<sup>29</sup>

ASPAC already has taken a firm stand on several important regional issues. At its third annual conference in Australia in August, 1968, ASPAC expressed support for South Vietnam and South Korea in their efforts to protect themselves against external aggression.<sup>30</sup> It expressed hope that diplomatic negotiations in Paris between the United States and North Vietnam would result in the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam, and it upheld the right of the government of South Vietnam to exist and to fully participate in any agreement concerning its territory.<sup>31</sup> Thailand has consistently stressed the view that ASPAC should remain non-military and non-ideological, while some other members, notably South Korea and Nationalist China, have sought to transform the organization into an anti-Communist military alliance.<sup>32</sup> Thailand has also held the view that ASPAC and ASEAN are complimenting each other and that neither hampers the work of the other.<sup>33</sup>

The prevailing winds of detente between the superpowers have also swept over ASPAC. At the ASPAC's fifth annual ministerial conference in June, 1972, for the first time in its history, the organization, led by South Korea, decided to open its door to all countries regardless of "ideology or political system".<sup>34</sup> This includes, of course, North Korea, North Vietnam, and China. There was also some talk of merging ASPAC and ASEAN into one.<sup>35</sup> It is now conceivable that an Asian regionalism will be established in the foreseeable future.

The fact that various countries in the Southeast Asian region and in the Pacific have been able to get together and cooperate in working out solutions to some Asian problems is encouraging to the Thai leadership. These organizations represent concerted actions of the countries involved and they see in each other's interests a mutual concern to



remain free and independent. The future of these organizations is not certain, since they are in their early stages of development. At this time, some political strength has been generated through these organizations through consultation and exchanges of ideas. Unity among these states can enhance their position vis-a-vis the outside powers. For this reason, Thailand has been in the forefront during the last decade in the cultivation and nurturing of these regional organizations.

Thailand is geographically in the center of Southeast Asia, which provides it with a strategic location between Japan and Australia, and between Japan and India. For geopolitical reasons alone, Thailand is in an ideal position to offer itself as a "key link" between these states. As Dr. Thanat Khoman puts it, "Thailand may be called the main sail of the Southeast Asian ship and has thus been buffeted by political winds coming from different directions."<sup>36</sup> The geographic factor seems to have some importance to Thailand's position on Asian regionalism. Thailand, in recent years has become the center of many activities in Asia, and Bangkok's foreign relations currently has important implications for the whole of Southeast Asia.

Thailand also participates in cooperative efforts in education and research through its membership in the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Secretariat (SEAMES) comprising Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, and South Vietnam. SEAMES, formed in 1965, is engaged in cooperative research in agriculture, tropical biology, tropical medicine and public health, education in science and mathematics, language study, and educational innovation and technology.<sup>37</sup> Other cooperative efforts include the annual Ministerial Conference for the Economic Development of Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, the

Philippines, and South Vietnam) which was formed in 1966; the Asian Development Bank (ADB), inaugurated in 1966 under United Nations auspices; the Mekong River Development Project (Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and South Vietnam), set up in 1957 to develop the water resources of the lower Mekong basin;<sup>38</sup> and the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic Development initiated in 1950.

Cooperation through the United Nations constitutes an important part of Thai foreign policy. Since the time of its joining in 1946, Thailand has supported the United Nations' varied activities. It was the first Asian nation to back the United Nations' intervention in Korea by furnishing a contingent of combat troops to serve under the flag of the UN command. In the economic realm, Bangkok is the site of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), a regional commission of the United Nations. Bangkok also served as the site for a ministerial meeting of Asian developing nations in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held in New Delhi in 1968. The Thai government has always held the view that the United Nations should assert a greater role in seeking to reconcile the conflicting positions of the Great Powers.

Thus, it can be seen that Thai foreign policy during the last decade has been oriented in the direction of regional cooperation. Thailand's stress on regional cooperation is credited to Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman's personal dedication to the idea. Ironically, however, it was also due to Thanat that close cooperation between Thailand and the United States in the 1960's was forged. In addition to his role in promoting the formation of ASA, ASEAN, and ASPAC, and other cooperative ventures, Thanat was the first Asian leader to appeal for an all-Asia

conference to settle the Vietnam war. He was also the first to call on Japan to assume a role in Asia commensurate with its enormous economic powers. Thanat stresses political and economic cooperation rather than military alliances as the optimum way of strengthening the smaller Asian nations vis-a-vis the outside powers.<sup>39</sup> His view on developments in Asia after the Vietnam war focuses on ASEAN and ASPAC as major pillars of a future "Pax Asiana." However, regional cooperation through these organizations does not represent a "Third Force" which will remain neutral and will be able to mediate large power conflicts.<sup>40</sup> Even though Thanat is temporarily out of the government, he nevertheless continues to play an active role in the shaping of Thai foreign policy. He was appointed Special Envoy to the ASEAN meetings in November, 1971, and again in April, 1972. His thoughts on Asian regionalism will remain the pillar of Thai foreign policy for some time to come.

The new accent on self-reliance and regional cooperation represents a major change in Thai foreign policy since 1968. Nevertheless, one question remains: is regional cooperation feasible? Between the large, off-shore archipelagoes of Indonesia and the Philippines and the arc of mainland nations stretching from Burma to Vietnam, there are no close ties. Within this cluster of nations, there is a history of conflict that goes back many centuries. Apart from the historical and cultural factors, numerous economic impediments also confront the Asian leaders who desire regional unity.<sup>41</sup> However, despite all that militates against regional cooperation, the subject has become ever more prominent in the pronouncements of the Asian leaders. It is treated more seriously in Djakarta and Bangkok and other capitals of the area than is commonly thought. These discussions have grown livelier as more and

more Asian leaders, watching American reactions to the unhappy experience in Vietnam, have come to realize that the United States is about to withdraw from the region as a major force.

It is recognized that any Asian endeavor aiming at regional cooperation will experience difficulties. Since most countries of the region are economically backward, there seems to be little basis for energetic economic cooperation. If these efforts, namely, development of manpower resources, the creation of more employment opportunities, the promotion of economic growth in rural areas, tourism, investment of foreign industries, continue in their present uncoordinated patterns, they will not be as productive as they might be under a cooperative program of development. Economic progress has been evident in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines during the last decade. If these states could cooperate, they could learn from each other's successes and mistakes. Furthermore, some major powers can be counted on to give assistance.

It does not appear that economic cooperation will be the big problem in the 1970's. A bigger problem is the Communist threat that confronts the region. It is a common problem for all, and it might very well serve as a uniting force. There is little doubt that Southeast Asian leaders believe that China, and China's support for internal dissident groups, represents the main threat to the region's security. Since the most likely threat from China is through subversion and support for revolutionary groups, it is conceivable that Southeast Asian states can mobilize their forces in joint combat operations against the challengers. They can cooperate in solving the social and economic problems that the Communists exploit. Although Dr. Thanat does not

believe in the militarization of the ASEAN nations, he once stated that Southeast Asianization is a possibility in dealing with the internal insurgency within Southeast Asia.<sup>42</sup> Support from states outside of the region also may be required.

The United States seems determined to extricate itself from the quagmire of its military commitments in Indochina. Cooperation among the Asian states through regionalism can facilitate the success of the "Nixon Doctrine." Prior to his coming to office in 1967, Mr. Nixon wrote an article in a professional journal stressing Asian solidarity as an alternative to United States overcommitment in Asia.<sup>43</sup> Undoubtedly, the United States has a very constructive role to play, although not in terms of direct military involvement, in helping to bring about Asian solidarity. Indeed, the United States national interest has always required more than one center of power in Asia. Conflict with Japan resulted from Japan's efforts to consolidate all of Asia under its hegemony; and United States antagonism toward China more recently can be explained in terms of a fear that China is attempting to dominate all of Asia.<sup>44</sup> These regional endeavors, with immense population and resources behind them, can provide a base for another center of power in Asia. China's ambitions can be thwarted. Southeast Asian regional solidarity made possible by United States economic and technical assistance can serve United States foreign policy interests.

In this connection, a strong and viable Thailand is indispensable for the growth of Southeast Asian regionalism and the reduction of United States commitments. Thailand's success in regional diplomacy and domestic progress can enhance the security of the entire region. In the general terms of Asian-United States interaction, Thailand can play a

key role in helping to bring about Asian solidarity, which, in turn, will permit the United States to reduce its commitment in Asia in the coming decade. A mutual long-range interest is present. The process will, of course, be a subtle, complicated, and time-consuming one. Without the United States' help, it is very unlikely that the scheme will succeed.

While American soldiers are being withdrawn from the region, United States naval forces still remain in the area. These forces can serve as a bulwark against any future Communist attack. The United States has already promised a shield under the Nixon Doctrine. If the countries of the region can be really united, with the United States military might in the background, defense of the region can be provided.

Another country that has deep interest in the security and stability of Southeast Asia because of its economic interests is Japan. Japan is now the third ranking economic and industrial power in the world. Although militarily restricted by its Constitution, its political power is on the rise concomitant with its economic might, and will be increasingly felt in many parts of the globe. Thus, we quite naturally can expect that as Japan's trade and investments in the region multiply, a political policy will inevitably follow. However, memories of ill-treatment during the Japanese occupation of the region during World War II still linger, and many countries of the region view Japan with suspicion. The activities of Japanese businessmen today are a cause for concern; many countries have charged "unfair business practices" against the Japanese.<sup>45</sup> Yet, these are minor impediments to regional cooperation. The Japanese have shown a growing interest by giving financial aid to the nations of Southeast Asia. In 1967, Japanese aid to the

region amounted to \$190,000,000, or about half of all official Japanese aid given in that year.<sup>46</sup> It is anticipated that Japanese aid will increase over the coming years. Japan's preoccupation at present seems to be with trade for purely commercial gain, but in the future it may be in a position to exercise influence commensurate with its economic standing and political aspirations. Japanese presence in Southeast Asia can be constructive in developing Asian regional solidarity.

So far as Thailand is concerned, Thai-Japanese relationships have always been cordial. Unlike most Southeast Asian countries, Thailand did not emerge from the war with bitter memories of Japanese occupation. There are no conflicts resulting from competing aspirations for regional leadership which seems to characterize Indonesian-Japanese relations. However, frictions in the commercial sphere do occur. As noted, the Thai deficit in its trade with Japan has steadily widened, and government officials seem to be unable to agree on solutions. Yet, Thailand agrees with the Nixon Administration that Japan should expand its economic and political role in Southeast Asia and this can include a greater security role for Japan. Japan has been actively participating in some regional endeavors such as ASPAC and the Djakarta Conference on Cambodia (May, 1970), and has made significant contributions to the Asian Development Bank and the Mekong Project sponsored by the riparian states and United Nations agencies. More recently, the Japanese government announced that Japan would increase its foreign aid up to one percent of its GNP by 1975.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, this was welcomed by all Southeast Asian nations. In the political realm, however, Japan still remains ambivalent.

Political events are moving fast in Asia today and Japan has had some difficulty responding. Japan has experienced a number of "shocks." In 1971, it was the "Nixon shocks" that irritated the Japanese most. Japan's own security is closely tied to the United States. Since Japan possesses such a great potential for an active role in world affairs, the United States has insisted that Japan share greater responsibilities for Asian security. Japan has constantly resisted this request. In 1971, Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's special adviser for security affairs, made a surprise visit to China, which was followed by the announcement that the President himself would visit Peking. This was followed by the President's surcharges against imports, which were aimed at Japan. Japan's trade with the United States is central to its economy, and the combination of these political and economic initiatives by President Nixon seriously called into question the assumptions on which Japanese foreign policy has been based. The Nixon Doctrine is bringing the United States closer to cooperation with the Soviet Union and China. This was evident in the President's visits to both countries. One clear result is that the "special relationship" that characterized the Tokyo-Washington ties during the 1950's and the 1960's has come to an end. As a consequence, Japan will be forced to reappraise its present foreign policy. The time is too early to tell what changes will occur, but it is possible that Japan will concentrate its energies in the Asian and Pacific regions. If it does, Asian solidarity can be significantly strengthened as a result of extensive Japanese participation.

Another country that has a deep interest in peace and stability in Southeast Asia is Australia. Located in the end of a great land bridge from mainland Southeast Asia into the Pacific, Australia has always



regarded what happens in Southeast Asia as vital to its own security. Its proximity to the Southeast Asian area has indicated a strategic role for Australia in defense arrangement relating to Southeast Asia.<sup>48</sup> Influenced by the Japanese threat during World War II, Australia had maintained a "forward defense" strategy. This means that the potential Communist Chinese threat to Southeast Asia has come to be appreciated as a threat to Australia as well. Over the years, isolation or a "fortress Australia" strategy has never seemed practical to the successive Australian governments.<sup>49</sup> This is the reason why it joined SEATO and became active in most regional endeavors in Asia. SEATO has proven to be weak, Australia has actively and constructively participated in a number of regional efforts with many of its Asian neighbors. Australia ranks high as an industrially advanced state; it contributes economic assistance to other nations, particularly in the Southeast Asia region. The decision of the British to withdraw from Singapore and Malaysia altogether by 1971<sup>50</sup> caused profound concern in Australia, and the impact of the "Nixon shocks" was just as great. Essentially, Australian foreign policy has been characterized by its participation in various alliances.<sup>51</sup> While the alliances have yet to be repudiated, Australia's two "big brothers" have decided to leave, and this fact has been very unsettling to the Australians. Australia now knows that it cannot count on the big powers. The choices open to the Australian government are whether it should decide to "go-it-alone," or join other Asian nations in regional cooperation since Australia is geographically "part" of Asia. The trend to "go-it-alone" seems limited. Australia's activities in regional cooperation have been increasingly apparent. Australia now has defense commitments with Malaysia, Singapore, and New Zealand. The

significance of its power is debatable. Nevertheless, it seems to be pursuing a constructive approach to Southeast Asian problems.

Another country that has to be reckoned with is the Soviet Union. With the Soviet announcement of an interest in an Asian security system, the Russians have thereby indicated the intention of increasing their presence in certain strategic areas along the sea routes between the Suez and the Pacific Ocean. Russian activities in Asia are growing, and today there is less hostility and suspicion toward the Soviet Union than a few years back.<sup>52</sup> The presence of the Soviet Union is indeed significant. Its future role, which is believed to be capable of acting as a counterpoise to the growing power of Mainland China, is an important factor in the power equation and will be watched with interest by countries in the area. With respect to Asian regional cooperation, however, initial responses to these organizations have been uniformly hostile or negative. They have attacked Asian regional efforts as nothing more than the activities of Japanese and American lackeys.<sup>53</sup> However, with Southeast Asia committed to further multilateral cooperation the Soviet Union must, it seems, accept this approach or lose all influence in the area. Significantly, after having shown some distaste for the Asian Development Bank, Soviet diplomats now have hinted that the Soviet Union, which already participates in the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), may join the Bank.<sup>54</sup> Thus, Moscow appears convinced that Asian regional cooperation will proceed despite Soviet attitudes; refusal to accept ASPAC, ASEAN, and other groupings can only make Asians turn to the United States or Japan. And since Moscow has little hope of creating a new Asian organization of its own, its best interest seems to lie in cooperation with existing regional groupings.

outside the framework of an American defense system in Asia. In this regard it is possible that more constructive efforts will be forthcoming to Asian regional cooperation from the Soviet Union.

Mainland China remains the biggest problem. So far China has been hostile to Asian regionalism, which is presumably aimed against rising Chinese influence in Asia. Regardless of its recent behavior which suggested possible cooperation with the United States, China will continue to cast an ominous shadow over the Southeast Asia peninsula for years to come. However, if countries of the region succeed in forging a regional identity and cohesiveness, they will have a better chance of persuading China to change its hostile foreign policy against them. A strong Asian solidarity and a reduced American military posture should lessen the Chinese threat. This is not to argue that regional groupings of the states in the area will be strong enough to contain China, but with the removal of what China considers to be a major military threat and the creation of a more united regional position vis-a-vis China, perhaps China will be willing to relax its activities in the region. Thailand has offered to begin a dialogue with Peking, and so have most, if not all, Southeast Asian states. So far nothing concrete has resulted; China has not yet fully disclosed its position regarding the issue. Also, Thailand has contemplated the possibility that ASEAN may conduct collectively talks with China. Stability in Southeast Asia cannot be brought about without China's cooperation.

One last country that merits consideration is North Vietnam. After the Vietnam war is settled, it is conceivable that North Vietnam is likely to emerge as a regional power. Yet, its capability to wage war in Southeast Asia in the future would be limited because the country has

suffered heavy losses in the present war. The task of reconstructing a war-torn nation lies ahead for the North Vietnamese. North Vietnam might be able to exert some degree of influence over its neighbors--Laos and Cambodia, since the leaderships of these countries are very weak. In the long run, however, North Vietnam might consider cooperating with regional efforts already under way, since it, too, will have to find a means to counter Chinese influence. One should not forget that the Chinese and Vietnamese are themselves traditional enemies. The North Vietnamese today have been able to evade Chinese domination because they have played the Soviet Union off against the Chinese.

It may be concluded that peace and stability cannot be established solely by the countries of the region. But these difficulties can come nearer to being resolved if the major powers pursue the right kind of policies. The roles of the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and others are important to the idea of Asian solidarity. The United States has already promised its assistance in the Nixon Doctrine message. The Soviet Union is expected to extend help. Japan and Australia have already become active. The results are encouraging to the Southeast Asian leaders.

Through regionalism, Thailand has hoped that a general settlement might be worked out. It is in this respect that ASEAN--or some broader association of Asian states such as ASPAC--might be able to make significant contributions to stability in the area by providing a framework within which Southeast Asian nations can cooperate. If these organizations can merge into one organization and if this organization can expand to include other Asian states, the prospects for peacekeeping in the area will be greatly enhanced. Economic assistance from the major

powers can then be channeled into a regional grouping. This would enable the region as an organized unit to work toward providing security in Southeast Asia.

Present Thai foreign policy is oriented toward regionalism and should continue to be in the future. In the absence of the United States, regionalism is indeed the most appropriate choice for Thailand. Unless drastic changes occur, Thailand has no other real alternative but to emphasize the regional efforts reflected in its foreign policy.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Russell H. Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958 (New York, 1958), Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 58-59. See also Amry Vanderbosch and Richard Butwell, The Changing Face of Southeast Asia (Lexington, Kentucky, 1966), p. 320.

<sup>3</sup>Thailand and Cambodia, Thailand and Laos, South Vietnam and Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia, and others experienced complications in their relationships that related to traditional animosities.

<sup>4</sup>Vanderbosch and Butwell, p. 348.

<sup>5</sup>Werner Levi, The Challenge of World Politics in South and Southeast Asia (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1968), Chapter VI.

<sup>6</sup>Donald E. Nuechterlein, Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia (Ithaca, New York, 1965), p. 94.

<sup>7</sup>John Coast, Some Aspects of Siamese Politics (New York, 1953), p. 38.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>George Modelski (ed.), SEATO: Six Studies (Melbourne, Australia, 1962), p. 110.

<sup>10</sup>See Chapter IV.

<sup>11</sup>"In the first place, there must be a recognition...of the fact that intervention of outside powers in dealing with Asian problems may not be the most effective nor the most desirable device.... [Also] we must recognize that the United States' interests [in Vietnam]...are not vital any longer." Statement by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, at the Thai-Japan Cultural Association, Tokyo, February 25, 1969. "Southeast Asia in 1969 and Beyond," in Collected Statements (1968-1969), Bangkok, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Frank C. Darling, Thailand: New Challenges and the Struggle for a Political and Economic "Take-Off" (New York, 1969), p. 45.

<sup>13</sup>Thanat, however, made a statement to the effect that British withdrawal would have no repercussions on Thai foreign policy. See Far Eastern Economic Review, October, 1968, pp. 155-159. Under the Conservative government, this decision was reversed in 1970.

<sup>14</sup>Thanat Khoman, "A Positive Foreign Policy for Thailand." Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, August, 1971, p. 6, (mimeo.).

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>"Regional Economic Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific." Office of the Secretariat (ASA, ASEAN, and ASPAC), Bangkok, August 6, 1970, (mimeo.).

<sup>17</sup>Vincent K. Pollard, "ASA and ASEAN, 1961-1967: Southeast Asian Regionalism," Asian Survey, Vol. 10, No. 3 (March, 1970), p. 245.

<sup>18</sup>This was evident in the ASEAN Declaration on August 8, 1967. See Bernard K. Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia: A Strategy for American Foreign Policy (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1968), p. 146.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>See the New York Times, May 20, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup>Bernard K. Gordon, "United States Policies in Southeast Asia," Current History, Vol. 59, No. 352 (December, 1970), p. 324.

<sup>22</sup>For more details see Far Eastern Economic Review, December 11, 1971, pp. 18-20.

<sup>23</sup>Interview with Dr. Thanat Khoman Before and After Attending the Fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, Press Release No. 10, New York, April 21, 1972, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup>They urged closer coordination in their trade and economic position in the international forums. For more details see Far Eastern Economic Review, April 29, 1972, p. 15.

<sup>25</sup>Interview with Dr. Thanat, Press Release No. 10, April 21, 1972, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup>"Can Southeast Asia Be Neutralized?" The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol. 24, No. 1 (February 2, 1972), p. 11.

<sup>27</sup>Darling, p. 45.

<sup>28</sup>Thanat Khoman, "Reconstruction of Asia," in Collected Statements 1968-1969, Bangkok, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1970, p. 27.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Darling, p. 45.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>John W. Henderson, et al., Area Handbook for Thailand (Washington, D. C., 1971), pp. 225-226.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 226.

<sup>34</sup>The Christian Science Monitor, June 12, 1972, p. 3.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Thanat Khoman, "Thailand and Southeast Asia," Permanent Missions of Thailand to the United Nations Press Release No. 54, New York, December 30, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup>Henderson, et al., p. 225.

<sup>38</sup>The Asian Development Bank and the Mekong River Development Project were both the outgrowth of ECAFE.

<sup>39</sup>Thanat Khoman, "Reconstruction of Asia," p. 24.

<sup>40</sup>Speech by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman to staff members from Chulalongkorn University, February 4, 1970, "Southeast Asia After the War in Vietnam." Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, 1970, (mimeo.).

<sup>41</sup>For a discussion of problems of regionalism in Asia see Bernard K. Gordon, "Economic Impediments to Regionalism in Southeast Asia," Asian Survey, 3 (May, 1963), pp. 235-244. See also Frank N. Trager, "Pax Asiatica," Orbis, 10 (Fall, 1966), pp. 673-689.

<sup>42</sup>Far Eastern Economic Review, October 3, 1970, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup>Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 46, No. 1 (October, 1967), pp. 111-125.

<sup>44</sup>Bernard K. Gordon, "United States Policies in Southeast Asia," Current History, Vol. 59, No. 352 (December, 1970), p. 369.

<sup>45</sup>Eugene Black, Alternative in Southeast Asia (New York, 1969), pp. 83-84. See also Kei Wakaizumi, "Japan and Southeast Asia," Current History, Vol. 60, No. 354 (April, 1971), p. 202-203.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>47</sup>Wakaizumi, p. 204.

<sup>48</sup>Justus M. van der Kroef, Australian Security Policies and Problems (New York, 1970), p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>50</sup>Decision was reversed in 1970.



<sup>51</sup>Bernard K. Gordon, "Open Options: Australia's Foreign Policy in the Seventies," Current History, Vol. 62, No. 367 (March, 1972), p. 129.

<sup>52</sup>The recent Moscow-Delhi axis is a case in point.

<sup>53</sup>V. Pavlovsky, "Problems of Regionalism in Asia," International Affairs (Moscow), No. 4 (April, 1969), pp. 49-50.

<sup>54</sup>Marian P. Kirsch, "Soviet Security Objectives in Asia," International Organization, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Summer, 1970), p. 469.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Southeast Asian international politics is now, as it has been for the last hundred years, dominated by outside powers. By the end of the 1960's, a triangular power struggle had developed in Southeast Asia involving the United States, the Soviet Union, and the People's Republic of China. The Chinese Communist government has succeeded in making China a major power in the region. Thailand, along with other states in Southeast Asia, must face the reality of the growing power of China under a disciplined and determined regime which is capable of imposing hegemony over all of Asia. The Thai government is unwilling to be included within China's so-called "natural sphere of influence." This is the reason Thailand allied itself closely with the United States and the West in the 1950's and the 1960's. The Thai-United States alliance grew out of a common interest in restraining Communist China and North Vietnam.

For the United States, however, Southeast Asia is only a part of its vast array of interests. In the 1960's, the American government conceived its intervention in Southeast Asia and especially in South Vietnam as a forward strategy in the defense of Japan, in the north, and Australia, in the south, as well as the defense of Southeast Asia against Chinese control or influence. But the war in Vietnam has been costly. Thus, it is conceivable that the United States fears becoming

involved in another costly struggle in another Southeast Asian country. With the enunciation of the Nixon Doctrine, the United States has indicated its intention to withdraw from Southeast Asia. Since Thailand has been so dependent upon the United States for its security, it must prepare for the change that is anticipated.

The aim of this study has been to investigate policy alternatives open to Thailand under the assumption that the United States is drastically reducing its military commitment to Southeast Asia. There are four major alternatives which the Thai government might pursue; however, it was found that only one alternative is feasible, given the current internal political situation and the immediate external environment.

Given Thailand's historical pattern of responding to the international environment, its geographical location, its economic interests, the ideological characteristics of its leadership, it was found that Thailand is unlikely to pursue an accommodation toward China, nor is it likely to align with the Soviet Union. In the case of China, it was found that Thailand's relationship with that particular country is by and large dominated by fear of China's power and influence. The ruling element in Thailand is the military group which views China as a major threat to its own internal political position. Fear of the powerful neighbor to the north and the affluent Chinese minority in Thailand was evident in the many anti-Chinese measures adopted by the government at various times. Also, it was found that Thailand's economic interests would not be served by an alignment with China. China and Thailand, given their levels of development, do not seem to have complementary trading economies. Since the two economies are mutually exclusive, the potential for trade relationships is limited. China is unlikely to

extend aid to Thailand for its economic development. Also, changes that are taking place in the international environment are not so drastic that Thailand is required to submit to Chinese power.

In reference to a possible alignment with the Soviet Union, it was found that the Soviet Union's interests in Southeast Asia are not as great as they are in South Asia. Geographically, Southeast Asia is some distance from the Soviet Union. While the Soviet Union has expanded its diplomatic activities in the region, it has not indicated a major drive to establish a significant position of power there. However, with the withdrawal of United States' military commitments in the region, it is conceivable that the Soviet Union will change the pace of its activities in Southeast Asia. If this does happen, Thailand may be forced to adjust to the intrusion by making accommodations with the Soviet Union.

The Soviet proposal for an Asian security system has been used mainly as a device to win cooperation from India and to establish its influence in South Asia. Thailand, over the years, has become skeptical of the usefulness of multi-national security systems. Its experience with SEATO, and its close association with the major powers in that organization proved to be unsatisfactory. Thailand was forced into a special relationship with the United States to guarantee its security. Further it was found that while Thailand has sought trade with the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries, trade with these countries has been statistically insignificant. Under the current circumstances it must be concluded that Thailand will not seek an alignment with the Soviet Union.

Neutralism was also considered as an alternative policy. It was found that neutralism is not a suitable foreign policy for Thailand.

The external political forces and the domestic situation render this policy untenable. The Communist threat within Thailand is too closely linked with the external pressures that Thailand confronts. In the past, Thailand's geographical location provided a workable buffer between France and Great Britain. These two powers agreed to the buffer and neither attempted to subvert the government of Thailand to its special interest. At the present time, it was found that no structure of international power relationships exists which would permit Thailand to become a buffer state and thereby neutral. Since the United States has been the major power in Southeast Asia, geographical position and political circumstances have prevented Thailand from becoming a buffer state. American power has been asserted in Vietnam and Laos which are located to the east of Thailand and south of China. Thailand's geographical position off to one side under these circumstances did not enable it to hold a buffer position. Even if the geographical circumstances permitted a buffer state, the antagonism of the governing elite in Thailand toward the Communists did not enable it to accept a neutral status. The political instability within the states of the region and the tenuous power commitments of the major antagonists (China and the United States) in the region also prevented a genuine neutralization of any part of Southeast Asia, including Thailand. If American power is replaced by Soviet power in the region vis-a-vis China, it is doubtful whether political conditions in the foreseeable future would change sufficiently to permit Thailand alone to pursue a neutralist policy. It would take some time for power relationships in the region to stabilize and, in the interim, internal pressures, assisted perhaps by China and the Soviet Union, can be expected to continue against the established Thai

government. It must be concluded under these circumstances that neutralism is not a viable option.

Another finding of this study is that a foreign policy which seeks regional cooperation among the states in the area is the most viable option for Thailand and would be the most appealing to its ruling elite. This policy would be in harmony with the nationalist element of the Thai leadership in the sense that it would reduce Thai dependence on the major powers, and would enable the Thai elite to continue to oppose Communist threats to its position of power. Political pressure against the established government inspired by the Communists could be resisted with some measure of outside support. At the same time, this policy would increase Thailand's political influence in regional matters. In terms of cooperation, it was found that most states in the region do possess common problems and interests. Thailand's interest in economic development could be served through cooperative planning efforts among the states of the area. There is some evidence that regional cooperation through such organizations as ASEAN and ASPAC has already contributed to political, economic, cultural, and social development.

Further it was found that regional cooperation among the Southeast Asian states is compatible with the national interests of some of the major powers. There is evidence that the United States will play a constructive role in helping to bring about unity among the Asian nations. The Nixon Doctrine asserts that solutions to major problems must be regionally developed. American assistance, compatible with United States national interests, is more likely to be given if substantial regional efforts are in evidence. A commitment of American military power in the background, if it can be acquired, could contribute to the

security of the regional arrangement vis-a-vis other powers. Perhaps, through big-power diplomatic efforts, the security of the region could be affirmed. This, undoubtedly, would require regional neutralization. Such an arrangement could possibly bring an end to major military conflicts in the region and provide political conditions that would facilitate the flow of developmental aid. Thus, it must be concluded that the option of promoting regional cooperation is the most feasible foreign policy for Thailand as it plans for the immediate future. Thailand should continue its leadership role in the development of regional unity in Southeast Asia and should work with other states of the region to develop beneficial political and economic relationships in the broader Asian and Pacific environment. It should cultivate, along with other states of the Southeast Asian region, relationships with the major world powers that will contribute to the security of the region. The big powers should be encouraged to agree to the neutralization of the entire region once the Vietnam war has been concluded.

Although the policy alternatives available to Thailand were analyzed on the basis of historical, economic, geographical, and political factors, the hypotheses which were set forth in this study were supported mainly by the historical and political variables. There were insufficient indices of the geographical and economic variables to permit extensive analysis along these lines. This is recognized as a serious shortcoming of the study.

Although considerable attention was given to the analysis of the impact of the People's Republic of China as a major power in Southeast Asia, almost no consideration was given to the role of North Vietnam which in the future might exercise considerable influence in the region.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Area Handbook for Thailand. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1971.
- A Report by a Chatham House Study Group. Collective Defense in Southeast Asia. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1955.
- Barnett, A. Doak. "The New Multipolar Balance in Southeast Asia." The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), pp. 73-86.
- Bell, Coral. "Nonalignment and the Power Balance." in Davis B. Bobrow (ed.). Components of Defense Policy. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965, pp. 68-80.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand's Northeast: Regional Underdevelopment, Insurgency, and Official Response." Pacific Affairs, Vol. 42 (Spring, 1969), pp. 47-54.
- Belof, Max. Soviet Policy in the Far East 1944-1951. London: Oxford University Press, 1956.
- Black, Eugene. Alternative in Southeast Asia. New York: Praeger, 1969.
- Buchan, Alastair. "The Balance of Power in Asia After Vietnam." Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, Vol. 56 (June, 1969), pp. 135-142.
- Bundy, William P. "New Tides in Southeast Asia." Foreign Affairs, Vol. 49 (January, 1971), pp. 187-200.
- Burton, J. W. (ed.). Nonalignment. New York: James H. Hieneman, Inc., 1966.
- Butwell, Richard. Southeast Asia Today--And Tomorrow. New York: Praeger, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Nixon Doctrine in Southeast Asia." Current History, Vol. 61 (December, 1971), pp. 321-326, and 366-367.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand After Vietnam." Current History, Vol. 57 (September, 1969), pp. 164-167.



Butwell, Richard. "Southeast Asia: A Survey." Foreign Policy Association, Inc., No. 192 (December, 1968).

"Can Southeast Asia Be Neutralized?" The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol. 24 (February 2, 1972), pp. 11-12.

Cassella, Alexandro. "Communism and Insurrection in Thailand." The World Today, Vol. 24 (May, 1970), pp. 197-208.

Clark, Joseph S. "Asia and the Prospects for World Order." The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), pp. 27-37.

Christian Science Monitor, June 12, 1972, p. 3.

Coast, John. Some Aspects of Siamese Politics. New York: International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1953.

Crosby, Sir Josiah. Siam: The Crossroads. London: Hollies and Cartes, 1945.

Dallen, David J. Soviet Russia and the Far East. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1948.

Darby, Phillip. "Beyond East of Suez." International Affairs (London), Vol. 46 (October, 1970), pp. 655-699.

Darling, Frank C. "America and Thailand." Pacific Affairs, Vol. 33 (December, 1960), pp. 347-360.

\_\_\_\_\_. Thailand and the United States. Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand: Stability and Escalation." Asian Survey, Vol. 8 (February, 1968), pp. 120-126.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand: De-Escalation and Uncertainty." Asian Survey, Vol. 9 (February, 1969), pp. 115-121.

\_\_\_\_\_. Thailand: New Challenges and the Struggle for a Political and Economic "Take-Off". New York: American-Asian Educational Exchange, Inc., 1969.

Denno, Boyce F. "Sino-Soviet Attitudes Toward Revolutionary Wars." Orbis, Vol. 11 (Winter, 1968), pp. 1193-1208.

Dommen, Arthur J. Conflicts in Laos: The Politics of Neutralization. New York: Praeger, 1964.

"Dr. Thanat Khoman Interviewed Before and After Attending the Fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting." Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations Press Release No. 10, New York, April 21, 1972.

"ECAFE in Thailand." Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations Press Release No. 9, New York, March 28, 1972.

"Economic Cooperation in the Asian and Pacific Region." Office of the Secretariat (ASA, ASEAN, and ASPAC), Bangkok, August 6, 1970, (mimeo.).

"Experience of the Government of Thailand in Achieving Social and Economic Changes for the Purposes of Social Progress." Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations Press Release No. 4, New York, February 18, 1972.

Far Eastern Economic Review, Hong Kong, 1961-1963, 1968-1972.

Free China Weekly, February 6, 1972, p. 1.

Fifield, Russell H. The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958.

Fluker, Robert. "Regional Cooperation and Modernization of Southeast Asia." The Review of Politics, Vol. 31 (April, 1969), pp. 189-209.

Girling, J. S. L. "Thailand's New Course." Pacific Affairs, Vol. 42 (Fall, 1969), pp. 346-359.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Northeast Thailand: Tomorrow's Vietnam." Foreign Affairs, Vol. 46 (January, 1968), pp. 388-397.

Gordon, Bernard K. "Economic Impediments to Regionalism in Southeast Asia." Asian Survey, Vol. 3 (May, 1963), pp. 235-244.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Southeast Asian View of China." Current History, Vol. 55 (September, 1968), pp. 165-170.

\_\_\_\_\_. Toward Disengagement in Asia: A New Strategy for American Foreign Policy. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968.

✓ \_\_\_\_\_ "The United States in Southeast Asia." Current History, Vol. 59 (December, 1970), pp. 321-325, 369.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Open Options: Australia's Foreign Policy in the Seventies." Current History, Vol. 62 (March, 1972), pp. 129-132.

Greene, Fred. The U. S. Policy and the Security of Asia. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1968.

Gurtov, Melvin. "Sino-Soviet Relations and Southeast Asia: Recent Developments and Future Possibilities." Pacific Affairs, Vol. 43 (Winter, 1970), pp. 491-505.

\_\_\_\_\_. Southeast Asia Tomorrow: Problems and Prospects for U. S. Policy. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970.

- Hall, D. E. G. A History of Southeast Asia. New York: St. Martin Press, 1968.
- Hindley, Donald. "Thailand: The Politics of Passivity." Pacific Affairs, Vol. 41 (Fall, 1968), pp. 355-371.
- Hough, Richard Lee. "Development and Security in Thailand: Lessons from Other Asian Countries." Asian Survey, Vol. 9 (March, 1969), pp. 178-187.
- Howard, Peter. "Soviet Policies in Southeast Asia." International Journal, Vol. 23 (Summer, 1968), pp. 435-454.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A System of Collective Security." Mizan, Vol. 11 (July/August, 1969), pp. 199-204.
- Hutchinson, E. W. 1688 Revolution in Siam. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1968.
- Insor, D. Thailand: A Political, Social, and Economic Analysis. New York: Praeger, 1963.
- Jan, George P. (ed.). International Politics of Asia: Readings. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1970.
- Joyce, James A. "Thai Foreign Minister Suggests New Course." Christian Century, Vol. 86 (July 2, 1969), pp. 908-909.
- Johnstone, William C. Burma's Foreign Policy. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Commitments in Asia: 1969." Current History, Vol. 57 (August, 1969), pp. 93-99, 116-117.
- Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol. 16 (1969-1970), under "World Communist Conference."
- Khemayotin, Net. Ngan Tai Din Khong Phan-ek Yothi. Bangkok: Praepittaya, 1957.
- Khoman, Thanat. Collected Statements 1967-1968. Bangkok: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Collected Statements 1968-1969. Bangkok: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand and Southeast Asia." Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations Press Release No. 54, New York, December 30, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Positive Foreign Policy for Thailand." Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, August 14, 1971, (mimeo.).

Khoman, Thanat. "Statement by Mr. Thanat Khoman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chairman of the Delegation of Thailand, at the Twenty-Sixth Session of the General Assembly." Department of Information Press Release, Bangkok, September 30, 1971.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Trade Problems With the Communist Countries." Speech by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, January 4, 1970, to staff members from Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, (mimeo.).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Political Stability in Southeast Asia." Speech by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, July 9, 1969, to staff members from Thammasat University, Bangkok. Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, (mimeo.).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Southeast Asia After the War in Vietnam." Speech by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, February 4, 1970, to staff members from Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, (mimeo.).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Interview With Arnold Abrams of Seattle Times and Michael Parks of Baltimore Sun." July 28, 1971, Bangkok. Transcript from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Information, (mimeo.).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Which Road for Southeast Asia?" Foreign Affairs, Vol. 42 (July, 1964), pp. 628-639.

Kirsch, Marian P. "Soviet Security Objectives in Southeast Asia." International Organization, Vol. 14 (Summer, 1970), pp. 451-479.

Koh, T. T. B. "International Collaboration Concerning Southeast Asia." The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), pp. 18-26.

Kux, Ernst. "The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Asia." Swiss Review of World Affairs, Vol. 21 (August, 1969), pp. 10-11.

\_\_\_\_\_. "India and the New Tsarism." Swiss Review of World Affairs, Vol. 22 (October, 1971), pp. 9-11.

Leifer, Michael. Cambodia: The Search for Security. New York: Praeger, 1967.

Levi, Werner. The Challenge of World Politics in South and Southeast Asia. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Future of Southeast Asia." Asian Survey, Vol. 10 (April, 1970), pp. 348-357.

Lobanov-Restovsky, A. Russia and Asia. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1951.

- Lomax, Louis E. Thailand: The War That Is, The War That Will Be. New York: Random House, 1967.
- London, Kurt L. "Vietnam: A Sino-Soviet Dilemma." The Russian Review, Vol. 26 (January, 1967), pp. 26-37.
- Lyon, Peter. War and Peace in Southeast Asia. London: Faber and Faber, 1968.
- Mates, Leo. "Nonalignment and the Great Powers." Foreign Affairs, Vol. 48 (April, 1970), pp. 525-536.
- McCabe, Robert Carr. Storm Over Asia. New York: Praeger, 1962.
- Modelski, George. A Theory of Foreign Policy. New York: Praeger, 1962.
- \_\_\_\_\_. SEATO: Six Studies. Melbourne, Australia: Australian National University Press, 1962.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand and China: From Avoidance to Hostility," in A. M. Halpern (ed.). Policies Toward China. New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1965, pp. 348-367.
- Morrell, David. "Thailand: Military Checkmate." Asian Survey, Vol. 12 (February, 1972), pp. 156-167.
- Mozingo, David P. "Containment in Asia Reconsidered." World Politics, Vol. 19 (April, 1967), pp. 361-377.
- Nairn, Ronald C. "SEATO: A Critique." Pacific Affairs, Vol. 41 (Spring, 1968), pp. 5-18.
- Newsletter From Washington, Washington, D. C.: Royal Thai Embassy, 1971.
- New York Times, 1950-1951, 1960-1962, 1969-1971.
- Nimmanheminda, Sukich. "The Chinese Threat to World Order." The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 372 (July, 1967), pp. 72-87.
- Nixon, Richard M. "Asia After Vietnam." Foreign Affairs, Vol. 46 (October, 1967), pp. 111-125.
- \_\_\_\_\_. U. S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A New Strategy for Peace. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. U. S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: Building for Peace. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

- Nuechterlein, Donald E. "Thailand and SEATO: A Ten Year Appraisal." Asian Survey, Vol. 6 (December, 1964), pp. 1174-1181.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Prospects for Regional Security in Southeast Asia." Asian Survey, Vol. 8 (September, 1968), pp. 806-816.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Small States in Alliance: Iceland, Thailand, and Australia." Orbis, Vol. 13 (Spring-Summer, 1966), pp. 600-623.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand: Another Vietnam?" Asian Survey, Vol. 7 (February, 1967), pp. 126-130.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand: Year of Danger and Hope." Asian Survey, Vol. 6 (February, 1966), pp. 119-124.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "U. S. National Interests in Southeast Asia: A Reappraisal." Asian Survey, Vol. 11 (November, 1971), pp. 1054-1070.
- Ott, Marvin C. "Foreign Policy Formation in Malaysia." Asian Survey, Vol. 12 (March, 1972), pp. 225-241.
- Overseas Hindustan Times, New Delhi, August 14 and 21, 1971.
- Palmer, Norman D. South Asia and the United States Policy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966.
- Pan, Stephen C. Y. "China and Southeast Asia." Current History, Vol. 57 (September, 1969), pp. 164-167, 180.
- Pavlovsky, V. "Problems of Regionalism in Asia." International Affairs (Moscow), No. 4, (April, 1969), pp. 46-51.
- Pollard, Vincent K. "ASA and ASEAN; 1961-1967: Southeast Asian Regionalism." Asian Survey, Vol. 10 (March, 1970), pp. 244-255.
- Ravenal, Earl C. "The Nixon Doctrine and Our Commitments." Foreign Affairs, Vol. 49 (January, 1971), pp. 201-217.
- Rothstein, Robert L. Alliances and Small Powers. New York: Columbia University Press, 1968.
- Sewell, W. R. Darriel. "The Mekong Scheme: Guideline for a Solution to Strife in Southeast Asia." Asian Survey, Vol. 8 (June, 1968), pp. 448-455.
- Shirk, Paul R. "Thai-Soviet Relations." Asian Survey, Vol. 9 (September, 1969), pp. 682-693.
- Siam Rath Weekly, Bangkok, 1969-1972.

- Singh, L. P. "Thai Foreign Policy: The Current Phase." Asian Survey, Vol. 3 (November, 1963), pp. 535-543.
- Smith, Roger M. Cambodia's Foreign Policy. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967.
- "Soviet Relations With Malaysia and Singapore." Mizan, Vol. 10 (January/February, 1968), pp. 26-37.
- Stanton, Edwin F. "Spotlight in Thailand." Foreign Affairs, Vol. 33 (October, 1954), pp. 72-85.
- Suhrke, Astri. "Smaller-Nation Diplomacy: Thailand's Current Dilemmas." Asian Survey, Vol. 10 (May, 1971), pp. 429-444.
- Thompson, Virginia and Richard Adloff. The Left Wing in Southeast Asia. New York: William Sloane Associates, 1950.
- Time Magazine, August 2, 1971, p. 60.
- Trager, Frank N. "Alternative Future for Southeast Asia and the U. S. Policy." Orbis, Vol. 15 (Spring, 1971), pp. 381-402.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Pax Asiatica." Orbis, Vol. 10 (Fall, 1966), pp. 673-689.
- United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations. Neutrality in Southeast Asia: Problems and Prospect. Committee Print. 89th Congress, 2d Session, 1966. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1966.
- United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations. Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. 92d Congress, 2d Session, 1972. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.
- Vanderbosch, Amry and Richard Butwell. The Changing Face of Southeast Asia. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1966.
- van der Kroef, Justus M. "Peking, Hanoi, and Guerrilla Insurgency in Southeast Asia." Southeast Asia Perspectives, No. 3 (September, 1971).
- Vella, Walter F. The Impact of the West on Government of Thailand. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1955.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Siam Under Rama III. New York: Association for Asian Studies, Inc., 1957.
- Wakaizumi, Kei. "Japan and Southeast Asia in the 1970's." Current History, Vol. 60 (April, 1971), pp. 200-206, 242.
- Westin, Alan F. "We, Too, Were Once a 'New Nation'." The New York Time Magazine, August 19, 1962, pp. 16-17, 54-58.

- Whetten, Lawrence L. "Moscow's Anti-China Pact." The World Today, Vol. 25 (September, 1969), pp. 385-393.
- Willmott, William E. "The Overseas Chinese Today and Tomorrow." Pacific Affairs, Vol. 42 (Summer, 1969), pp. 206-214.
- Wilson, David A. Politics in Thailand. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "China, Thailand, and the Spirit of Bandung." China Quarterly, No. 30 (April/June, 1967), pp. 149-169; No. 31 (July/September, 1967), pp. 96-127.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The U. S. and the Future of Thailand. New York: Praeger, 1970.
- Wit, Daniel. Thailand: Another Vietnam? New York: Charles Scriber's Sons, 1968.
- Young, Kenneth T. "Thailand's Role in Southeast Asia." Current History, Vol. 56 (February, 1969), pp. 94-99, 110-111.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Asia and America at the Crossroads." The Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 390 (July, 1970), pp. 53-65.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thailand and Multipolarity." Current History, Vol. 61 (December, 1971), pp. 327-331, 364-365.



VITA

Prachya Davi Tavedikul

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: FOREIGN POLICY DETERMINANT AND DIRECTIONS OF CONTEMPORARY  
THAILAND

Major Field: Political Science

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Bangkok, Thailand, August 14, 1947, the son  
of Dr. and Mrs. Thawee Tavedikul.

Education: Graduated from Triam Udom Suksa School, Bangkok,  
Thailand, in May, 1965; attended Central State University,  
Edmond, Oklahoma, from 1966 to 1968; attended Oklahoma State  
University, from 1968 to 1972; received the Bachelor of Arts  
degree in January, 1970 in Economics; completed requirements  
for the Master of Arts degree in July, 1972, with a major in  
Political Science.

Professional Experience: Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department  
of Political Science, September, 1970 to July, 1972.

Professional Organizations: Member of Pi Sigma Alpha.