

**THAILAND'S CHINA POLICY :  
THE VIETNAM FACTOR  
(1975-1980)**

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## DECLARATION

Certified that the dissertation entitled "Thailand's China Policy - The Vietnam Factor (1975-1980)" submitted by Leena Das is in partial fulfilment of six credits out of a total requirements of twenty-four credits for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of this University. This dissertation has not been submitted for the M.Phil. Degree of this University or any other University. This is her own work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
(L.S. BARAL)  
CHAIRMAN

  
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## P R E F A C E

Thailand, unlike most other countries of Southeast Asia, has never been under any foreign rule. This was as much due to its flexible foreign policy as to the other historical factors. Flexibility continues to be an important characteristic of her foreign policy.

Before the first world war, she established cordial relations with France and Britain. But the post second world war period saw her being aligned with the United States. In this process, the year 1954 is a landmark, for in that year SEATO (the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) was formed and Thailand was one of its active members. Bangkok was chosen as the SEATO headquarters, and from then onwards she offered her bases to the United States. But her policy of close military alliance with the United States came to an end in the mid seventies. The Thais realized the need for a reappraisal of her foreign policy. The Sino-U.S. detente, the Sino-Soviet rivalry, withdrawal of American troops from Indo-China, set the Thais thinking. Moreover, in the early seventies the Thais students and the general masses became aware of the new political situation and the changing external realities. There was

from the students, demand for a reassessment of her attitude towards the communist neighbours.

From 1975 to 1980 her relations with China underwent a change. She turned towards the People's Republic of China for support and more so, after the Kampuchean crisis. This work is a short study of Thailand's policy of detente towards China. The question which arose is what brought about the realization? Is she following an independent policy or toeing the line of the U.S.A.? To understand this, ~~a study to understand this, a study~~ of her history and geo-political situation has been made in the first chapter. It focuses on the internal determinants which had a great impact on the Thai foreign policy. The Third chapter takes care of the security perception of Thailand and the fourth deals with the actual phase of Thai-China Relations - The Vietnam Factor (1975-1980). In the last I have given my conclusions.

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## Chapter - I

### INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"The term Southeast Asia is of recent origin. It became popular during World War II, when the territories south of the Tropic of Cancer were placed under Louis Mountbatten's Southeast Asia Command".<sup>1</sup> According to D.G.E. Hall, it is a term which came into general use during the second World War to describe the territories of the eastern Asiatic mainland forming the Indo-Chinese peninsula and the immense archipelago which includes Indonesia and the Philippines."<sup>2</sup>

Halford Mackinder, the famous British political geographer called "Southeast Asia a peripheral region, a part of the 'rimland'. A series of events, beginning with the Japanese occupation during the World War II, and the long drawn out conflict and eventual unification of Vietnam"<sup>3</sup> and more recently the Vietnamese military action in Kampuchea and the Chinese attack on Vietnam have all transformed the entire region into one of the most strategic and sensitive areas of the world."<sup>4</sup>

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1. D.R. Sardesai, South East Asia Past and Present, (Delhi, 1981), P.3.
  2. D.G.E. Hall, A History of South-East Asia, (New York 1968), P.3.
  3. Sardesai, n.1, p.3.
  4. Ibid, pp.3-4.

Thailand, situated in the centre of Southeast Asia has been of utmost importance in recent times. To-day, she is in the midst of major developments and changes. The recent events have no doubt made her a frontline state and threatened her security. These factors further made change her foreign policy. It is in the 1980's that we see her becoming close to the People's Republic of China.

The Thais from time immemorial have been a part of China. They originated in the Yunan province of China and were forced to vacate after the Mongolians invaded and conquered their territory in A.D. 1253. The Thais moved westward across northern Burma, with one group entering Assam in India."<sup>5</sup> They have also, according to D.G.E. Hall been called the descendants of the Chinese. The T'ais as they were named by the middle of the seventh century had coalesced into the kingdom of Nanchao." The warlike kingdom of Nanchao had a T'ai population, but rulers of different race."<sup>6</sup> These "Tai's never ceased to be on the move, slowly, very slowly, infiltrating along the rivers and the valleys of central

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5. C.I. Eugene Kim and Lawrence Ziring, An Introduction to Asian Politics (New Delhi, 1979), p.252.
  6. Robert Karr Mc Cabe, Storm over Asia (A Problem of China and South East Asia, New York, 1974), p.9.



Indo-China."<sup>7</sup> It was the tributary states of Annam and Tonking which were responsible for the bitter fighting between the people of Yunan and the Chinese. The struggle continued for over a hundred years and the Chinese gained success. Nanchao became a vassal state.<sup>8</sup> Nanchao's defeat then merely accelerated the southward movement of the Thais. In Chao Phraya, the Thais defeated the Khmer commander of Sukhotai and laid the foundation of what was to become the cradle of Thai civilization.<sup>9</sup> It was here in Sukhotai that the Chinese began to call the kingdom by the name of 'Sien', Syam was the name later used by the Khmers for the savages from the middle Menam, depicted on the south gallery of the Angkor Wat.<sup>10</sup>

The Thai kingdom possessed a high level of civilization "Some fifty years later under an able ruler called Rama Khamheng the kingdom of Sukhotai extended its sway over the Khmer dominated states of the menam delta and the Malayan Isthmus."<sup>11</sup> It was in the fourteenth century that Thailand

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7. D.G.E. Hall, n.2, p.169.

8. Karr, n.6, p.10.

9. Ibid, p.11.

10. Hall n.2, p.175.

11. Richard Allen, A Short Introduction to the History and Politics of Southeast Asia. (New York 1970), p.16.

actually emerged with its capital at Ayuthia. "Then a third kingdom came into the scene. King Uthong founded his capital in 1350 at Ayudhya, known as Ramatibodi I".<sup>12</sup>

It was with Rama Khamheng that relations with China were given importance. "The linchpin of Rama Khamheng's policy was the maintenance of the most cordial relations with China."<sup>13</sup> History shows that close ties have always existed between Thailand and China. It seems that there were a number of exchanges between Sukot'ai and the imperial court of China. Infact Rama Khamheng is said to have visited China himself. He brought back Chinese tradesmen who established the ceramic workshop. But it seems strange that inspite of Chinese influence in Siam and while Siam was signing treaties with western countries, China still refused to sign a treaty with her.<sup>14</sup>

However, in the nineteenth century when the Europeans entered Southeast Asia, the Thai-China relations dwindled.<sup>15</sup> In 1842, on China's defeat in the Opium war, King Mongkut

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12. Manich Jumsai, History of Thailand and Cambodia (Bangkok, 1970), p.20.

13. Hall, n.2, p.174.

14. Virginia Thompson, Thailand: The New Siam. (New York, 1967), p.102.

15. Victor Purcell, The Chinese in Southeast Asia. (London 1951), pp.109-10.

decided that China was no longer a great power and discontinued payment of tribute. Instead he sought to strengthen the country's relations with the European powers.<sup>16</sup> As King Mongkut observed, "Being as we are now, surrounded on two or three sides by powerful nations, what can a small nation like us do? Supposing we were to discover a gold mine in our country, enough to pay for a cost of hundred warships even with this we would still be unable to fight against them.. The only weapons that will be of real use to us in the future will be our mouths and hearts"..<sup>17</sup>

It is true that Thailand owes her independence to her ability to adapt her internal affairs to foreign pressures.<sup>18</sup> But she did not remain totally unaffected by the great changes. She came to be seen by the rival European powers as a buffer zone between their conflicting interests. She ceded some of her territories and made substantial concessions to foreign interests. "Despite this Thailand presented a singular contrast to the rest of Southeast Asia in the late nineteenth century."<sup>19</sup>

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16. Prince Chula Chakrabongse, Lords of Life: A History of the Kings of Thailand (London, 1960), p. 162.

17. Sardesai, n.1, p. 213.

18. S.R.E. Waddell, An Introduction to South East Asian Politics. ( Sydney 1972), p. 27.

19. Milton Osborne, Southeast Asia, An Introductory History (Hong Kong, 1979), pp. 65-66.

By the twentieth century a strong sense of nationalism spread all over Thailand. The Thais began to look upon the Chinese as intruders in their country. All business began to be controlled by the Chinese. They were regarded as transients to Siam. They were also called the Jews since their main aim was to make money and return home.<sup>20</sup> The Revolution of 1911 had made the Chinese in foreign countries change their attitude towards various governments in which they were domiciles. This resulted in causing discontent among the Thais at home.<sup>21</sup>

Between the 1850's and the 1930's Thailand found herself totally preoccupied with finding a basis for her own survival and strengthening herself through modernization.<sup>22</sup> In 1927, there was an exodus of refugees from China into Thailand. The civil war between the nationalist and the communist in China was responsible for the flight of refugees, thus creating problems for the Thais.<sup>23</sup>

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20. Virginia Thompson, n.14, p.103.

21. Ibid, p.103.

22. Sarasin Viraphol, Directions in Thai Foreign Policy. (Singapore, 1976), p. 8.

23. Thompson, n.13, p.104.

Internally, the government was in serious financial difficulties which made the people rise in discontent. In 1932, with the help of the military, a bloodless coup took place. Since then "Thailand has withstood thirteen revolutions, eight constitutions and more than thirty changes of administration."<sup>24</sup>

"In foreign affairs efforts were made to win concessions from the western powers by threatening to cooperate with Japan."<sup>25</sup> Visits between the Chinese and the Thai officials were exchanged but all efforts were futile. In 1936 a visit was paid to Thailand by the Chinese mission for Economic Affairs. "It was to interpret China to our Siamese friends. China was anxious to find new trade outlets to offset the smuggling then prevalent in North China."<sup>26</sup> Another important reason for Thai suspicion of China, was the Chinese minority. At the close of the second world war, these people celebrated the Allied

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24. Sardesai, n. 17, p.218.

25. Hall, n. 25, p.813.

26. Thompson, n. 14, p.106.

victory over Japan. Furthermore, they hoisted Nationalist Chinese flags without being accompanied by Thai flags. The Thais resented this and the government imposed a ban. The Chinese defied the ban and fired upon the Thais who attempted to pull down the flags. Fighting ensued between the two groups."<sup>27</sup> "Thailand began to wonder on how it might safeguard security in the event of China intervening on the behalf of the Chinese minority."<sup>28</sup>

"The victorious emergence of the Kuomintang (KMT) in China had led to a new assertiveness among the overseas Chinese. Anticipating the KMT's initiative in seeking a special legal status for the overseas Chinese, the Thai government had unilaterally ended the existing extra territorial privileges of the Chinese in 1930."<sup>29</sup> Political instability landed Thailand with a military dictatorship. Field Marshal Pibun Songkram succeeded Pridi Phanamyong, whose government was said to have a 'communistic element'.<sup>30</sup> Pibun's strongest card was his intense opposition to communism both at home and

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27. Ganganath Jha, Foreign Policy of Thailand (New Delhi, 1975), p.80.

28. Ibid, p.80.

29. Sardesai, n.14, p.221.

30. Hall, n.25, p.812.

abroad and his tough nationalistic line in dealing with the large Chinese community in Thailand. "The Chinese in Thailand welcomed with immense enthusiasm the victory of the People's Liberation Army in China in 1949. The Communist Party of Thailand became a power in the land, while communist influence increased in the Chinese labour unions, schools and press."<sup>31</sup> In 1952, the police claimed the existence of a communist plot to overthrow the government, and carried out a long series of raids in Bangkok, arresting hundreds of Chinese, temporarily paralysing the activities of their associations and closing their schools. The anti-Chinese campaign got further impetus due to the communist insurgencies of Laos, Vietnam, Burma and Malaya, and gave the Thais a feeling of insecurity.<sup>32</sup>

In the foreign sphere Pibun's anti-communist policy refused to recognize the Peking regime, "opposing China's entry into the United Nations, and without hesitation espousing the United Nations cause in Korea in 1950. As a counterpart of this policy he built up closer

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31. Ibid, p.905.

32. Ibid, p. 906.

co-operation with the United States, particularly in its antagonism towards Communist China".<sup>33</sup> Thailand showed great enthusiasm for the Secretary of State Mr. Dulles call for 'United action' to meet the Communist threat in South-East Asia.<sup>34</sup> She became an active participant in the formation of the Southeast Treaty Organisation (SEATO) which was aimed against China. She also welcomed to locate its headquarters at Bangkok. "In 1955, Pibun offered SEATO bases in his country and wanted stronger military guarantees than were incorporated in the pact."<sup>35</sup> After the Bandung conference in 1955, Pibun was convinced while China did not contemplate military adventures in Southeast Asia, it was likely to be a strong competitor for the loyalty of the Chinese in Thailand. "The Thai delegation left Bandung with the distinct impression that general diplomatic recognition of the Peking regime and China's, admission to the United Nations must soon come."<sup>36</sup>

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33. Collective Defence in South East Asia, Chatham House Report, London, 1956, p.2.

34. Ibid.

35. Russell Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia 1945-58. (New York 1958), pp.271-2.

36. Hall, n.20, p.906.



In 1958, yet another bloodless coup took place. All political parties were abolished and a large number of arrests were made for breach of the anti-communist laws. This change of military rule was for the preservation of national interest through the tightening of anti-communist laws. Subsequent events in Indo-China compelled closer co-operation between Thailand and the United States. The Thanat-Rusk agreement on bilateral relations was concluded. "This confirmed Washington D.C.'s prerogative to come to Thailand's aid in any case of an emergency without having to wait for the other SEATO members to respond."<sup>37</sup> The containment of communism became the major objective of the Thai-United States alignment. The Chinese retaliated by forming the 'Thai Autonomous People's Government'. The main aim of this organization was to crush the agents of the United States imperialism.<sup>38</sup> Meanwhile, "the deepening American military presence in Thailand through giant air and naval bases and troops and large scale military aid had hardened the Chinese attitude."<sup>39</sup> While the overcommitment of the

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37. Sarasin Viraphel, n.22, p.12.

38. Jha, n.27, p.63.

39. Usha Mahajani, *The United States Chinese Detente and Prospects*, South East Asia Quarterly Vol.3, no. 2, 1974 Spring, p. 716.

military to an American stand might have affected their perception of the reality taking place around them, but atleast some of the civilians were becoming more vocal about the direction of Thai foreign policy. As early as 1968, the Indo-Chinese events made Thanat Khoman the then Foreign Minister realize the lop-sided nature of the commitment to an increasingly troubled American policy and advocated a ditente with China.<sup>40</sup> Back in the early 1960's, at the 'beginning of the United States ground involvement' in South Vietnam, a feeble start in regional cooperati on was made with the inaguration of Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) which was later expanded into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967.<sup>41</sup> "But this did not reflected Thailand's serious search for political alternatives, but rather were merely gestures to foster cultural and economic ties with some neighbouring states. The predominant policy was the anti-communist fight and continued reliance on the United States."<sup>42</sup>

In suchna milieu, Thanat's early advocacy for flexibility, especially in seeking peace with Peking, was

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40. Sarasin Viraphol, n. 22, p. 16.

41. W. Scott Thompson, Unequal Partners (Lexington, 1975), p. 124.

42. Sarasin, n. 22, p. 14.

not greeted with great enthusiasm. Infact, it was felt that adherence to a pro-American policy was intensifying local insurgency supported by Peking and Hanoi.<sup>43</sup>

In early 1971 with the Chinese issue of invitation to a United State ping-pong team, Thai foreign policy changed. This marked a departure from the previous confrontation and antagonism. It seemed for a while what Thanat's advocacy-of seeking detente with Peking and becoming less attached to the Americans was being vindicated. The Kissinger strategy of dealing predominantly with major powers at the expense of smaller states in a new world order seemed to the finally understood by the generals.<sup>44</sup>

In November 1971, Thanom-Kittikachorn and Prapat Charusathien staged a coup. One important change in the foreign policy was the ouster of Thanat Khoman as the Foreign Minister and a complete break from his influence. But Thailand was to suffer another shock, when in 1972 February, President Nixon made a journey

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43. Scott, n.41, p.125.

44. Somporn Sangchai and Jim Joo-Jock(ed) Trends in Thailand II (Singapore 1976), p. 184.

to Peking and jointly signed the Shanghai communique, pledging further normalization of contact between the two countries.<sup>45</sup> The Thais realized the importance of flexibility and began to soften their attitude towards China and look for other alternatives. They also decided to make a move to establish contact, but to go slowly and, cautiously without upsetting the 'delicate internal balance or aggravating the communist insurgency'. When the Chinese decided to invite a Thai team to participate in its first Afro-Asian Table Tennis Tournament in Peking that year, Prasit Kanjarawat deputized as head of the team; and thus began the trading activities between the two countries. "A few more sports exchanges followed in 1972 and 1973, but the pace of normalization was deliberately slowed down. The Thais were still apprehensive about the Chinese support of the local insurgents. It was obvious that security still remained in the minds of the Thai policy makers as the overriding factor blocking any acceptance of the Chinese in the Thai fold."<sup>46</sup> In

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45. Shee Poon Kim, "The Politics of Thailand's Trade Relations with the People's Republic of China". Asian Survey, Vol. XXI, no. 3, March 1981, p.143.

46. Viraphol, n.22, p.16.

In the year 1973, President Nixon announced the disengagement of American troops from Southeast Asia. This made the Thanom-Prapat regime increasingly doubtful about the United States commitments. The United States, on the other hand, had initiated this policy normalization with China at a time when a number of Thais were already suspicious of the United States steps.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, the Thanom-Prapat government was brought down by the students uprising and Thailand was destined to face a new chapter in her foreign policy. The conclusion of the 1973, Paris Peace Agreement appeared to have ensured a definite end to further American involvement in Indo-China. This may have resulted in the withdrawal of the United States troops from Indo-China, thereby making the desirability of its presence in Thailand doubtful. "In December 1973, Deputy Foreign Minister Chartichai Choonhavan led a delegation to Peking to negotiate the purchase of diesel fuel."<sup>48</sup> The Chinese gesture of goodwill towards the Thais coming at a time of great need, was made even more

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47. George K. Tanham, Trial in Thailand (New York 1974), p.19.

48. Viraphol, n.22, p.21.

meaningful by the special "friendship" price. The psychological impact of this deal was not lost on the Thai people. In 1974, Sarit government abolished all trade restrictions put by Marshal Sarit in 1958, thus ending a long era of trade discrimination.<sup>49</sup>

As an alternative power focus, the Thais for the first time started looking towards China. "The ameliorating stance in Peking's international relations directly encouraged by the serious differences with the Soviet Union helped to enable Thailand's new orientation toward the erstwhile enemy to be endorsed by students and other activist groups at large. The wind of change had gathered force as popular participation in international issues became increasingly marked after 14 October."<sup>50</sup>

The Thai attitude of ignoring the China problem was no longer tenable. No one expected a major breakthrough in Thai-China relations but whatever little contact was established was more than welcome. In this fast changing world, the Thais are debating their future policy without yet showing what direction it will take, except that it will be more flexible and not tied to the apron strings of one Super power or the other.

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49. Shee Poon Kim, n.45, p.145.

50. Viraphol, n.22, p.18.

## Chapter II

### INTERNAL FACTORS AS DETERMINANTS OF THAI FOREIGN POLICY

The foreign policy of any country is the reflection of her domestic affairs. The two are no doubt inextricably interlinked. Thailand is no exception to the case.

Momentous changes have been taking place in her domestic sphere. These have had a direct or indirect bearing on the national politics and the policies of the country. Many new factors have emerged due to the interaction of national and international politics for instance, the students uprising in Thailand in 1973, was directed as much against the dictatorial military regime as against United States. Again the liberation of Indo-China, the establishment of diplomatic relations with China and her friendly gesture towards the Soviet Union and the low key posture of the United States in the region have had their impact on Thailand.

Thailand, since 1932 has been dominated by the military only to be interrupted by a brief period of constitutional government in 1973.

In 1932, a change from absolute monarchy to constitutional government occurred and the military became

the pillar stone of the Thai political system. "On June 24, 1932, troops seized key positions in Bangkok and the coup leaders declared the absolute monarchy at an end."<sup>1</sup> There were several coups that took place in Thailand. "A number of coups and attempted coups occurred after 1932, engendered by men almost always within the system. Thus it left a legacy of uncertain methods for the transfer of political power, but most of the changes have been accomplished with little or no bloodshed."<sup>2</sup> Political leaders to a great extent have been responsible for decisions concerning internal and external policies. "The Thai policy and action were also predicated on conditions within Thailand itself, as well as on the thinking and perception of individual leaders who were at the helm of government."<sup>3</sup> Hence, the fact that the military was in control of the government during most of the period following the 1932 revolution, resulted

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1. George K. Tanham, Trial in Thailand.  
(New York, 1974), p.15.
  2. B.N. Pandey, South and South East Asia 1945-1979  
Problems and Policies.  
(London, 1980), p.7.
  3. Sarasin Viraphol, Directions in Thai Foreign Policy,  
(Singapore 1976), p.3.



into the kind of foreign policy that was pro-western and pursued by Thailand. In the same way, the democratization of the Thai polity after October 1973, had a direct effect on the new foreign policy orientation.

During the past twenty-five years, Thai foreign policy reflected the idiosyncracies of the ruling elite on Thailand problems of national security and survival. With the crumbling structure of cold war confrontation and alignment, Thailand was forced to abandon old options and search for new ones. "The ensuing political transformation in neighbouring Indo-China, lent credence to an alternative; the power realignment in Indo-China has contributed to multipolarity in Asia which in turn has compelled Thai foreign policy makers to further define the various options."<sup>4</sup>

Internally, the student uprising of 1973 was a potent cause for a change in Thai politics. The students in 1972, launched a ten day "Boycott Japanese Goods Campaign."

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4. Asia year Book  
(Hong Kong, 1972), p.14

"The significance of the anti-Japanese outburst lies not so much in the emergence of student power in Thailand, as in the steady deterioration in Thai-Japanese relations over the past few years."<sup>5</sup> It was the October uprising of 1973 which made the students a force to be reckoned with. There were unprecedented strikes and demonstrations. The demand for a permanent constitution was begun by teachers and students." Troubles began in June by the expulsion of nine students in Ram Khmeng University in Bangkok. It was followed by the arrest of eleven students and two University lecturers while distributing leaflets, calling on the public to join a campaign to seek a permanent constitution."<sup>6</sup>

The government media projected the students as communists "Marshal Prapas Charusathien, Deputy Premier and the Minister of Interior declared that searches in the homes of the students and teachers revealed communist

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5. Bangkok Post (Bangkok),  
25 September 1972, p.17.

6. Clark, D. Neher, Stability and Instability in Contemporary Thailand,  
Asian Survey, Vol.XV, no.12,  
December 1975, p.1101.

documents in Thai and English."<sup>7</sup>

Some saw in this a threat to the government. "It was a plot to incite the public to overthrow the government and a plan to organize soldiers and labourers in an anti-government movement calling for promulgation of the constitution."<sup>8</sup> However the students demand for a constitution was not met and made matters worse. Corruption amongst the government leaders was brought to light by the students. "In order to get their demands fulfilled, they organized protests and demonstrations in July (1973) and it became apparent that the rulers abhorred not only the students demands but the students themselves."<sup>9</sup> The students also criticised the Anti-corruption Board of Investigation. This board was led by Colonel Narang Kittikachorn, the son of Prime Minister Thanom and the son-in-law of Prapas. There was

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7. S.R. Sudhamani, "Thai Politics since 1973 uprising", Seminar Paper at J.N.U.  
8-10 March 1979, p.3.
  8. Jidbhand Kambu, "Thailand: Death of a Regime".  
Far Eastern Economic Review  
22 October, 1973, p.13.
  9. Ibid, p.13.



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unemployment problem and for the first time the Thai students were finding it difficult to get employment in the bureaucracy.<sup>10</sup> Their awareness of the changing political values and of the international situation made them doubt the government's capacity to rule, as well as its legitimacy.

By October, 5, 1973, the constitution movement had surfaced in public due to the corrupt, self serving and tyrannical rule of the Premier Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, Prapas Narang Kittikachorn's clique. It climaxed nine days later in the bloody Sunday riots that pulled the government down.<sup>11</sup> The Premier and his deputy were sent into exile and the student's power was introduced into the Thai policies. Thammasat University had been all through, the Centre for their activities. The king appointed Sanya Dharma Sakti, the Rector of the Thammasat University, as the Prime Minister of the caretaker government.<sup>12</sup>

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10. Jidhhand Kambu, "The Fruits of Revolution," FEER, 5 November 1973, p. 14.

11. M. Rajaretnam and Lim so Jean (ed), "Trends in Thailand", (Singapore, 1973), p. 87.

12. Asia Year Book, 1974, p. 255.

The Sanya government promised to restore constitutional rule within six months. The students were given a strong consultative role, "but there were no indication that the students were concerned with anything that time, than a return to constitutional civilian government. Moreover the army continued to be a powerful factor."<sup>13</sup> But the ouster of the 1973 military dictators and the signing of the Paris Agreement in the same year made Thailand emotionally and institutionally unprepared for the new political realities - external and internal.<sup>14</sup>

Internally, the Thai economy was in shambles. The number of strikes had increased. Sanya was aware that he had inherited a tough problem, that of inflation.<sup>15</sup>

Externally, the power configuration had changed. The conclusion of the Paris Peace Agreement in early 1973 appeared to have held some prospect for peace in a war

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13. Frances Starner, "Power to the Reluctant People," FEER, 5 November 1973, p.14.

14. Richard Nations, "The Era of the Diplomatic Balancing Act." Ibid, 1975, p.12.

15. Starner, n.13, p.14.

torn Vietnam. The most notable accomplishment was the annulment of the fifty-third Decree of the former Sarit regime which had prohibited trade with the People's Republic of China.<sup>16</sup> "To many, it was just the substitution of one form of control for another. Whatever the motive, this only reflects problems of such nature emerging in the period of transition."<sup>17</sup>

Sanya Dharmasakti resigned in May 1974, after the internal upheavals in the country. The farmers demonstrations appeared to be taking place whereas "historically Thailand had been free of peasant revolts."<sup>18</sup>

But inspite of all this, Sanya was asked to return to the office, by the king. At the end of 1974, he became ill and the Deputy Prime Minister, Prakab Hutasing assumed office till the election in January 1975.<sup>19</sup>

The year 1975 was one of the turning points in modern Thai history. "There were a general election on 26 January,

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16. Viraphol, n.4, p.18.

17. Eugene Kim Lawrence Ziring, An Introduction to Asian Politics.  
(New Jersey, 1977), p.292.

18. Jeffrey Race, "Thailand in 1974: A New Constitution," Asian Survey, Vol.XV, No.2, February, 1975 p.163.

19. The Bangkok Post, 10 May 1974

the first after the overthrow of the military regime, it was unique because not only was there no government party but it was the first to be held to choose a new government rather than to confirm one already in office."<sup>20</sup>

After eighteen days of intricate manoeuvring, Thailand's post 1975 election politics reached its base with the election of Seni Pramroj, as the country's second Prime Minister since the military regime was overthrown in October 1973.<sup>21</sup>

M.R. Seni Pramroj announced that he wanted all American forces out of Thailand. But the Americans did not seriously accept his ultimatum. Rather, they felt that Seni was bowing to political necessity. "Seni said that he would take action to have foreign forces which had been stationed in this country withdrawn as quickly as possible."<sup>22</sup>

But unfortunately, Seni Pramroj could not carry out his proposal and was defeated in the elections soon after.

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20. Sudhamani, n.7, p.6.

21. Nations, n.14, p.11.

22. Derek Denzil, "A Brief Turn at the Helm for Seni Pramroj," FEER, 21 March, 1975, p.14.

The choice was made in favour of Seni's younger brother Kukrit Pramoj. This was seen here as an attempt to give their makeshift coalition the appearance of a strong broad base in the Assembly, and an acceptably liberal and monarchist facade. "Thailand seemed to have more experience with National Elections than any of the other countries of the region except the Philippines."<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, the political "party systems in Thailand, as elsewhere in Asia, seemed to be clearly linked with the impact of Western influence, particularly that of the United States, which emphasized support for constitutional issues and developed legislative and political processes."<sup>24</sup> But it was noticed that democratization had encouraged more people to air their views on foreign affairs. "The shortlived Kukrit government reflected such a diversion in its 17-party coalition, with the various coalescing elements trying to exert a voice in the foreign policy process."<sup>25</sup> Kukrit Pramoj's government had to face the challenge of the new communist governments in Indo-China

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23. Lucian W. Pye, Politics of South East Asia (New Jersey 1960), p.141.

24. Ross Prizzia, Thai Election and coalition Government, Asian Quarterly, Part I, 1976, p.192.

25. Sarasin Viraphol, n.4, p.50.



"After a quarter century of comfortable repose under the American security blanket, Thailand was abruptly awakened by the dual impact of internal democracy and the dramatic collapse of the Indo-Chinese governments which had been its ideological comrade in arms."<sup>26</sup>

"The Thais under Kukrit, while wishing to see Washington D.C. as the pillar of support against growing external communist threats, after the transformation in Indo-China, nevertheless conceded to a degree of change, perhaps taking into account their own weakened position vis-a-vis other groups."<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, the people had become outspoken proponents of Thailand's independence from any external control. The students had emerged as a strong pressure group. They planned to "educate" and motivate the Thai people on democracy and independence.<sup>28</sup> The Kukrit government shifted its weight to Peking, apprehensive

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26. John Everingham, "Outplanking the Right", FEER, 20 August 1976, pp. 11-12.

27. Viraphol, n.3, p. 12.

28. Sudhamani, n.7, p. 19.

about Hanoi's intention toward Southeast Asia. "It did not follow that Thai leaders had come to admire communism or otherwise, but it was a step towards the growing flexibility."<sup>29</sup>

Attempts were also made to strengthen ties with the Soviet Union in accordance with the policy objectives of balancing relations with other powers.<sup>30</sup> While the vocal and visible progressive elements comprising mainly of college students and professors advocated a "radical reorientation away from the United States" and the forging of closer links with the communist states, on the Right there were the vocational students who supported the military's stand of aligning themselves with the western powers.<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, the public demonstrated its power in influencing foreign policy as seen in the Mayaguez incident in May 1975. "The forceful demonstrations in front of the United States Embassy in Bangkok had been a vital boost for the Kukrit

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29. Shee Poon Kim, "The Politics of Thailand's Trade Relations with the People's Republic of China".  
Asian Survey, Vol. XXI, No. 3,  
March, 1981, p.343.

30. Asian Recorder, 1975

31. Shee Poon Kim, n.29, p.343.

government which had sought equity in future Thai-American relations and an end to the erstwhile inclination to deal under the table."<sup>32</sup> The students once again began their campaigns for a total withdrawal of American forces. "Mass participation to a great extent influenced the course of Thai foreign policy and rendered it strong and legitimate, notwithstanding the complication and polarization effects which would follow."<sup>33</sup>

Kukrit's government was beset with insurgency problems. Efforts were made to deal with 'urban-rural dichotimies and to encourage local participation in governmental process."<sup>34</sup> But inspite of all these measures, Kukrit's government lacked stability and institutionalization and depended on the colourful personality of the Prime Minister.

The next elections were held on 4 April, 1976. About 39 political parties contested the two hundred and seventy-nine seats in the national Assembly.<sup>35</sup>

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32. Times of India (Editorial), 6 May, 1975.

33. Viraphol, n.3, p.18.

34. Frank, C. Darling, "Thailand in 1976 Another Defeat for Constitutional Democracy".  
Asian Survey, Vol.17, no.1,  
June 1972, p.217.

35. Ibid, p.218.

The Democrat Party, the oldest and most conservative political party in Thailand won a landslide victory. Observers pointed out "that the Thai people had been alarmed by the agitation and unrest caused within by various liberal and progressive groups (student, labour and political organizations) and without by the events in Indo-China."<sup>36</sup> This explains the victory for the right during the election campaign, the liberal parties were alleged to have received financial backing from communist sources, and their so called progressive platform for social and economic reform was suspected as being communist inspired.<sup>37</sup>

"Whether it was a refutation of the left or an endorsement of the Right, the conservatives victory created an impact on Thai foreign policy. The Democrat Party, during the course of the election campaign, chose the issues of the American military

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36. Prizzia, n.24, p.192.

37. Kromal Somvichian, "The Oyster and the Shell; Thai Bureaucrats in politics," Asian Survey, vol.XVIII, no. 8 August 1978, p. 829.

withdrawal."<sup>37</sup>A The Democrat Foreign Minister publicly declared his intention to adhere to the decision of the former government with regard to the withdrawal of forces but at the same time, he also left the door open for future negotiations with the United States.<sup>38</sup>

Concurrently Seni Pramoj, The Prime Minister publicly voiced his reservation about the withdrawal of the American forces. The ruling elite agreed with the Premier, but the weakness which afflicted Seni's government was the inability to deal realistically and effectively with the military.<sup>39</sup> Many of his colleagues were anxious to relegate a subordinate position to the military. This aroused discontent among the armed forces. At the same time, the army felt that the Thai government was betraying its weakness and insecurity as reflected by some of the statements of Pichai Rattakul.<sup>40</sup>

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37A. Sudhamani, n.7, p. 3

38. Darling, n.34, p.218.

39. Bangkok Post, 7 October, 1976

40. The Statesman, 10 October 1976

The civilian government led by Seni Pramoj came to an end on 6 October 1976, when the military seized the government. The 1974 constitution was abolished followed by martial law. "The coup was precipitated by violence from the leftist students of Thammasat University when they reacted to the return of Thanom to Thailand. The government suppressed the students and ousted the members of Seni's government. The military claimed that the leftist students at Thammasat University had received their weapons and directions from the communists."<sup>41</sup>

The Bangkok Post, remarked on the 1976 coup "Thailand's frail flower of democracy wilted last night. It faded through lack of any firm roots and the absence of enough people to give it a chance to blossom."<sup>42</sup> To many observers the Thai military regime brought a sigh of relief. It was, they claimed the end of Thailand's longest 'experiment' in democracy. Yet for the others, it was a return to authoritarian rule.<sup>43</sup> 'Nation' another

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41. Frank C. Darling, "Thailand Return to Military Rule," Current History, vol.71, no.422, December 1976, p.198.

42. Bangkok Post, 7 March 1975.

43. Frank C. Darling, "Thailand in 1976: Another Defeat for Constitutional Democracy," Asian Survey, vol.17, no.1, Jan-June 1977, p.116.

newspaper from Bangkok in 1976, wrote Asia has proved to be a graveyard of democracies and we are holding a flickering candle."<sup>44</sup>

The Central Committee of the Maoist group of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) accused the United States of having a hand in this coup de tat and called upon the insurgents to take to armed struggle.<sup>45</sup>

The United States rejected this charge of the C.I.A. having backed the coup. They felt that the traditional role of the armed forces was to protect the royal family in times of civil unrest.<sup>46</sup>

Kershaw

According to "the pull of dictatorship on one hand and democracy on the other, the United States power was the vital underpinning of the hated Thai military regime. This was a tragic syndrome."<sup>47</sup>

The Administrative Reforms Committee appointed Thanin Kraivichian, a justice of the Dika (Supreme Court) as

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44. Nation (Bangkok), 10 March, 1975.

45. Darling, n.43, p.117.

46. The Time Magazine 1976, p.27.

47. Roger Kershaw, "Thailand After Vietnam; After Vietnam Thailand? The Directions of Thai Diplomacy in 1975". Asian Affairs, vol.63, February 1976, p.25.

the Premier. Thanin was described as a royalist, moderately conservative, intelligent uncorrupted and a strong anti-communist.<sup>48</sup> Thanat Khoman, the former foreign minister was appointed as an adviser to the government. Thanin proposed for a gradual restoration of democracy. But in the opinion of many of his colleagues he lacked decisiveness and energy.<sup>49</sup>

His government indicated that it would take a strong postive against communism. "His repressive measures at home and his strong anti-communist stand abroad, could not help alienating everyone."<sup>50</sup> Although he promised to maintain all treaty commitments, there were rumours of a possible return to closer military co-operation between Thailand and the United States. His censorship of the press, ban on communist literature and the extreme rightest policies damaged not only the domestic morale but also diplomatic relations with the

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48. Sudhamani, n.7, p.10.

49. Richard Nations, "Busloads of Trouble", FEER, 10 March, 1978, p.10.

50. Richard Nations, "Back in the Game". FEER, 10 November 1978, p.21.



communist regimes. The hostile relations with Indo-China become apparent.<sup>51</sup> Differences began to appear between Thanin and the military leaders. In October 1977, the civilian government of Thanin was toppled by Sangad Chaloryao, ousted minister of Thanin's regime. 'The coup had in itself United States overtones, and was supported by the United States and China.<sup>52</sup>

The constitution, political parties and parliament were abrogated and martial law imposed. The National Administrative Reform Council was continued. General Kiangsak was renamed the Secretary General of the Advisory Reform Council and subsequently the Premier. "Kriangsak assumed power by using a transitional pattern that has been common at the top level of the Thai political system for years."<sup>53</sup> He was the key figure in negotiations during the Vietnam war and got one billion dollars in

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51. Ibid., p.22.

52. Stephen Barber, "Preventing the Domino Effect." FEER, 16 February, 1979, p.29.

53. Frank C. Darling, "Thailand: Transitional Military Rule;" Current History, December 1978, p.20, vol.75, no.442.

Thailand from the United States. His flexible policy seemed to be approved by all. The Thai people did not protest against the change in government.

Kriangsak sought to promote rapid economic development which brought increasing benefits to Bangkok and other urban areas. Relatively, few restrictions were imposed. But firm steps towards insurgency were taken.<sup>54</sup>

The security situation seemed to be the main internal problem facing the Thai government. The Kriangsak government faced well-organized subversion which has been prevalent for more than a decade. Moreover, Thailand seemed to have become the home for rebels the Vietnamese and the Sino-Malaysians, both under dedicated communist leadership.<sup>55</sup> But Kriangsak seemed to mobilize the main strength of the nation. The students once again began organizing themselves though they could never gain momentum. Infact, General Kriangsak gave amnesty to eighteen

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54. Astri Suhrke, "Thailand: Politics as Usual," Current History, December 1979, vol. 77, no.452, p.210.

55. John Stirling, "Thailand and ASEAN in a Dangerous World," Asian Affairs, vol.6, no.5, May-June 1979, p.18.

students and won for himself the support of the students in the Thammasat University. It was also a move to make peace with the leftists of the country.<sup>56</sup> His foreign policy was one of accommodation and the new power pattern in Indo-China made the military regime realize the need to establish close contacts with the communist neighbours, China and Vietnam.<sup>57</sup> The United States and Thailand moved closer to each other. The General visited China in March 1978 and Beijing's unprecedented invitation to the royal family strengthened relations between the two.<sup>58</sup> Kriangsak proved more successful in the operation of the Thai foreign policy than his predecessor. But political pressure mounted against him, "due in part to the damaging fallout from unavoidable domestic oil price increases which became an all, too convenient target."<sup>59</sup>

The loss of Thailand's buffer state Kampuchea between her and Vietnam provided a stimulus to alter

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56. "Thailand: The Homecoming,"  
Newsweek, 25 July, 1977, p.12.

57. "A Bridge to China",  
Asia Week, 1978, p.13.

58. Wall Street Journal, 10 September, 1978, p.8.

59. Asia Year Book, 1981, p.252.

the allocations in the budget. The government's continued failure to enlist the cooperation of the major segments of the polity, led to its increasing polarization. Economic difficulties provided the hothouse climate for Kriangsak.<sup>60</sup> "The action of parties with whom Kriangsak had never aligned, threatened him with a vote of no-confidence. Prem Tinsulanond, the army commander and later the Defence Minister came to parting of ways with the Premier. Kriangsak finally made his decision to resign on February 28, 1980."<sup>61</sup>

Prem's appointment, there days later, was a little more than a formality, ushering in a Coalition of several parties the Social Action, The Chart Thai and the Democrat Parties.<sup>62</sup> The government was sworn in on March 14, 1980, the cabinet struck the right note as far as the man in the street was concerned by rolling

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60. Larry Nicksch, "Thailand in confrontation with Vietnam and the fall of Kriangsak," Asian Survey, vol.XXI, no.2, February 1981, p.223.

61. Wall Street Journal, n.58, p.256.

down oil prices.<sup>63</sup> Besides economic problems, political miscreants were also warded off with the help of the 'Red Gaur's'. "They warned the students against protesting at the extension of the Premier's tenure as army commander. But the Parliament passed a revision of the Pension Act in late September, 1980 to clear the way for extension. In diplomacy, General Prem, followed Kriangsak's footsteps and maintained goods relations with not only the west, but also with China and the Indo-Chinese states." "In doing so, the people acknowledged, even though reluctantly, that stability could be achieved if not fully guaranteed only with a single man controlling both the army and the government; however much Prem stands for incorruptability and goodness it was a loose flagstone on the democratic path."<sup>64</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Thailand's external policy is no doubt a result of her domestic factors. In order to safeguard her national interest Thailand aligned with the United States. Communism was perceived as a threat and the Thai military found its future endangered, if communism penetrated the country. But the new power configuration in the region and the shift in the internal policies, compelled her to abandon her anti-communist posture and search for alternatives.

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63. Asia Year Book, 1981, p.252.

64. Ibid, p.257.

### Chapter III

#### THAILAND'S SECURITY PERCEPTION

Throughout the centuries, Thailand has been strong enough to withstand the encroachments of her immediate neighbours and flexible enough to bend with the strongest wind through various diplomatic postures, she avoided getting involved in wars. "Thailand has a national tradition of rapid and skilful adjustment to the threat of outside superior force, the kingdom was saved from extinction in the nineteenth century by the brilliant exercise of this policy by King Monkut and King Chulalongkorn."<sup>1</sup>

Due to this diplomatic move, Thailand retained her independence and survived the entire colonial period as free and independent. Independence and stability have given the Thais confidence, but not to the extent of warping their very realistic assessment of most situations especially in the international field. But in the latter part of the twentieth century, Thailand

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1. C.P. Fitzgerald, China and South East Asia Since 1945 (Hongkong, 1973), p.65.

has begun to face many dangers and difficulties which are a challenge for her.<sup>2</sup>

The most imperative need in Thailand's foreign policy has been the desire for security and national independence. This for Thailand implies freedom, liberty and well being which are important factors for the Thai people.<sup>3</sup>

For too long, the stability of Thailand had been taken for granted. The country lacked a colonial past and suffered much less than her neighbours from the war. "Its traditional ruling elite, the respect and authority of the monarchy were all stabilizing factors. Agrarian unrest and communal problems were virtually unknown."<sup>4</sup>

To understand the problems of security, one has to look at both the internal and external dimensions. In the case of Thailand the external threat perception is related to the measure and extent of the internal threat

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2. George K. Tanham, "Trial in Thailand", (New York 1974), p.4.
  3. Thomas A. Marks, "Thailand: The Threatened Kingdom," Conflict Studies, no.115, February, 1980 p.2.
  4. Conflict Studies, "Thailand: The Dual threat to Stability, no.44, 1974, p.6.

to security. Security involves a wide spectrum of affairs. In Thailand, it is not merely a military matter, as understood in the conventional sense. It is an important factor, but it alone is not sufficient to deal with the complex problems of development and security which encompasses all aspects of life.<sup>5</sup>

Thailand retained her independence and emerged from the second world war practically unscathed. This apparently was a result of her astute diplomacy.<sup>6</sup> During the war, Thailand allied herself with the Japanese.

"During the first world war, she cooperated with the allied powers but sided with the Japanese during the World War II. When the world war was about to end it shifted its loyalties to the United States."<sup>7</sup>

"The traditional foreign policy of Siam, states Sir, Josiah Crosby, "has been one of studied neutrality."<sup>8</sup>

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5. Jusuf Wanadi, Dimensions of Southeast Asian Security Contemporary Southeast Asia Vol.1, no.4, March 1980, p.34.
  6. Donald E. Nuecterlein, Thailand and the Struggle for South East Asia, (New York, 1965), p.91.
  7. Ganga Nath Jha, "Foreign Policy of Thailand", (New Delhi, 1975), p.8.
  8. Josiah Crosby, "Siam: The Crossroads, (Hollis and Carter) 1945, p.18.



In the course of war, the situation of the world had altered drastically. Thailand was faced with new policy options. It was difficult for her to decide whether to follow the 'prewar policy', align herself with the western powers, or 'cultivate' good relations with the nationalist forces in Burma, Indo-China, Malaya and Indonesia. Finally, her decision was in favour of the west. Soon after the second world war, insurgency movements began taking place all around Thailand. The communist guerillas were a potential source of danger and were already harassing Thailand's neighbours. "Thailand though literally sunounded by trouble was able to remain at peace in South-East Asia."<sup>9</sup> The looming china on the north, compelled her to assess her national security. Even more ominions for Thailand's security was the steady advance of communist forces in China against the nationalist armies. Not only did they fear having a powerful communist China as a neighbour; they were obsessed with the possibility that the large number of overseas Chinese would be attracted

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9. Russell H. Fifield, "The Diplomacy of South-east Asia":  
1945-1958.  
(New York, 1958), p.247.

to the new China and thus become a powerful subversive force.<sup>10</sup> Communism, from the beginning was looked upon with distaste and as a formidable enemy. By 1950, the full meaning and objectives of communism became clear—their desire to capture and then subvert the local nationalist and anti-colonialist movement. That is why Thailand made up her mind to move closer towards the United States. "To safeguard her security she entered into an Economic and Technical Agreement as well as a military pact with the Americans. This was followed by an active participation in the Korean war, Thailand became a key country in the security policy of the United States in the area."<sup>11</sup>

The internal situation at this time was a critical one for Thailand's security policy. The communists were making attempts at turning a greater portion of Thai population against the government. The people began to

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10. Nuechterlin, n.6, p.96.

11. Fifield, n.9, p.269.

wonder whether an alignment with the United States was a wise step. The establishment of Thai Autonomous People's Government by Peking, alarmed the ruling regime. It was believed that there was a serious threat of subversion. "The plan was diabolically cunning and it disturbed Thailand as nothing else had been done because the Chinese had hit upon a political theme cherished by the Thai's for many centuries-the unity of all Thai speaking people in Asia."<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, the Thai leaders fears were further strengthened by Thailand's northeastern problem. The inhabitants were culturally and ethnically related to the Laotian's, who could prove a source of danger for the Thais. In addition to this, some 50,000 Vietnamese refugees lived in this critical area, along the Mekong River and their loyalties were with the Vietnamese leader, Ho Chi Minh.<sup>13</sup> To combat 'communist armed attack' and gain from the American an assurance

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12. Edwin F. Stanton, "Brief Authority",  
London, 1957, p.278.

13. Nuecterlein, n.6, p.113.

of military assistance, the Thai's entered into a Southeast Asia collective Defence Treaty. Many viewed it as a diplomatic act of the Thais. "A result of a long period of skillful diplomatic activity, in which Thailand succeeded in fashioning itself as the bastion of western defence in South East Asia."<sup>14</sup>

But in less than two years, the security situation in Thailand and her attitude towards Communist China changed. But the coup of 1957 once again brought about a reassurance from the Thai leader, Sarit Thanarat, for the continuance of his policy, towards the United States. However, at this period of time, there seemed no consistency in Thailand's foreign affairs. This became particularly true by the policy statements made by Thanat Khoman, the minister for Foreign Affairs. He "represented a new look in Thai diplomacy which sought to bring Thai foreign policy more into accord with the views of other Asian nations and to avoid the charge made by some neutral nations that Thailand was a satellite of the United States."<sup>15</sup>

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14. George Modelski (ed), SEATO, Six Studies (Melbourne, 1962), pp.87.

15. Donald Nuecterlein, "Thailand after Sarit," Asian Survey, May 1964, p.844.

Sarit Thanarat followed an anti-communist posture. Many Chinese were detained by the Thai police and all trade with communist China was banned. Thailand emerged a stronger ally of the United States in the 1960's. This period was considered to be a watermark in Thai-American relations. Thailand's policy of anti-communism was to a great extent a result of the insurgencies. The Thais viewed the situation across the Mekong border in Laos with considerable concern. Viet-minh forces were known to be operating in Laos. Small cadres had moved into the more remote northern provinces of Thailand as long their southern border with Malaysia. The government initiated a program to prevent the communist from recruiting ethnic and religious groups that had been suppressed by the Thai majority. The threat to the nation would increase, if the communists took over Laos. At that moment, Thailand felt only the United States had the power to defend her, if danger approached her borders. But the other alternative was accommodation with the communists. "If Thailand, with uncertainly and instability near its border, cannot get what it considers

adequate and effective guarantee for the preservation of its independence, freedom and sovereignty, it may be forced into accommodating itself to the conditions surrounding it, in the hope that the communists who are coming closer will live and let live."<sup>16</sup>

However, the immediate security problem improved and the Thai fears of the United States withdrawal from South East Asia diminished. Thailand was also fearful that confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia might cause a security problem on its southern border and the country might be caught in a "nutcracker" between unfriendly forces in both the north and the south. They also took pains to increase co-operation with Burma along the Thai-Burmese border.<sup>17</sup>

The Communist Party of Thailand believed to have been founded in the 1928, supports the insurgencies in the northeast, north and south Thailand. According to Dr. Somchai, "the communist elements in the South, North and Northeast are co-ordinated by the Central Communist

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16. Bangkok Post, 24 July, 1962, p.4.

17. Ibid

Party of Thailand. This has various branches, such as the northeastern branch, the northern branch, the southern branch and the central branch. So there is real connection here. But there is very little connection between the Communist Party of Thailand and the Communist Party of Malay. In this case the connection is only limited to co-ordinating operations occasionally."<sup>18</sup>

The military wing of the CPT, was the Thai People's Liberation Armed Forces, which was born in 1968. Support for this is mainly drawn from ethnic minorities in border or in hill areas and from the Thais of chinese descent.<sup>19</sup>

The rural insurgencies have been more of a nuisance than a major threat to Thai security and political development.<sup>20</sup> But the insurgency in the northeast has plagued every government since the 1950's.

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18. Rajaratnam M. Lim So Jean,(ed), Trends in Thailand:  
(Singapore, 1973)  
p.186.

19. Conflict Studies, no.4, p.7

20. Frank C. Darling,"Thailand: Transitional Military Rule,"  
Current History, December 1980, p.208.

In the early sixties, they relied heavily on outside support, but towards the end of the decade "they were able to stand on their feet."<sup>21</sup> The northeast being cut off from the capital is inhabited by minority people and suffering from neglect and maladministration is more prone to insurgents. "The northeast problem can be summed up in a word-poverty. Long neglected by the central government, populated by ethnic Lao, the northeast regions are as obvious targets for the communist propogandists."<sup>22</sup> It no doubt is the focal point for Thai insecurity. As Thailand shares the border with Laos, boats full of cadres carrying weapons, sail across the Mekong. Another region of threat is the northern province which comprises of Nan, Chiang Rai, Phu Lom Lo, and Tak.<sup>23</sup> They were a victim of armed attacks by mountain tribesmen, largely Maos, whose targets were the government buildings and military

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21. Justus Vonder Kroef "Gurilla Communism and Counter Insurgency in Thailand," Orbis, Spring 1974, p.112.

22. Robert Karr Mc Cabe, "Storm Over Asia," (New York 1974), p.10.

23. Tanham, n.2, p.58.



personnel. The Thais suspected China's hand behind these activities. These areas were named "special insurgency zones" by the authorities.<sup>24</sup> Another threat of a lesser magnitude is the insurgency in the South. Elements of the Communist Party of Malaysia operating in the border areas between Thailand and Malaysia form the other group of communist insurgents. Known as the Communist Terrorist Organization (CTO), it is only interested in Malaya and carries out subversive activities among the Thais, Muslims and Chinese minorities in the southern most provinces of Thailand.<sup>25</sup> In short, in so far as communism is concerned, the Communist Party of Thailand is the only one which poses a serious threat. Thailand's destiny has seemingly been intertwined with that of Indo-China's. The war in Indo-China threatened Thailand's defences. The country's leaders put implicit faith in the Americans. They hoped that by aiding the United States in military activities in Indo-China, they

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24. Darling, n. 25, p. 209.

25. Samporn Sangchai and Lim Joo-Jock (ed), Trends in Thailand, (Singapore, 1975) p. 46.

could prevent evolving forms of Maoist government in the region. The bonds of Thai-U.S. friendship developed to be so strong that it began to receive top priority in the conduct of the Thai foreign policy.<sup>26</sup>

But the role of a 'handmaid' did not last long. In the beginning of 1970, Thailand expanded her interest and leadership in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) hoping that it would become increasingly a political force as well as, an instrument of economic interaction. This to a great extent made the Thais look for other channels and not depend on the United States wholly. "Thai leadership has painstakingly moved sideways. Grudgingly but under unavoidable compulsions. The difficulty of changing colour and appearance to blend in with the new political necessities in Southeast Asia is formidable."<sup>27</sup>

In an effort to regain Thailand's initiative and to respond to new realities, the Thai leaders were forced to readjust their relations with China and the United States.

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26. L. Edward Shuck Jr. "Thailand: In Search of the Lost Trail" Current History, December 1975, p. 230.

27. Ibid

The U.S.-Sino detente brought about a change in Thailand's policy. The announcement of the Nixon doctrine and the President's own desire to visit Peking came as a shock to the Thais; "Nixon's China visit has caused further disruption in Thai foreign policy."<sup>28</sup> It was seen as undermining the entire basis on which the country's rigid anti-communist policies had rested. The United States and China had decided to keep their ideological differences out and combat together against their common enemy - the Soviet Union. Thailand's confidence in the United States had been shaken. The students began to voice their opinions vociferously and insisted that Thailand's security could only be assured when the country no longer relied on either economic or military assistance from the United States.

According to King Vajiravudh, (Wake up Siam) "Every small nation must place its trusts equally in its courage and make utmost efforts for its own people. Trusting or

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28. Rajaretnam Jean (Ed), "Trends in Thailand",  
(Singapore, 1973), p. 32.

hoping for help from others is the best guarantee of failure. Thailand must find its strength in its own people. Thai weapons must protect the Thai borders. And if the nation hopes to survive, it must rely on its strength and on the true patriotic feelings of those who are truly Thai.<sup>29</sup> ("By 1974, the role of the leaders and students came increasingly vague. The public began to show weariness with the strikes, demonstrations and violent fighting among the students which became commonplace in the months that followed the October Revolt."<sup>30</sup> This gave the military a chance to stage a coup in 1976.) King Vajravadh's philosophy became the ideal for the Thai students. The question of withdrawal of the American troops from the Thai bases seriously threatend Thailand's security. The students became active participants in the overthrow of the inefficient military dictatorships and in the attempt to replace it by a democratic system that created a new and greater internal threat to stability."<sup>31</sup> "In 1973, the

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29. Marks, n. 3, p. 3,

30. Ross Prizzia, "Thailand's Election and Coalition Government," Asian Quarterly, 3, March 1976, part I, p. 192.

31. Inge Heinze, "Ten Days in October-Student vs the Military", Asian Survey, June 1974; p. 491.

students toppled one of the most entrenched military regimes in Thailand."

In the mid 70's Thailand was facing a crisis both in her internal and external politics. Externally, her neighbours Laos and Kampuchea had gone under communist rule. Furthermore, the United States defeat in Indo-China was a cause for concern. Internally, the condition in Bangkok and elsewhere was chaotic. There was a lack of efficient public services. Economic discomfort hunger and destitution were growing. The new phenomenon of strikes by public service employees, including garbage collectors and postal employees, marked the month of September 1975, and was not only a menace to the security of the ruling class but also a demonstration to many Thais of continued bureaucratic inadequacy.<sup>32</sup> Taking all these factors in view. Thailand decided to make a general adjustment in her domestic policy and external situation. The new leadership moved tactfully towards a policy of non-alignment. Thailand began her diplomatic relationship with China. It also began to seek

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32. Jusuf Wanadi, n. 5, p. 35.

closer cooperation with the communist neighbours. Despite all this the threat from the communists remained her greatest anxiety.

In 1976, Thailand's relations improved with the United States "Thailand, far from being the falling domino of a year ago, is now the centre of an international chessboard, as the hostile states of the communist world jostle for a position of influence."<sup>33</sup> Internally, the emergence of the hardliner, Thanin Kravixien government put an end to strikes and other troubles in industries, but it was obvious that the lid was on, and the pot was still boiling.<sup>34</sup> His anti-communist policy perturbed the military, as the realities around Thailand had changed, and an anti-communist posture was not welcome. A coup was staged and his successor Kriangsak Chomanand for the sake of security, stressed the need for improving relations with the neighbouring communists, creating greater domestic stability in preparation for elections in 1979 and improving Thailand's

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33. Richard Nations, "Back in the Game,"  
Far Eastern Economic Review,  
10 November, 1978, p. 21.

34. A Bridge to China,  
Asia Week, 1978

economic performance and investment climate. Even more dramatic was the improvement in Thai-Vietnam relations. The highest point was when Premier Pham Van Dong visited Bangkok and pledged that Vietnam would not support insurgency in Thailand, directly or indirectly.<sup>35</sup> But the question was, would it stick to its assurance. The insurgency continued and Vietnam was supposed to be responsible for this.

The Vietnamese involvement in Kampuchea engaged Thailand militarily along her borders. This was the result of the Vietnamese crossing the borders in pursuit of Pol Pot's men. Thailand was already burdened by a large number of refugees and the Vietnamese military action in Kampuchea caused exodus into Thailand.) Besides taxing the Thailand economically and socially, the refugees posed other problems too. Anti-Vietnam feeling led to growing demonstrations against the small Vietnamese Community by the Thais. Towards the end of 1979, Thailand's fragile kingdom groaned under the presence of unwanted refugees.<sup>36</sup> According to Thai perception, Vietnam supposedly posed direct threats to her stability.

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35. Richard Nations, "The Makings of Friendship," FEER, 22 September, 1978, pp. 28-30.

36. Marks, n.3, p.4.

The latest war of nerves began when army monitors intercepted field radio transmission between Vietnamese units, hunting at a possible cross border incursion to outflank Khmer Rouge guerilla elements, south of the town of Aranyaprathet.<sup>37</sup>

Thailand by now, was a major beneficiarg of China's concern over increasing Soviet influence in South East Asia and its desire to establish counterweights to Vietnam. "The Sino-Soviet cold war appeared to be locked in a spiral of encirclement and counter encirclement as each power in recents months moved into the strategic backyard of the other."<sup>38</sup> China justified its attack on Vietnam. The Chinese could not tolerate the Soviet backed Vietnamese becoming a force to be reckoned with in Southeast Asia. Thailand was assured of all possible help by the Chinese. "The Chinese have supplied weapons to the Khmer Rouge. The Beijing government has helped to reduce Vietnamese pressure

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37. John Mcbeth, "Storm Clouds on the Horizon," FEER, 6 July, 1979, p. 18.

38. Asia year Book, 1979, p. 16.



on the Thai-Cambodian borders by keeping sizeable forces of its own on the border between Vietnam and China and by threatening another 'punitive mission' into Vietnamese territory."<sup>39</sup> Similarly the United States pledged to assist Thailand militarily in accordance with the Manila Pact. Thomas Marks quotes Article IV of the Southeast Asia collective Defence Treaty (Manila Pact) "which in effect commits the United States, in the event of an armed attack upon Thailand, to 'act in accordance with its constitutional processes."<sup>40</sup> Arms sale rose four fold to \$ 400 million, because of the danger that Thailand perceived from the Vietnamese inventory of Soviet built medium tanks.

The attack on Kampuchea in December 1978 showed that there was no longer a "buffer state" between Vietnam and Thailand. There was concern in Thailand that Vietnam may give support to the insurgents. In the judgement of Jusuf Wanadi, as cited by Dilip Mukherjee, external threats to Thailand are of secondary nature.

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39. Frank C. Darling, "Thailand in the 1980's," Current History, December, 1980, p. 185.

40. Marks, n. 32, p. 17.

A direct assault is not on the cards but the infiltration and subversion via local communist parties or other insurgent groups poses a real danger.

These problems are assuming new dimensions. The growing economy, which provides urban Thailand with one of the highest living standards is facing its first serious encounter with an energy crisis caused by a total dependency on imported oil. "Rising inflation in 1979 had adversely affected the livelihood of Bangkok's business and labour sectors. When the government in early february announced increases in the price of oil products ranging from 24% to 60%, labour unrest erupted in the city."<sup>41</sup>

An ominous task which it has been countering for centuries is the chinese minority. They constitute a formidable economic force." Their potential for acting as a fifth column for China is another concern."<sup>42</sup> For the first time Thailand and Vietnam pose a serious and direct threat to one another. In the past, Thailand and Vietnam were able to keep Kampuchea and Laos as traditional

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41. Dilip Mukherjee, "Thai Parallel with Pakistan," Times of India, 7 March, 1980.

42. Larry Nicksch, "Thailand in 1980: Confrontation with Vietnam and the fall of Kriangsak," Asian Survey, Vol.XXI, no. 2, February 1981, p. 224.

buffers but their removal has left Thailand in the uncomfortable position of having new neighbours she would have preferred to live without.<sup>43</sup>

But Thailand seems to cope with these problems with astute diplomacy. Her strategy consists of seeking diplomatic support from the ASEAN. The ASEAN has already supported her demand for a genuinely independent Kampuchea and total withdrawal of foreign troops. "The ASEAN members have consistently provided strong diplomatic support to Thailand. In 1980 March, a joint meeting of the foreign ministers of ASEAN and the EEC in Kuala Lumpur condemned military intervention of communist powers in Cambodia as a threat to international peace security."<sup>44</sup>

Together with other members of the ASEAN, Thailand has appealed for stability and security in the region; Secondly, sought diplomatic support from communist China and the United States. A major goal of her strategy is to restore a stronger security-oriented relation with the United States. The Thais are seeking a 'more coherent'

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43. Nguyen Manh, Hung; "Sino-Soviet Conflict; Power Play among the Communist neighbour," Asian Survey, vol. XIX, no. 11, November, 1979, p. 1041.

44. Darling, n. 43, p. 185.

American policy.<sup>45</sup>

Indeed now that Thailand is faced with a real challenge, its steps toward stability are well taken.

But the Thai government and her people have important reasons to preserve their national independence and safeguard their security. Her people are held together by an 'electic culture' and a 'popular monarchy'. They have preserved their national independence for move than six centuries. Though relied heavily on foreign assistance, they have managed to increase the speed and direction of their modernization. This capacity was a major strength in the past, but having become a key to the future of the region Thailand undoubtedly has and will prove her worth.

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45. Ibid

## Chapter IV

### THAILAND'S CHINA RELATIONS: THE VIETNAM FACTOR

As ASEAN's frontline state, Thailand's foreign policy perceptions have a distinct sensitivity. "By mid 1975 there had been a change in the international relations of Southeast Asia, from the bi-polarity of the 1950's and 1960's to the multi-polarity in the mid 1970's as a result of an improvement in bilateral relations between the PRC (People's Republic of China) and the United States, the emergence of the PRC as a major power in Asia and its growing influence in Southeast Asia."<sup>1</sup>

The increase in the Soviet influence in the late 1960's and Sino-Soviet rivalries all contributed in the restructuring of the patterns of international relations in the region. Lastly the Vietnamese incursion pointed out the growing confrontation between Thailand and Vietnam over Kampuchea and Thailand's diplomacy reflected the confrontation.<sup>2</sup> Overnight, Thailand became geographically

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1. Shee Poon Kim, "The Policies of Thailand's Trade Relations with the People's Republic of China." Asian Survey, vol. XXI, no. 3, March 1981, p. 146.
  2. Sheldon W. Simon, "China Vietnam and ASEAN: The Politics of Polarization." Asian Survey, vol. XIX, no. 12, December, 1979, p. 1174.

and politically a strategic country. China made it a keystone in its foreign policy, particularly with regard to Southeast Asia.<sup>3</sup>

The defeat of the United States in Indo-China and the victory of the Indo-Chinese Communists, made it no longer viable for Thailand to continue its alliance with the United States. From the time, the former United States President Richard Nixon issued his Guam doctrine in 1969, Thailand's foreign policy had been identified with the American containment policy which had become increasingly anachronistic. By 1972, the Thai foreign ministry was officially advocating an independent posture vis-a-vis, Washington. But it was not until the early part of 1975, when the first popularly elected government came into being, and such a stance was reiterated as a legitimate and succinct course of action for the country.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the acceleration of involvement by the Soviet Union and the

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3. Bangkok Post, 31 May, 1975.

4. Sarasin Viraphol, Directions in Thai Foreign Policy, Occasional Paper no. 40, ISEAS(1976) Singapore, p. 2.

People's Republic of China in Southeast Asia necessitated the adoption of a balancing of interests policy, with a mind towards keeping both the powers at arms length. "It has been interesting to see the way in which the Thais, adept as they are at walking a tight rope in a difficult situation, have picked their way carefully between the Soviet Union and China, not committing themselves to one or the other."<sup>5</sup> The Thais decided to follow a policy of neutrality and an independent strategy in their external affairs. It was with this view in mind that they decided to normalize diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, thus "readressing an aberration which had existed for some twenty-five years."<sup>6</sup>

In terms of historical development the year 1975 was the watershed in the Thai foreign ministry. It was with China that Thailand's new diplomacy made the most solid advances. Beijing's concern over the Soviet move in Vietnam and Laos encouraged its interest in Thailand and Cambodia-

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5. Peter Tripp, "Thailand To-day"  
Asian Affairs, vol.X, Part-III,  
October, 1979, p. 253.

6. Viraphol, n. 4, p. 3.

the two countries of the region whose national interests have been more at odds with Vietnam historically."<sup>7</sup> It was Kukrit Pramoj's government "which coped astutely with the formation of communist regimes in Indo-China following the collapse of the American-supported governments in Vietnam. (The Thai Prime Minister led an impressive entourage to Beijing during the summer of 1975 and established diplomatic relations with China.)"<sup>8</sup> On the same day Thailand ended her connection with Taiwan. In Peking the joint communique that established diplomatic relations signed by the Chinese Premier and the Thai Prime Minister. The Chinese Premier assured the world that the PRC would "respect the independence sovereignty and territorial integrity of Thailand."<sup>9</sup> In the same communique it was agreed upon that "all foreign aggression and subversion and all attempts by any country to control any other or to interfere in its internal affairs are impermissible and are to be condemned."<sup>10</sup> On this occasion,

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7. Asia year Book, 1976, p. 262.

8. Frank C. Darling, "Thailand in 1976: Another Defeat for Constitutional Democracy," Asian Survey, vol. 17, no. 1, Jan-June, 1977, p. 116.

9. Thomas A. Marks, "Thailand: A Threatened Kingdom," Conflict Studies, no. 115, February, 1980, p. 16.

10. Ibid



Vice Premier (Teng Hsioping) reiterated China's assurances not to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of Thailand, nor to assist any movements subversive to Thai government.

"During the first few months of diplomatic intercourse, Thailand showed great enthusiasm for China. Athletic and scientific exchanges were made.<sup>11</sup> "The visits of a delegation under the pro-government speaker of the House of Representatives Prasit Kanjanawat, played a role in bringing the relationship closer to realization.<sup>12</sup> But at the same time "the Kukrit government went out of way to reassure the United States that it wanted to continue good relations. Observers saw this as an effort to achieve some balance in relation with the super powers."<sup>13</sup>

This new policy was short-lived and not considered adequate by some domestic critics and not seen as genuine by some of Thailand's neighbours. No doubt it was governed by self interest but the real problem seemed to be a serious lack of cohesion and understanding between the

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11. Viraphol, n. 4, p. 4.

12. The Times of India, 7 March, 1975.

13. Harvey Stockwin, "Grasping Chinese Realities," FEER, 24 October, 1975, p. 18.

different ministries particularly the ministers of foreign affairs and defence."

The withdrawal of the United States in Indo-China left the field open for the PRC and the Seni administration carried the withdrawal of the United States residual forces in July 1976. There was hardly any time for the Seni government to implement its foreign policy.<sup>14</sup>

Once again in 1976, Thailand came under military dictatorship after a brief spell of constitutional government. A right-wing group led by Thanin Kraivichien seized power from the democratic party leader Seni Pramōj, "and launched the country on an anti-communist course, which many Thais regarded as provocative to the victory-flushed Vietnamese forces across the borders. Infact, Hanoi did make very threatening noises against Thanin's government."<sup>15</sup> His hawkish policies developed strains in Thai-China relations, and his anti-communist posture did much to alienate everyone at home and abroad. Though an anti-communist Thanin's policy towards China was oriented towards creating better relations between the two countries. He tried quietly to

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14. Asia Year Book, 1977, p. 342.

15. John Stirling, "Thailand and ASEAN in a Dangerous World," Asian Affairs, vol. 6, no. 5, May-June, 1979, p. 310.

urge Beijing to use its influence on the communist regime in Kampuchea to reduce armed attacks on Thai territory.<sup>16</sup>

"In October 1977, General Kriangsak Chomanan ousted Thanin in a peaceful and well-planned coup. The coup had the backing of the United States and China. It continued the search for stability and progress. In spite of many adverse predictions, Thailand did not move closer to anything resembling another 'domino' in Southeast Asia. Kriangsak firmly and deftly directed the country back to its traditional middle path."<sup>17</sup> He realized that the nation's survival in the present regional and global environment depends on a policy of conciliation and extreme discretion.

By far the most important trend in Thai foreign relations in 1978, was the improvement in relations with the neighbouring communist states. General Kriangsak had considerable domestic support for his efforts and fortuitously coincided with a willingness on the part of the Communist States to respond to such overtures.<sup>18</sup>

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16. Asia Year Book, 1977, p. 342.

17. Frank C. Darling, "Thailand in 1977: The Search for Stability and Progress," Asian Survey, vol. XVIII, no. 2, February 1978, p. 153.

18. Stirling, n. 15, p. 310.

As an army man, Kriangsak was well placed to make the more myopic generals see the light of an "open door policy" which would allow the new power currents to flow through Thailand rather than wash it away. The foreign policy of his government aroused even more enthusiasm than its approach to internal problems, for the past year saw the Thanin government undo much of the progress achieved under Thailand's previous democratic governments.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the General was favoured by Washington and Beijing. He very deftly saw the logic of the situation and seized the moment. The army man and his foreign minister Upadit Pathariangkul skillfully managed one of the most active and successful foreign policy of any state in the region. Normalization with Hanoi was also one of his first moves. The attempt on the part of the Thai government was to come to terms with her Indo-Chinese neighbours. There was a perceptible lowering of tensions as a result.<sup>20</sup> The Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong's visit to Bangkok, indicated strong Thai solidarity and also with

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19. Richard Nations, "Thailand Back in the Game," FEER, 9 December, 1978, p. 21.

20. Dilip Mukherjee, "The Thai Parallel with Pakistan," The Times of India, 7 March 1980.

the rest of ASEAN. The Thais side stepped Vietnam's proposals for a bilateral treaty in return for Hanoi's pledge not to support insurgency.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the precise formula for dealing with the "zone of peace" concept adopted in Bangkok was repeated in another joint communique signed by the Vietnamese Premier in other ASEAN States. But "what different interests and potential dangers might be camouflaged in the semantic subtleties is beyond understanding."<sup>22</sup> The normalization of relations was soon broken. When Kriangsak assumed power in 1977, Vietnam and Kampuchea were already engaged in battle along their common border. "China, at that time contrary to its public posture was privately giving political support to Kampuchea. The U.S.S.R. of course was in close collaboration with Vietnam."<sup>23</sup> "Behind the thicket of alive branches the game has changed. The Sino-Soviet cold war appeared to be locked in a spiral of encirclement and counter-encirclement as each power in recent months had moved more overtly into the strategic

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21. Nations, n. 10, p. 22.

22. Asia Year Book, 1979, p. 323.

23. Khien Theeravit, "Thailand: An Overview of Political and Foreign Relations." South-East Asian Affairs, 1979, p. 305.

backyard of the other."<sup>24</sup> Under these circumstances, Thailand adopted a neutral policy and showed a friendly attitude towards all. But in reality China received special treatment. One wonders what General Kriangsak expected from China. Did he see it as playing a stabilizing role in Southeast Asia? Could Beijing act as a go between to smooth relations between Thailand and ASEAN on the one hand and Indo-China on the other. As the Thai premier himself answered, "This is a difficult question, we in Thailand would help maintain peace and security in this part of the world, on the part of any country not only China, but any other power, major or minor."<sup>25</sup> This viewpoint was stressed by his foreign minister, Upadit Pachariyankun "Thailand always succeeds in using diplomatic means to solve its political problems."<sup>26</sup>

It seems, Thailand has become a keystone in China's Southeast Asian policy. In the changed situation Thailand has acquired political and strategic significance so far as the superpowers are concerned. For China, Bangkok could also act as a channel of communications with the ASEAN

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24. Nations, FEER, n. 20, p. 24.

25. Ibid, n. 21, p. 22.

26. Stirling; n. 15, p. 311.

members. It could be helpful in toning down the unsurmountable hostility shown to China by the Djkarata government.<sup>27</sup>

Not since the fall of Saigon, had a greater shift in power relations in the region been so clearly indicated. That Hua Go Feng should choose Thailand, until last year's SEATO (South East Asian Treaty organisation) headquarters was an astonishing example of the new flexibility on the part of both China and Thailand.<sup>28</sup>

In March 1978, General Kriangsak visited China for a week. This visit was undertaken to improve relations and strengthen co-operation between the two countries. A rousing welcome for the Prime Minister; the instant rapport between the Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak and the Vice-Premier Deng, the receptiveness of the Chinese leaders to Thai views and proposals, the ease in negotiations, and agreements on trade and scientific technical cooperation showed the eagerness of both the sides to chalk out a new path of friendly relations. The visit manifested the desire for friendships between

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27. Times of India , 16 May 1978.

28. Hindustan Times, 8 April, 1978.

Thailand and China, based on the five principles of peaceful co-existence. "The visit was successful almost beyond optimistic hopes. Some very concrete proposals were made and accepted in respect of trade, scientific and technical co-operation."<sup>29</sup> Both the countries seemed to have a common purpose in seeing that Vietnam did not emerge as a threat or military embarrassment to either of them. That Vietnam could be used by the Thais to balance a preponderant Chinese influence in the region was a part of the sophisticated foreign policy."<sup>30</sup>

During Kriangsak's April visit to China, Vice Premier Deng-Xiaoping, confirmed Chinese support for the ASEAN and promised to help Thailand improve relations with Kampuchea. Five months later, Deng on his visit also commented that party to party relations between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) need not disrupt good state to state relations.<sup>31</sup> This disappointed the Thais. One section of the Thai press did not appreciate this stand but the others supported

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29. The Bangkok Post, 1 April, 1978.

30. Times of India, 15 May, 1978.

31. Anil Ramsay, "Thailand 1978: Kriangsak, the Thai who binds." Asian Survey, vol. XIX, no. 2, February, 1978, p. 108.



them on the plea that a total withdrawal of moral support would help the Soviets strengthen their own position within the CPT to the point of taking control of it and that it would not be to the advantage of either China or Thailand."<sup>32</sup>

Deng also warned of "hegemonists" in Southeast Asia. He also cautioned the Thai officials not to trust Pham Van Dong's assurance that Vietnam would not support insurgency in Thailand. Whereas China confirmed, that it was her desire to have overseas Chinese adopt local citizenship and follow local laws. During these talks, the two countries tentatively agreed that Chinese commercial flights to Kampuchea would cross Thailand and signed a trade agreement under which Thailand would sell China approximately \$80,000,00 of agriculture and textile products and would purchase crude and diesel oil at special rates in return.<sup>33</sup> Thailand, without mentioning it, began to look upon the Chinese for help. She had reasons to be concerned about the Vietnamese expansion. SEATO, the security arrangement, of which Thailand was a member, having been abandoned, left her with no two alternatives. Her even handed policy

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32. S.S. Bhattacharya, "Mr. Deng's visit to Southeast Asia," Strategic Analysis, vol. 11, no. 9, December, 1978, p. 336.

33. David Bonavia, "A Bridge to China," Asia Week, 14 April, 1978, p. 28.

reached a crucial test when Vietnam decided in June 1978 to join the COMECON. "Vietnam's decision to join the COMECON marked a culmination of its growing economic dependence on the Soviet Union."<sup>34</sup> "Chinese apparently abandoned their efforts to keep Vietnam from moving into the Soviet orbit, responded to the COMECON decision by cutting of all economic and technical aid to Hanoi."<sup>35</sup> Beijing believed that Hanoi was an accomplice of the Soviet Union, and of that its design was to isolate China and dominate Southeast Asia.

Meanwhile, the border conflict between Vietnam and Kampuchea escalated in 1977. According to Hanoi, the Kampuchean forces began to stage heavy raids into the Vietnamese territory in April. The following month, Vietnam extended its territorial waters to 12 miles and established 'exclusive economic zones'. These actions directly affected the islands converted by Vietnam and China, as well as, those in dispute between the Vietnamese and the Kampucheans. Shortly after the Vietnamese moves, China vowed publicly to recover the spratly's.<sup>36</sup> As the

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34. Marion Leighton; Asian Affairs, nd, vol. 6, no. 1, September 1978, p. 26.

35. Ibid

36. Ibid

Vietnamese-Kampuchean conflict got intensified, "China which traditionally preferred a 'Balkanized' Indo-China became concerned over Vietnamese attempts to forge, an Indo-Chinese federation".<sup>37</sup> The gentle land once again became a proxy for great power ambitions. For China, the Vietnamese offensive was seen as a strategic threat. This was also due to the Vietnam-USSR friendship treaty of november 1978 and Hanoi's control of Indo-China would revive the Soviet Union's Asian Collective Security concept, originally broached in 1969. "China seemed to be confronted with a hostile Indo-China to her south linked to her perennial Soviet enemy to the north and west."<sup>38</sup> According to Pravada as quoted by Bu Diem, China's attempts were to replace the fading U.S. interests with her own. "When the Vietnamese 'Juggernaut' rolled into Kampuchea, it was plain that a confrontation between Thailand and Vietnam was not for off. But the question remaining was whether it would be decided with words or with weapons."<sup>39</sup>

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37. Ibid

38. Theeravit, n. 23, p. 305.

39. Bud Diem; "A new kind of War," Asian Affairs, vol. 5, no. 5, February 1980, p. 273.

Not since the Indo-Chinese war had an ASEAN member been so perilously close to outright hostilities with Vietnam. Vietnam continued its military action on Kampuchean forces. After the fall of Phnom Penh the Vietnamese installed a pro-Vietnam regime, headed by Heng Samrin. According to Bu Diem, "their armoured units rolled westward reaching quickly the borders of Thailand and leaving behind in a sort of German style blitzkrieg operation, pockets of resistance."<sup>40</sup>//

On the international scene, the Chinese were the sole supporters of the Pol Pot regime. They were embarrassed by the brutal policies of the government, but by no means, wanted to see the Vietnamese allied to the Soviets, seize control of the whole Indo-Chinese peninsula. Hence they reviewed the Vietnamese attack on Kampuchea not simply as another local border conflict, but in terms of geopolitics and coming out of spheres of influence. It was a blow to their prestige, a problem "of peace and credibility". Vice Premier Deng publicly said, "We cannot allow Vietnam to run everywhere. We may be forced to do what we do not like to do."<sup>41</sup> With its stronghold in Laos and Kampuchea,

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40. Ibid, p. 272.

41. Ibid, p. 273.

it was presumed that Vietnam would extend its influence upto Thailand, strategically, the most important in the region. In order to strengthen her security arrangement, Thailand began to look upon China as a friend. She also called upon the ASEAN members who were already wary of Hanoi's intentions and condemned the vietnamese offensive. General Kriangsak also visited the United States to seek their assistance in meeting their defence requirements.<sup>42</sup> Politically, if the United States was hesitant in its support, Beijing posed quite a different problem, it seemed too eager to help, threatening to draw Thailand into the Sino-Vietnamese quarrel.

Just a few weeks later, after the collapse of Phom Penh and installation of the Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation, the Chinese launched an attack on Vietnam on a massive scale. ("Punitive Action") that was the term with which the Chinese characterized their attacks along the northern frontiers of Vietnam on february 17, 1979. Thailand, on the other hand, was undergoing an attack of nerves when the army intelligence monitors intercepted field radio transmissions between Vietnamese units hinting at a cross border incursion to

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42. Marks, n. 9, p. 17.

outflank Khmer Rouge Guerilla elements south of the town of Aranyaprathet.<sup>43</sup> Moreover there were alarming reports of Vietnamese troops re-inforcement backed by the Soviets, moving towards the border. Kriangsak summoned military leaders into a hostily called strategy session and gave orders for strengthening border defences. Washington warned Hanoi, that it would be seriously concerned at any Vietnamese attack on Thailand. "as they would be prepared to honour the Manila pact."<sup>44</sup> "President Carter affirmed that the United States would stand by its commitments in South East Asia and protect the "Vital interest of the United States."<sup>45</sup> The Vietnamese were quick to react. Their Ambassador Hsang Bao Son denied any such threat to the Thai security. He justified by saying that the Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea are there to suppress the terrorists within the territory. The Thai Foreign Minister Upadit Parchariyankun said, "This denial will be the last."<sup>46</sup>

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43. John Mcbeth, "Storm clouds on the Horizon,  
FEER, 8 July, 1979, p. 18.

44. Stephen Barber, "Preventing the Domino Effect,"  
FEER, 8 November, 1979, p. 14.

45. Marks, n. 9, p. 17.

46. Nyan Chanda, "Vietnam finds its surprising,"  
FEER, 14 November, 1979, p. 14.

The Vietnamese blamed the Thais for supporting the Pol Pot regime and helping China in the supply of arms to the ousted government. Whether Thailand was actually involved, became a much debated issue. One seasoned Indo-Chinese observer said, "If the Thais are supporting the Khmer Rouge and after all who knows what is going on it may have far reaching consequence."<sup>47</sup> Still Thailand seemed determined to take the charges lying down.

The Chinese punitive expedition into Vietnam had added a new dimension, it was believed at least by the Vietnamese that Deng had promised similar action in the event of a Vietnamese attack on Thailand. The Chinese Foreign Minister issued a statement on June 26, strongly denouncing Vietnam's expansion of Thailand and expressing China's resolute support for the people of Thailand in their struggle against aggression. Chinese leaders have sternly declared that if Vietnam should invade the ASEAN Countries, China will stand on the side of the latter and if Vietnam should invade Thailand, China will stand on the side of Thailand. Though exceptionally wary of appearing to tilt too much to Peking's side, the Thai cautiously fostered the notion that their army

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47. Ibid

did not stand alone."<sup>48</sup> The ASEAN members all of which had overseas Chinese minorities, evidently sympathized with Vietnam in its dispute with China, but yet did not wish to alienate Beijing. In order to ensure that these countries did not seek Soviet protection from an alleged Chinese threat, Beijing emphasized repeatedly, that its differences with Vietnam stemmed from a Soviet inspired plot to isolate China from its neighbours and national allies in Southeast Asia. Thailand, had become a frontline state and the feeling of disquiet was apparent.

Whatever justification was given, Beijing could not hide the fact that it escalated the issue as a means of 'punishing' Hanoi for moving closer to Moscow.<sup>49</sup> The illtreatment of the 'Hoa people' by Vietnamese was a mere facade held by the Chinese. Beijing had no other instrument for exerting leverage on Vietnam but to portray it as on meance to the stability of Southeast Asia.<sup>50</sup>

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48. Beijing Review; no. 27, July 7, 1980, p. 7.

49. Frank Mount, "The Prussians of Southeast Asia: Can they be stopped?" Asian Affairs, vol. 6, p. 378, no. 6, July-August, 1979.

50. Leighton, n. 36, p. 26.



According to some "The Chinese attack on Vietnam was not simply a gesture of support for Pol Pot." The Vietnamese invasion provided China with a pretext for showing to Vietnam the gravity with which Beijing viewed Hanoi's obstinacy and China's potential for doing something about it. The Vietnamese maintained that the Chinese attack did not really test their capabilities."<sup>51</sup>

The beginning of 1980 did not bring much of a change in the situation. It was only the political leadership of Thailand which changed hands. General Kriangsak was replaced by General Prem Tinsulanonda. He let it be known, that he did not trust the Chinese as much as his predecessor. The outlawed Beijing backed party of Thailand openly bragged that it constituted Thailand's greatest security threat.<sup>52</sup> A few months later, the Chinese Premier Huang Hua arrived in Bangkok for a full exchange of views with the Thai leaders. The talks mainly centered around Kampuchea and Vietnam.<sup>53</sup> An effort for a general consensus was made but all was futile. Thailand seemed to be treading a delicate path over Kampuchea in particular, because some of its

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51. Ibid

52. New Strait Times, 6 May, 1980.

53. The Bangkok Post, 1980.

ASEAN allies appeared to be anxious about its close proximity with China, and felt that it would jeopardize the prospects of achieving an ultimate settlement.

Thus for the moment, the immediate threat of invasion had been checked. Wariness of Thailand's inherent strength and growing ASEAN defence co-operation, together with uncertainties as to the possible American and especially Chinese responses, combined to produce a restraining influence on Hanoi. But it can no doubt be said that it was the waning influence of the United States, the detente between China and United States of America, Sino-Soviet, Sino-Vietnamese rivalries which contributed to the Thai-China relationship. Many obstacles still stand on the way, but the period from 1975 to 1980 can be described as developing and fruitful. The initial apprehension of China has thawed considerably and there is a distinct change in Thailand's China policy.

## C O N C L U S I O N

Thailand has never known any foreign domination in her history. She had been avoiding colonization successfully throughout the past several centuries. According to Peter Tripp, "Thailand is a country which has neither been colonized nor communized. The indigenous structures are strong and immediately identifiable as Thai. It has been free from the kind of emotional intolerance often found in those countries with a colonial past."

Thailand far from being the 'falling domino' as characterized by some, has been able to maintain her independence because of her flexible foreign policy.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, several brilliant monarchs, including Mongkut (1851-68) and Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), warded off encroachments upon Thai sovereignty, though at a price of giving up some parts of their territory. Nevertheless, because of the modernization of the Thai society and participation in the first world war on the side of the Victorious Allies, negotiation of treaties was undertaken and consequently Thailand was accepted as a member of the League of Nations. Recognition of full sovereignty had scarcely been achieved when it was endangered by the dangers of the

Japanese empire builders. Faced with Tokyo's overwhelming strength, which in 1941 asserted itself by occupying the kingdom despite a nominal Japanese-Thai partnership, the Thai leadership initially appeared to side with the Japanese. The government in Bangkok declared war on Britain and the United States of America but throughout the second world war Pridi Phanomyong and Seni Pramoj, organised the underground resistance and aided the "Free Thai Movement."

The traditional diplomacy of Thailand helped her face the revolutionary post war situation with confidence. Though initially Thailand supported the anti-colonial movements of Southeast Asia, the leaderships reassessed to its position when the Nationalists regime collapsed in China, and its turbulent aftermath brought the communist Chinese in power. Thailand turned to the United States, which emerged as the strongest power in Asia and as the guarantor of her security. In the early phase of the cold war in Asia, the United States of America looked for allies from amongst the Asian countries. Hence, Thailand's desire to seek help from the United States of America met with a favourable response. The People's Republic of China's appearance on the Asian scene disturbed Thailand and her new

found ally the United States of America. China viewed the kingdom with suspicion for it felt that Thailand was a party to the American plan to isolate it from the rest of the world. Thailand and the United States developed shared perspective with respect to China. //

Gradually, Thailand moved into the U.S. alliance system. Apart from entering into bilateral agreements with the United States, she became an active member of SEATO in 1954. Subsequently, on all international issues, Thailand began to take a position similar to the U.S. In the Vietnam war too, Thailand became a partner with the United States by sending her troops. She allowed her bases Udon, Utapao, Ubon Takli, Korat and Nakhon Phanom to be used by the Americans for their mission in Vietnam. No wonder, therefore that after the defeat of the Americans in Vietnam, and the subsequent withdrawal, Vietnam also demanded a removal of the Americans from the Thai bases, as a precondition for normalization of relations.

Meanwhile in the early seventies, Thai foreign policy makers made a reassessment of their policy towards China, moving closer to their northern neighbour. In the post 1975 period this interlude of co-incidence in the Thai-U.S. interests appeared to have ended. The Thais also became uneasy about the American presence. Moreover, the Sino-U.S.

detente of 1972, alarmed the Thais of the possible loss of support from United States. There was a need for readjustment in Thai foreign policy. The student revolt in 1973 October, led to a change from military to civilian government. The change of regime initiated fresh demands on foreign policy. In later years new directions in foreign policy became noticeable, viz, the demand for total withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Thai bases.

The insurgency within Thailand created problems but was not much of a threat to her security. Only in the later stages, did it become evident that it was the social problem which was the root of the insurgency.

The Americans were forced to depart from Thailand in 1976, and they left behind an uncertain security environment, It was this change in geopolitics, which brought Thailand closer to Beijing. Visits were exchanged between the leaders of the countries. Vietnam's hostility towards Thailand also helped to strengthen to Thai-Chinese relationship. The Vietnamese offensive on Kampuchea in 1978 set Thailand wondering-Could China be the answer to her problems? In the event of an attack from Vietnam, China assured Thailand

of all possible help. Meanwhile, the ASEAN, which since its formation in 1967, had confined itself to a Modicum of economic links, and even the triumph of communism did not evoke a positive response towards Indo-China, had began to feel worried at the emergence of a new and United Vietnam. The ASEAN countries were also concerned at the flow of refugees from Vietnam. They denounced the Vietnamese military action in Kampuchea and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam and called for a complete withdrawal of forces. This was followed by a demand which ultimately took the shape of a United Nation's Security Council resolution (voted by the Soviet Union) that all "foreign troops" should leave Indo-China. The other ASEAN members promised their support to Thailand.

To help meet the Vietnamese threat, the Americans increased the military sales to Thailand. Though SEATO had been dismantled in June 1977, Washington remained committed to the objectives of the Manila Pact. Yet, Thailand was under no illusion about the United States. She began to rely more on China for help than on any other country. Hard on the heels of the Vietnamese Premier's visit to Bangkok in 1978, there had been a parleys in Bangkok between the Thai Premier Kriangsak and the Chinese Vice-Premier Deng, It was Kriangsak's middle path policy, a policy of conciliation towards its

Indo-China states, China and the United States which proved useful for Thailand. However any solution to the Kampuchean problem was not in sight. Meanwhile the Thais and the Chinese moved closer in their relationship. In the early 1980, the Chinese Foreign Minister Haung Haa visited Bangkok, which was followed by a visit from his Thai counterpart, Sithi Sawestsila. He was assured by the Chinese leaders that any Vietnamese attack on Thailand would prompt Chinese reprisals against Vietnam. When Prem Tinsulanond came to power in 1980 October, there were no signs that he would put the Sino-Thai relations at a low key. But the events took a different turn for Thailand.

What then, does the future hold for Thailand? Is it advisable for her to shore up relations with China? One fact seems to be clear that China is reverting to the ancient policy, dating from Kublai Khan of asserting its hegemony. In pursuit of its goal, Beijing had established diplomatic and economic relations with the United States of America. Thailand, for China, occupies a more important strategic position than any of its ASEAN members. In the PRC's perception, its legitimate access to



influence in Bangkok can thwart Vietnam's ambition beyond the frontiers of the three Indo-Chinese states and can also undercut the Soviet influence. Moreover, it can also help in the normalization of relations with Singapore and Indonesia.

But can Thailand act as a scapegoat? A country which has maintained her independence for centuries is surely capable of handling her own problems. Despite being exposed and threatened, Thailand has successfully resisted communist intrusion into her territory. A nation like Thailand must therefore, try and look into the future and foresee the various ways in which she can create new situations and relations. Among the many factors, that should be taken into consideration, is the super power dominance over the events in the area. But if Thailand to survive the impact of this equation and make South East Asia a 'zone of peace, stability freedom and neutrality,' she must adopt a policy of equidistance, to the best of her ability by avoiding any commitment to either China or the United States. The past experience should be enough to teach her a lesson. In spite of ideological differences, she should patch up with

her communist neighbour-Vietnam, and recognize the new Kampuchean government. She should no longer depend upon the big powers as their interests may not always coincide with hers. What once were "future shocks", are now fast approaching, and what little time Thailand had, is fast running out.

APPENDIX - I

BANGKOK DECLARATION

The Presidium Minister for Political Affairs/  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the Deputy  
Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Secretary of Foreign  
Affairs of the Philippines, the Minister for Foreign  
Affairs of Singapore and the Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of Thailand:

MINDFUL of the existence of mutual interests and  
common problems among the countries of Southeast Asia and  
convinced of the need to strengthen further the existing  
bonds of regional solidarity and co-operation;

DESIRING to establish a firm foundation for common  
action to promote regional co-operation in Southeast Asia  
in the spirit of equality and partnership and thereby  
contribute towards peace, progress and prosperity in the  
region;

CONSCIOUS that in an increasingly interdependent  
world, the cherished ideals of peace, freedom, social  
justice and economic well-being are best attained by  
fostering good understanding, good neighbourliness and  
meaningful co-operation among the countries of the region  
already bound together by ties of history and culture,

CONSIDERING that the countries of Southeast Asia share a primary responsibility for strengthening the economic and social stability of the region and ensuring their peaceful and progressive national development, and that they are determined to ensure their stability and security from external interference in any form or manifestation in order to preserve their national identities in accordance with the ideas and aspirations of their peoples;

AFFIRMING that all foreign bases are temporary and remain only with the expressed concurrence of the countries concerned and are not intended to be used directly or indirectly to subvert the national independence and freedom of states in the area or prejudice the orderly processes of their national development;

DO HEREBY DECLARE:

FIRST, the establishment of an association for regional co-operation among the countries of Southeast Asia to be known as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

SECOND, that the aims and purposes of the Association shall be:

1. To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;

2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;

3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;

4. To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, progressional, technical and administrative spheres;

5. To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilization of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communication facilities and the raising of the living standards of their people;

6. To promote Southeast Asian Studies;

7. To maintain close and beneficial co-operation with existing international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer co-operation among themselves.

THIRD, that, to carry out these aims and purposes, the following machinery shall be established:

(a) Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers, which shall be by rotation and referred to as ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. Special Meetings of Foreign Ministers may be convened as required.

(b) A Standing Committee, under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister of the host country or his Representatives and having as its Members the accredited Ambassadors of the other member countries, to carry on the work of the Association in between Meetings of Foreign Ministers.

(c) Ad Hoc Committees and Permanent Committees of specialists and officials on specific subjects.

(d) A National Secretariat in each member country to carry out the work of the Association on behalf of that country and to service the Annual or Special Meetings of Foreign Ministers, the Standing Committee and such other Committees as may hereafter be established.

FOURTH, that the Association is open for participation to all States in the Southeast region subscribing to the aforementioned aims, principles and purposes.

FIFTH, that the Association represents the collective will of the Nations of Southeast Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and co-operation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity.

DONE in Bangkok on the eighth day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and sixty-seven.

APPENDIX - II

Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty,  
9 September 1954

The Parties to this Treaty,  
Recognising the sovereign equality of all the Parties,  
Reiterating their faith in the purpose and principles  
set for in the Charter of the UN and their desire to live  
in peace with all peoples and all governments,

Reaffirming that, in accordance with the Charter of  
the United Nations, they uphold the principle of equal  
rights and self-determination of peoples, and declaring  
that they will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to  
promote self-government and to secure the independence of  
all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to  
undertake its responsibilities;

Desiring to strengthen the fabric of peace and freedom  
and to uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty  
and the rule of law, and to promote the economic well-being  
and development of all peoples in the treaty area,

Intending to declare publicly and formally their sense  
of unity, so that any potential aggressor will appreciate  
that the parties stand together in the area, and

Desiring further to c\_ordinate their efforts for  
Collective Defence for the preservati on of peace and security,



Therefore agree as follows:

- I. The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the UN, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN.
- II. In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and to prevent and counter subversive activities directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability.
- III. The Parties undertake to strengthen their free institutions and to co-operate with one another in the further development of economic measures, including technical assistance, designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being and to further the individual and collective efforts of governments towards these ends.
- IV.(1) Each party recognises that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the Parties or against any state or territory which the parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate, would endanger

its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. Measures taken under this para shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the U.N.

(2) If, in the opinion of any of the Parties, the inviolability or the integrity of the territory or the sovereignty or political independence of any Party in the treaty area or of any other state or territory to which the provision of Para 1 of this Article from time to time apply is threatened in any way other than by armed attack or is affected or threatened by any fact or situation which might endanger the peace of the area, the Parties shall consult immediately in order to agree on the measures which should be taken for the common defence.

(3) It is understood that no action of the territory of any state designated by unanimous agreement under para I of this Article or on any territory so designated shall be taken except at the invitation or with the consent of the government concerned.

V. The Parties hereby establish a council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall provide for consultation with regard to military and any other planning as the situation obtaining in the treaty area may from time to time require. The Council shall be so organized as to be able to meet at any time.

VI. This Treaty does not affect and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligation of any of the Parties under the Charter of the UN or the responsibility of the UN for the maintenance of international peace and security. Each party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the parties or any third party is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagements in conflict with this Treaty.

VII. Any other State in a position to further the objectives of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the area may, by unanimous agreement of the Parties, be invited to accede to this Party. Any state so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. The Government of the Republic of Philippines shall inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

VIII. As used in this Treaty, the "Treaty area" is the general area of Southeast Asia, including also the entire territories of the Asian Parties, and the general area of the Southwest Pacific not including the Pacific area north of 21 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. The parties may, by unanimous agreement, amend this Article to include within the treaty area the territory of any state according to this Treaty in accordance with Article VII or otherwise to change the treaty area.

IX. (1) This treaty shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the Republic of Philippines. Duly certified copies, thereof, shall be transmitted by that government to the other signatories.

(2) The Treaty shall be ratified and its provision carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the Republic of Philippines, which shall notify all the other signatories of such deposit.

(3) The Treaty shall enter into force between the states which have ratified it as soon as the instrument of ratification of a majority of the signatories shall have to be deposited, and shall come into effect with respect to each other state on the state of the deposit of its instrument of ratification.

X. This Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely, but any party may cease to be a party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall inform the governments of the other parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

XI. The English text of this Treaty is binding on the Parties, but when the Parties have agreed to the French text thereof and have so notified the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, the French text shall be equally authentic and binding on the parties.

APPENDIX - III

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

BETWEEN

THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

1. The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the People's Republic of China, desiring to revive and strengthen further the traditionally close and friendly relations between the peoples of the two countries and in conformity with the interests and common desires of the two peoples, have decided upon mutual recognition and the establishment of diplomatic relations as from July 1, 1975.

2. The two Governments reaffirm that only the people of each country have the right to choose their own political, economic and social systems, without outside interference. They also share the conviction that, in spite of the differences in the political, economic and social systems of the Kingdom of Thailand and the People's Republic of China, there should be no obstacle to the development of peaceful and friendly relations between the two countries and peoples in accordance with the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual

non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

3. The two Governments agree to settle all disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the above-mentioned principles without resorting to the use or threat of force.

4. The two Governments agree that all foreign aggression and subversion and all attempts by any country to control any other country or to interfere in its internal affairs are impermissible and are to be condemned.

5. The two Governments are also opposed to any attempt by any country or group of countries to establish hegemony or create spheres of influence in any part of the world.

6. The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China, acknowledges the position of the Chinese Government that there is but one China and that Taiwan is an integral part of Chinese territory, and decides to remove all its official representations from Taiwan within one month from the date of signature of this communique.

7. The Government of the People's Republic of China recognizes the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and agrees to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Thailand.

8. The Government of the People's Republic of China takes note of the fact that for centuries Chinese residents in Thailand have lived in harmony and amity with the Thai people in conformity with the law of the land and with the customs and habits of the Thai people. The Government of the People's Republic of China declares that it does not recognize dual nationality. Both Governments consider anyone of Chinese nationality or origin who acquires Thai nationality as automatically foreiting Chinese nationality. As for those Chinese residents in Thailand who elect to retain Chinese nationality of their own will, the Chinese Government, acting in accordance with its consistent policy, will enjoin them to abide by the law of the Kingdom of Thailand, respect the customs and habits of the Thai people and live in amity with them. Their proper rights and interests will be protected by the Government of China and respected by the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand.



9. The two Governments agree to pursue policies for the development of trade, economic and cultural relations between them.

10. The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the People's Republic of China agree to exchange mutually accredited Ambassadors as soon as practicable and to provide each other with all the necessary assistance for the establishment and performance of the functions of diplomatic missions in their respective capitals in accordance with international practice and on a reciprocal basis.

APPENDIX - IV

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

FEBRUARY 28, 1972

SHANGHAI, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

President Richard Nixon of the United States of America visited the People's Republic of China at the invitation of Premier Chou En-lai of the People's Republic of China from February 21 to February 28, 1972. Accompanying the President were Mrs. Nixon, U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers, Assistant to the President Dr. Henry Kissinger, and other American officials.

President Nixon met with Chairman Mao Tse-tung of the Communist Party of China on February 21. The two leaders had a serious and frank exchange of views on Sino-U.S. relations and world affairs.

During the visit, extensive, earnest and frank discussions were held between President Nixon and Premier Chou En-lai on the normalization of relations between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China, as well as on other matters of interest to both sides. In addition, Secretary of State William Rogers and Foreign Minister Chi Peng-Fei held talks in the same spirit.

President Nixon and his party visited Peking and viewed cultural, industrial and agricultural sites, and they also toured Hangchow and Shanghai where, continuing discussions with Chinese leaders, they viewed similar places of interest.

The leaders of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America found it beneficial to have this opportunity, after so many years without contact, to present candidly to one another their views on a variety of issues. They reviewed the international situation in which important changes and great upheavals are taking place and expounded their respective positions and attitudes.

The U.S. side stated: Peace in Asia and peace in the world require efforts both to reduce immediate tensions and to eliminate the basic causes of conflict. The United States will work for a just and secure peace: just, because it fulfills the aspirations of peoples and nations for freedom and progress; secure, because it removes the danger of foreign aggression. The United States supports individual freedom and social progress for all the peoples of the world, free of outside pressure or intervention. The United States believes that the effort to reduce tensions is served by improving communication between countries that have different ideologies so as to lessen the risks of confrontation through accident, miscalculation or misunderstanding. Countries should treat each other with mutual respect and be willing to compete peacefully, letting performance be the ultimate judge. No country should

claim infallibility and each country should be prepared to reexamine its own attitudes for the common good. The United States stressed that the peoples of Indochina should be allowed to determine their destiny without outside intervention; its constant primary objective has been a negotiated solution; the eight-point proposal put forward by the Republic of Vietnam and the United States on January 27, 1972 represents a basis for the attainment of that objective; in the absence of a negotiated settlement, the United States envisages the ultimate withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the region consistent with the aim of self-determination for each country of Indochina. The United States will maintain its close ties with and support for the Republic of Korea; the United States will support efforts of the Republic of Korea to seek a relaxation of tension and increased communication in the Korean peninsula. The United States places the highest value of its friendly relations with Japan; it will continue to develop the existing close bonds. Consistent with the United Nations Security Council resolution of December 21, 1971, the United States favors the continuation of the cease-fire between India and Pakistan and the withdrawal of all military forces to

within their own territories and to their own sides of the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir; the United States supports the right of the peoples of South Asia to shape their own future in peace, free of military threat, and without having the area become the subject of great power rivalry.

The Chinese side stated: Wherever there is oppression, there is resistance. Countries want independence, nations want liberation and the people want revolution - this has become the irresistible trend of history. All nations, big or small, should be equal; big nations should not bully the small and strong nations should not bully the weak. China will never be a superpower and it opposes hegemony and power politics of any kind. The Chinese side stated that it firmly supports the struggles of all the oppressed people and nations for freedom and liberation and that the people of all countries have the right to choose their social systems according to their own wishes and the right to safeguard the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of their own countries and oppose foreign aggression, interference, control and subversion. All foreign troops should be withdrawn to their own countries.

The Chinese side expressed its firm support to the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in their efforts for the attainment of their goal and its firm support to the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and the elaboration of February this year on the two key problems in the proposal, and to the Joint Declaration of the Summit Conference of the Indochinese Peoples. It firmly supports the eight-point program for the peaceful unification of Korea put forward by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on April 12, 1971, and the stand for the abolition of the "U.N. Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea." It firmly opposes the revival and outward expansion of Japanese militarism and firmly supports the Japanese people's desire to build an independent, democratic, peaceful and neutral Japan. It firmly maintains that India and Pakistan should, in accordance with the United Nations resolutions on the India-Pakistan question, immediately withdraw all their forces to their respective territories and to their own sides of the cease-fire line in Jammu and Kashmir, and firmly supports the Pakistan Government and people in their struggle to preserve their independence and sovereignty and the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their struggle for the right of self-determination.

There are essential differences between China and the United States in their social systems and foreign policies. However, the two sides agreed that countries, regardless of their social systems, should conduct their relations on the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, nonaggression against other states, noninterference in the internal affairs of other states, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. International disputes should be settled on this basis, without resorting to the use or threat of force, The United States and the People's Republic of China are prepared to apply these principles to their mutual relations.

With these principles of international relations in mind the two sides stated that:

Progress toward the normalization of relations between China and the United States is in the interests of all countries.

Both wish to reduce the danger of international military conflict,

Neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony; and

Neither is prepared to negotiate on behalf of any third party or to enter into agreements or understandings with the other directed at other states.

Both sides are of the view that it would be against the interests of the peoples of the world for any major country to collude with another against other countries, or for major countries to divide up the world into spheres of interests

The two sides reviewed the long-standing serious disputes between China and the United States. The Chinese side reaffirmed its position: The Taiwan question is the crucial question obstructing the normalization of relations between China and the United States; the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government of China; Taiwan is a province of China which has long been returned to the motherland; the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere; and all U.S. forces and military installations must be withdrawn from Taiwan. The Chinese Government firmly opposes any activities which aim at the creation of "one China, one Taiwan," "one China, two governments," "two Chinas," and "independent Taiwan" or advocate that "the status of Taiwan remains to be determined".



The U.S. side declared: The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes.

The two sides agreed that it is desirable to broaden the understanding between the two peoples. To this end, they discussed specific areas in such fields as science, technology, culture, sports and journalism, in which people-to-people contacts and exchanges would be mutually beneficial. Each side undertakes to facilitate the further development of such contacts and exchanges.

Both sides view bilateral trade as another area from which mutual benefit can be derived, and agreed that economic relations based on equality and mutual benefit are in the interest of the peoples of the two countries. They agree to facilitate the progressive development of trade between their two countries.

The two sides agreed that they will stay in contact through various channels, including the sending of a senior U.S. representative to Peking from time to time for concrete consultations to further the normalization of relations between the two countries and continue to exchange views on issues of common interest.

The two sides expressed the hope that the gains achieved during this visit would open up new prospects for the relations between the two countries. They believe that the normalization of relations between the two countries is not only in the interest of the Chinese and American peoples but also contributes to the relaxation of tension in Asia and the world.

President Nixon, Mrs. Nixon and the American party expressed their appreciation for the gracious hospitality shown them by the Government and people of the People's Republic of China.

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