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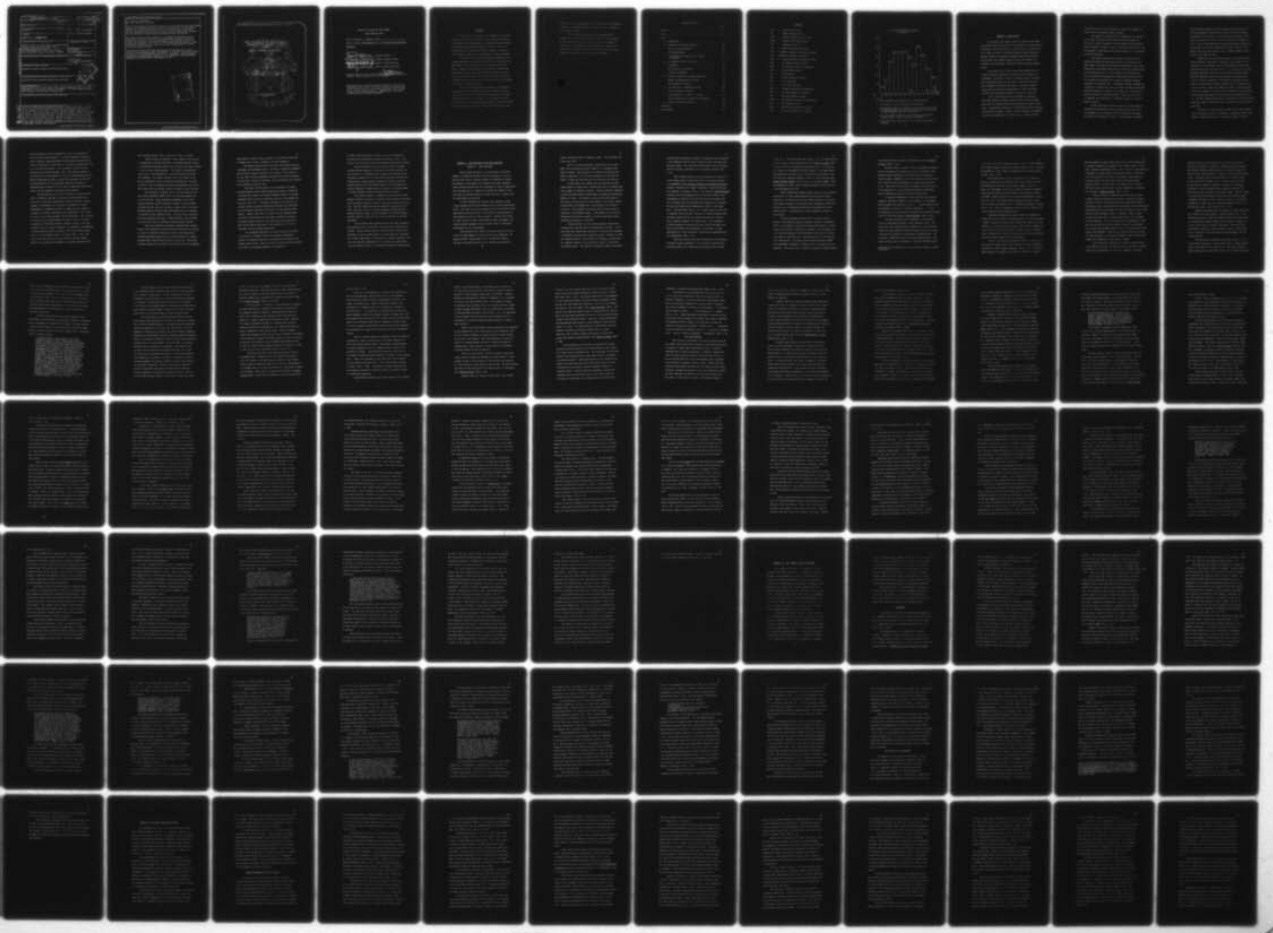

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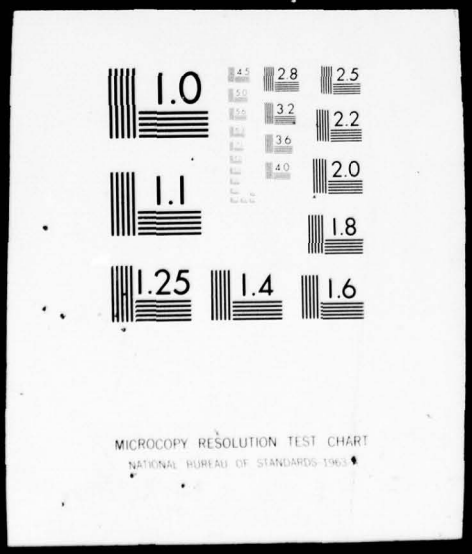

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This thesis constitutes an examination of how two major obstacles to formal diplomatic relations between Thailand and the People's Republic of China were resolved between 1965 and 1975. In 1965, the two countries addressed each other as enemies. The enmity between the two countries was most evident in the major policy each pursued toward the other. In the case of Thailand, the PRC was perceived as a major threat and Thai leaders developed a close tie with the United States to counter the threat. The PRC responded by supporting an armed insurgency in Thailand. These two obstacles had to be resolved in order for

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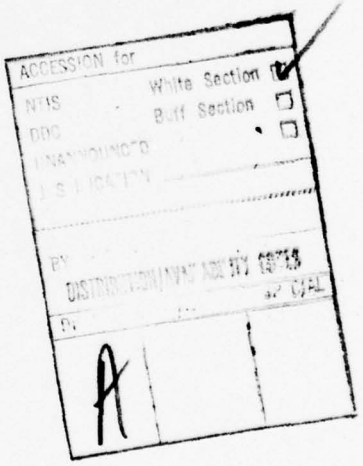
First to be examined is the close alliance between Thailand the the United States. Staunchly anti-communist, Thailand had never recognized the PRC and instead entered into close military alliance with the United States. This close US-Thai relationship was based on containing the PRC's influence in Southeast Asia and resulted in hostile relations between Thailand and the PRC.

The manner in which the PRC carried out an insurgency in Thailand will be addressed in order to point out the second obstacle blocking the evolution of Sino-Thai relations. Clearly demonstrated is the Chinese expertise in building an insurgency into a threat to Thai security and then toning it down as Thailand loosened her ties with the U.S. and the opportunity for closer Sino-Thai relations evolved.

The conclusion relates the steps taken by the PRC and Thailand as the two countries re-evaluated new power relationships in Southeast Asia brought about by the end of the Indochinese War and the U.S. withdrawal. These steps were successful in reducing major obstacles so that diplomatic relations between Thailand and the PRC could be established in 1975.



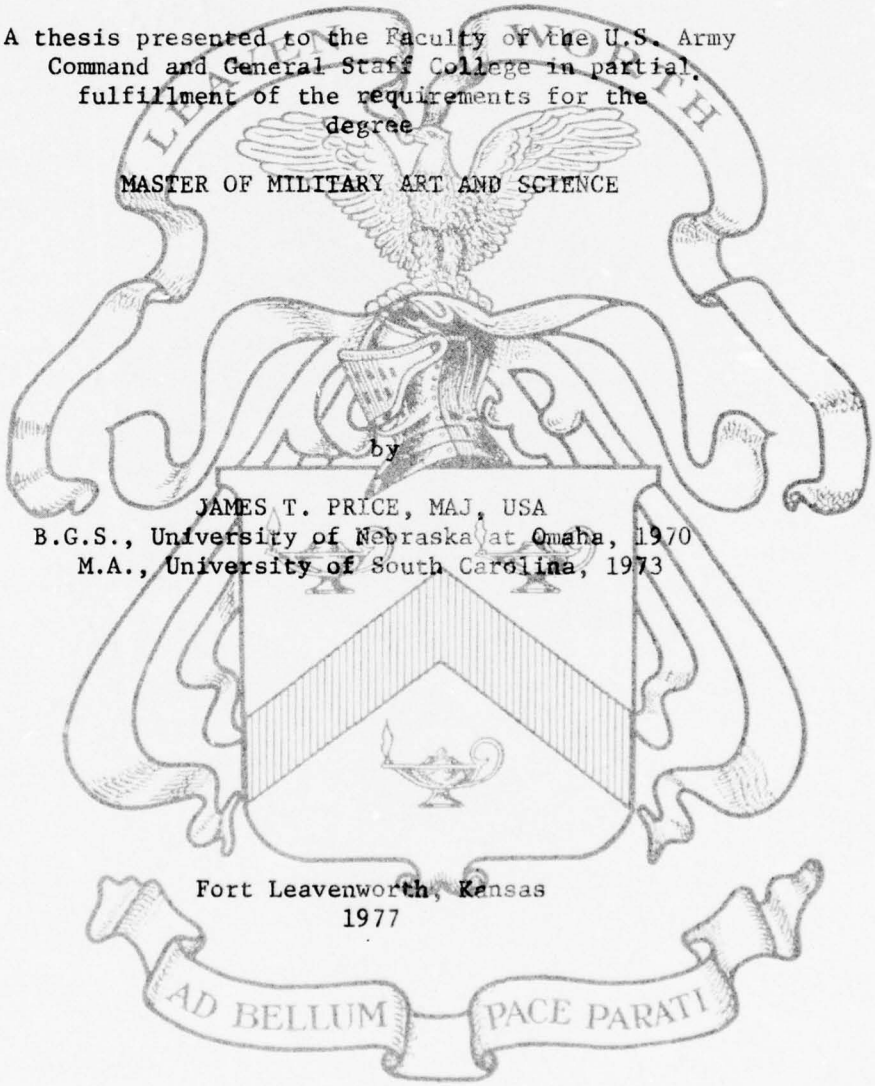
THE EVOLUTION OF SINO-THAI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS: 1965-1975

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

JAMES T. PRICE, MAJ, USA
B.G.S., University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1970
M.A., University of South Carolina, 1973



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Sidney Klein, Member, Consulting Faculty

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the individual student author and do not necessarily represent the views of either the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the reduction of two major obstacles between 1965 and 1975 facilitated the evolution of formal diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Thailand and the People's Republic of China. The two obstacles were the United States military presence in Thailand and the Chinese support for an insurgency in northern Thailand.

This thesis constitutes an attempt to demonstrate that Bangkok and Peking each perceived the other as carrying out one major aspect of foreign policy which was unacceptable to the other. Thailand had established close military ties with the United States and was assisting the United States in the conduct of the Indochina war. The large U.S. military presence in Thailand, especially the air units, was perceived by the Chinese as a threat to Chinese security.

On the other hand, Thailand pointed to the insurgency in northern Thailand and perceived that the Communist Party of Thailand was attempting to subvert Thai authority with material and propaganda support from Peking. Both of these obstacles will be traced from their origins and then the thesis will examine how each government went about reducing the two obstacles in an

effort to reach an accommodation that would result in more amiable relations, and eventually lead to formal diplomatic recognition in the summer of 1975.

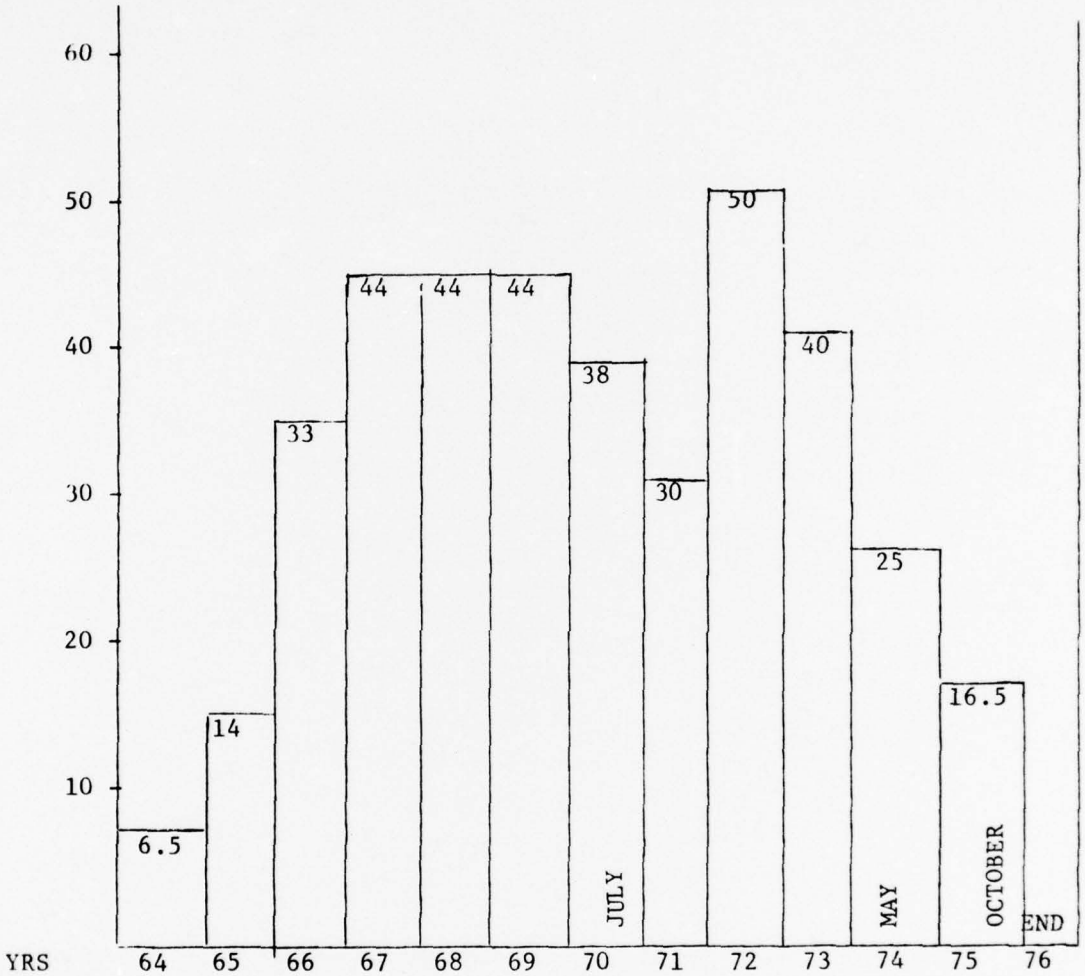
The investigation reveals that a dialogue between Bangkok and Peking evolved gradually as the U.S. troop presence in Thailand was lowered, and as Peking placed less emphasis on support for the insurgency in northern Thailand. When the obstacles were reduced to the level that neither country perceived a threat, then diplomatic relations were established.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY

BPP	-	Border Patrol Police
CCP	-	Chinese Communist Party
CCPS	-	Chinese Communist Party of Siam
CENTO	-	Central Treaty Organization
CPS	-	Communist Party of Siam
CPT	-	Communist Party of Thailand
CSOC	-	Communist Suppression Operations Command
DRV	-	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
FBIS	-	Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FEER	-	Far Eastern Economic Review
NATO	-	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCNA	-	New China News Agency
PR	-	Peking Review
PRC	-	People's Republic of China
RTA	-	Royal Thai Army
RTG	-	Royal Thai Government
SEATO	-	Southeast Asian Treaty Organization
SRV	-	Socialist Republic of Vietnam
TIM	-	Thai Independence Movement
TPLAF	-	Thai People's Liberation Armed Forces
TPF	-	Thai Patriotic Front
USOM	-	United States Operations Mission
VPT	-	Voice of the People of Thailand

U.S. MILITARY STRENGTH IN THAILAND
(in thousands)



Notes:

1. Troop strengths are approximate to nearest thousand.

2. All figures are year end strengths unless noted.

3. The temporary influx of strength in 1972 reflects troops that had been withdrawn from South Vietnam and were in the process of being withdrawn from the Indochina War.

4. Last U.S. combat troops departed Thailand on 20 July 1976, leaving 250 U.S. military personnel in Thailand.

5. As of March 1977, there were 210 U.S. military personnel in Thailand

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The dramatic and traumatic events in Southeast Asia which were brought about by the end of the Indochina War and the military withdrawal of the United States has given birth to an entirely new set of power relations. The United States no longer maintains a military presence in peninsular Southeast Asia; North Vietnam is without doubt the strongest military power in the region, and Thailand is now faced with a 1000 mile border adjoining communist states.

The trauma of the post-war period has demanded that the leaders of Thailand address the situation as one calling for a realignment of interests in order to maintain peaceful relations with the dominant powers in the region. Toward this end, the major diplomatic initiative undertaken by Thailand's leaders during this period was the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China on 1 July 1975.

Only a decade before the establishment of diplomatic relations, Thailand and China looked upon each other as enemies whose goals in Southeast Asia were diametrically opposed to each other. Ideologically, politically, and militarily the two countries shared little in common. However, with the changes in the balance of power in Southeast Asia, the Nixon visit to Peking in 1972,

and Hanoi's success in the Indochina War, Peking and Bangkok perceived a need to establish closer relations.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the reduction of two major obstacles between 1965 and 1975 facilitated the evolution of formal diplomatic relations between Thailand and the People's Republic of China. These two obstacles were the U.S. military presence in Thailand and the Chinese support for an insurgency in northern Thailand.

This thesis constitutes an attempt to demonstrate that Bangkok and Peking each perceived the other as carrying out one major aspect of foreign policy which was unacceptable to the other. Thailand had established close military ties with the United States and was assisting the U.S. in the conduct of the Indochina war. The close military relationship had developed since 1950 as part of the American containment policy aimed at limiting communist expansion into Southeast Asia. In Peking's judgement, Bangkok was conducting a foreign policy that was hostile to China and therefore addressed Thailand as a member of the enemy camp. The influx of American troops into Thailand in 1965, to carry out the air war in Indochina, was perceived by the Chinese leaders as a threat to Chinese security.

On the other hand, Thailand pointed to an armed internal insurgency and perceived that the insurgency was carried out by the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) which Thailand had reason to believe was influenced by Peking. The insurgency in Thailand

received frequent mention in the propaganda media emanating from Peking and Bangkok's interpretation was that Peking was actively contributing to the attempt to subvert the Thai government. After these two obstacles are traced from their origins, the thesis examines how each government went about reducing these two obstacles in an effort to reach an accommodation that would result in more amiable relations, and eventually lead to formal diplomatic recognition in the summer of 1975.

Chapter Two will address the obstacle of the United States' military presence in Thailand. Critical to the discussion is an examination of how Thailand took the first tentative steps toward siding with the West after World War II. In a step-by-step process, Thailand established closer military ties with the United States. When the Communists took over mainland China, Thailand was suspicious of China's intentions. The Chinese involvement in Korea seemed to confirm China's hostile foreign policy. Afterward, Thailand sent troops to fight the communists in Korea, joined the SEATO alliance, and signed a bi-lateral military agreement with the United States thereby establishing a close military relationship with the U.S. By 1965, Thailand was staunchly anti-communist and Thai military policy was closely aligned with that of the United States in Southeast Asia.

The close U.S.-Thai military relations led to Thai cooperation in carrying out the war in Indochina. Beginning in 1965, large numbers of American soldiers and airmen were based in Thailand

primarily to carry out the air war in Indochina. This large American military presence in Thailand was the primary threat to China even though Thailand supported the Indochina war in other ways, to include sending Thai combat troops to fight in Laos and South Vietnam. However, in the late 1960's the United States began to reappraise the situation in Southeast Asia and also began to reduce the American military presence in Indochina. Thailand also began to reexamine the military relationship with the United States and began to negotiate for American troop withdrawals from Thailand in order to loosen the close military ties.

At the same time, this chapter will note that the Thai leaders began to follow a more flexible course in international relations by opening talks with a number of communist countries. The most important communist country with which Thailand established a dialogue was the People's Republic of China. The latter part of Chapter Two will trace the events that were to lead to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1975. A significant trend is that as moves were made toward closer Sino-Thai relations, the close military ties between Thailand and the United States began to loosen. The most significant aspect of the loosening of military ties was reflected in the reduction of the U.S. troop presence in Thailand. The reduction continued until the Thai leaders had announced that all combat troops were to be withdrawn and Chou En-lai had expressed satisfaction with the U.S. troop level in Thailand. Thus Chapter Two will close with the major

obstacle of the U.S. military presence in Thailand having been reduced to a level acceptable to Peking and no longer constituting an obstacle to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Chapters Three and Four will address what is essentially background information, useful in that it provides a fuller understanding of why the Thai leaders perceived that Peking was supporting the insurgency in Thailand. Chinese support for the insurgency was the second obstacle to the establishment of diplomatic relations. In Chapter Three the role of the CPT in its support of insurgency in Thailand is discussed. The CPT will be identified as the organization which provided the leadership, direction and ideological orientation for the insurgent movement. Furthermore, Thai officials perceived that the CPT was influenced by Peking. This perception evolved because the CPT was organized by Chinese communists in the 1920's, and was based upon the revolutionary doctrine of the Chinese communists. In addition, the CPT made repeated propaganda statements praising Communist China. These perceptions in turn led the Thais to believe that Peking was able to influence the CPT to carry out Peking's policy objectives in Thailand, which primarily took the form of an insurgency in northern Thailand.

The nature of the propaganda support which Peking provided the CPT and the insurgency in Thailand is the topic of the last portion of Chapter Three. The Chinese participation in the insurgency in northern Thailand was most evident and measurable in the

organized method by which propaganda was used to lend support to the CPT and the armed insurgents. Primarily through the medium of radio broadcasts, Peking addressed the Thai people and the minority groups of Thailand on a daily basis in an effort to enhance the role of the CPT and lend support to the insurgents in their struggle against the Royal Thai Government (RTG). The material covered in the latter part of the chapter is critical to understanding how the Chinese propaganda was used to support the insurgency and the CPT. The characteristics of the propaganda approach of Peking are addressed again in Chapter Five in order to demonstrate how Peking's support for the insurgency was significantly reduced.

The discussion up to this point involves an approach which refers to Thailand, the CPT, and Chinese influence primarily as they apply to the entire geographical entity of Thailand. The insurgency is addressed as if it applied to Thailand as a whole. Subsequently, the emphasis narrows to examine only the conduct of insurgency in northern Thailand and the inhabitants of that region who carry out the armed struggle, the Meo hilltribes. The rationale in selecting only northern Thailand is that of the four regional insurgencies in Thailand (northern, southern, central, and northeastern), only the northern insurgency is considered to be primarily a Chinese-supported endeavor (Darling, 1973, pp. 551-556; Parker, 1973, p. 331; Weatherbee, 1970, p. 85; Race, 1974, p. 85). The focus on the Meo results from the conclusion that the primary vehicle for conducting the insurgency in northern Thailand is the

Meo hilltribes (Marks, 1973, p. 929; Race, 1974, pp. 94-98).

With this shift of emphasis in mind, Chapter Four provides an examination of the Meo hilltribes of northern Thailand in order to provide the background setting for how the Meo have been utilized to carry out the armed insurgency. The chapter is detailed and begins with a brief explanation of the Meo migration from China into Thailand. The primary cultural traits and customs of the Meo are discussed in order to provide an appreciation of the Meo lifestyle. This is significant because the Communists capitalized upon these traits and customs in the recruitment of Meo insurgents.

The importance of Chapter Four is the description of the Royal Thai Government's (RTG) effort to extend governmental control over the Meo. While extending governmental control into northern Thailand the RTG instituted a number of policies which alienated the Meo, and over a period of several years a situation developed whereby the Meo became disillusioned with any attempts to have RTG controls imposed on them. The result was a situation which the communists utilized to foment hostility toward the RTG and draw the Meo into an insurgency directed against the RTG.

With this background information providing added insight, Chapter Five addresses the second obstacle which had to be reduced in order for Sino-Thai relations to evolve. The obstacle was Peking's propaganda support for the armed insurgency in northern Thailand which the Meo hilltribes were carrying out. The actual insurgency began in early 1967, but before that date the communists

capitalized on the Meo traits, customs, and disaffection discussed in Chapter Four to build a foundation for the insurgency.

The chapter demonstrates how the CPT, with Chinese material, leadership, and propaganda support, was able to fashion an insurgency which the Thai leaders perceived to be a threat to Thai security. By late 1968, the Thai leadership considered the northern insurgency to be the most critical in Thailand, and the insurgency grew steadily until reaching its peak in 1970.

The events in 1970 proved to be a watershed in northern Thailand because as Thai leaders began their attempt to establish a dialogue with Peking, the Chinese propaganda support for the Meo insurgents began to decline noticeably that year, and dropped more each year until 1973. A noticeable decrease in the areas of recruiting and Meo initiated clashes with the Royal Thai Army (RTA) also was probably perceived by the Thais as a decrease in Peking support. However, the level of military activity remained high from 1970 to 1973 because the RTA began to expand the military operations against the Meo by utilizing large scale operations. When the RTA reduced the scope of its operations, the level of insurgent activity dropped dramatically.

The propaganda emanating from Radio Peking and the Voice of the People of Thailand (VPT) also reflected a measureable decline in frequency along with a noticeable drop in hostile tone between 1970 and 1973. These two factors, reduced military activity and a shift in propaganda emphasis, contributed to

the shift of Thai perception in 1973 to focus on northeastern Thailand as the region where insurgency was most critical. This region of the new threat was one influenced by Hanoi and not Peking.

The discussion also reveals a notable parallel between lessening Chinese emphasis on insurgency in northern Thailand and the evolution of a dialogue between Bangkok and Peking which was discussed in Chapter Two. By 1974, when Chou En-lai remarked that Peking would no longer support insurgency in Thailand, the Thai leaders perceived that the Chinese support for the insurgency in northern Thailand no longer posed an obstacle to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

This thesis attempts to demonstrate that before the Prime Minister traveled to Peking to establish formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, two major obstacles were overcome. The Thai leaders had been successful in negotiating a dramatic reduction of the U.S. military presence in Thailand, and Peking's apparent support for the insurgency in northern Thailand had been lowered to the point that it was acceptable to the Thai government.

The conclusion then recapitulates how Sino-Thai diplomatic relations were able to come about as the two major obstacles were reduced. Several implications for future Sino-Thai relations are presented, as well as some comments on future Thai-U.S. relations. All of these implications are discussed in a rather optimistic vein, since the Sino-Thai rapprochement is a positive step which hopefully will enhance peaceful relationships throughout Southeast Asia.

CHAPTER II: THE EVOLUTION OF SINO-THAI RELATIONS

CLOSE U.S. - THAI RELATIONS

Before formal diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and Thailand could be established, it was imperative that the U.S. military presence in Thailand be reduced. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the events leading to formal relations between the two governments in order to demonstrate that only when the U.S. presence in Thailand was reduced to the point where the Chinese leaders no longer perceived a threat could the relationship be finalized.

In 1965, Thailand was staunchly anti-communist and was closely aligned with the United States in both foreign and military policy. The first part of this chapter will trace the events which began shortly after World War II and formed the step-by-step process leading to close U.S.-Thai relations. Thailand sent troops to fight in Korea in 1950, joined SEATO in 1954, and signed a bilateral security agreement with the United States in 1962 while developing the close relationship.

The discussion will reflect that these events led to the joint U.S.-Thai endeavor to carry out the war in Indochina. Beginning in 1965, large numbers of U.S. troops were based in Thailand in conjunction with the war, and this troop presence

became a perceived threat to Peking's leaders. This situation continued until 1969.

The U.S. position underwent a reevaluation in the late 1960's and the American military commitment to Southeast Asia began to change. The discussion will address how Thailand then began to negotiate for U.S. troop withdrawals from Thailand and began to loosen the close military ties with the United States.

At this point, this chapter will also note how the Thai leaders began to broaden their foreign policy base by opening talks with a number of communist countries. The most important communist country with which Thailand established a dialogue was the People's Republic of China. The process of the evolving relationship is the focus of the latter part of this chapter. The closer contacts between Peking and Bangkok will be paralleled by the reduction of the U.S. troop presence in Thailand until the troop level is acceptable to the Chinese leaders. This chapter will close with Thailand and the People's Republic of China establishing formal diplomatic relations on 1 July 1975.

After World War II, Thai leaders generally based their foreign policy upon the idea of friendship with the West. At the same time, Thai leaders were supportive of nationalistic movements in Indochina, much the same as American leaders. However, by 1949 the communist nature of the movements in Indochina, coupled with the communist takeover of mainland China, began to arouse Thai and American fears. The communist insurgency in Malaya especially

worried the Thais because it seemed to telegraph hostile intentions of the communists and the close proximity of that insurgency made the Thais uneasy. That the Thai leaders should look to the United States for military assistance is not surprising (Tanham, 1974, p. 21).

Thus, Thailand adopted collective defense as the basis for a new foreign policy, in the belief that it could best perserve its independence (U.S. Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad, Kingdom of Thailand, U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, 91st Congress, 1st Session, 1969, p. 613; hereafter Senate Hearings). Thailand clearly saw Communist China as the major threat to her independence and believed that the power with the resources and will to prevent China from extending her dominance into Southeast Asia was the United States (Neuchterlein, 1965, p. 130, Cough, 1975 p. 186 and Tanham, 1974, p. 21). Based largely on this fear of Communist China, Thailand cultivated a cordial friendship with the United States and the two countries entered into league to deter communist expansion in Southeast Asia. This congruence of Thai and American interests was never really challenged until 1969 and successive Thai governments, "on the basis of their identification of Thai interests," preserved and strengthened the ties (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 21).

The first concrete step which Thailand took toward demonstrating a staunch commitment to close military relations with the United States was in 1950 when North Korean forces invaded

South Korea. Thailand was the first country, after the United States, to offer troops to the United Nations force (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 613). The Thai contingent was accepted by the U. N. and served in a combat role throughout the Korean conflict. The Thais served with distinction and their active combat role was reflected by the fact that the contingent suffered a total of 1,296 casualties (Far Eastern Economic Review, 17 Oct, 1975, p. 5, hereafter FEER). With the armistice in 1953, a Thai contingent remained in Korea as part of the UN Command until 1975.

Within months after sending combat troops to Korea, Thailand entered into its first formal agreement with the United States. Thereafter, from 1950 until the later 1960's Thailand in a step-by-step process, emerged as the United States' staunchest military and political ally on mainland Southeast Asia; excluding only South Vietnam after U.S. intervention to combat communist activity in that country.

The first agreement between the two countries was the Economic and Technical Assistance Agreement signed on 19 September, 1950. By an exchange of notes, the United States agreed to furnish economic and technical assistance to Thailand. This agreement was not a military alliance nor did the United States receive military base rights in Thailand, but it signaled the start of the long and close relationship. The United States Operations Mission (USOM) was established in Bangkok to administer the aid program under the agreement. The primary goal of USOM was to promote economic progress

in Thailand through a variety of developmental programs (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 613).

One month later, 17 October 1950, an agreement concerning military assistance was agreed upon by the two countries. The Agreement Respecting Military Assistance created an American military mission (JUSMAAG) to assist the Thai armed forces in the use of American military equipment and weapons (Darling, 1969, p. 39). This was the first military agreement and proved to be a firm foundation for a very lasting and effective program which greatly improved the quality of the Thai armed forces.

It should be emphasized at this point that the military agreement concluded in 1950 was not an alliance. The agreement merely provided the authority for the ". . . United States to give and Thailand to receive U.S. military assistance . . ." This relationship was clearly spelled out under the provisions of Public Law 329 of the 81st Congress (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 613).

The next important step in cementing a close Thai-U.S. military relationship occurred in early September, 1954. The Manila Pact (more commonly known as SEATO) was a formal military alliance in which Thailand joined the United States and six other countries* in providing for the defense of Southeast Asia. The evolution of SEATO was rooted in the rapid deterioration of the French military effort in Indochina. After the Vietminh victory

*Australia, Great Britain, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, and the Philippines.

at Dien Bien Phu and the subsequent Geneva Accords of 1954, Thailand "saw Chinese Communist influence spreading further in (her) direction and pressed for formal defense arrangements with the United States" (Clough, 1975, p. 187).

The United States was also casting about for a method to shore up a defense line in Southeast Asia "quite simply to prevent the expansion of territory in Asia under communist control". A policy of "containment in Asia" was a logical extension of American policy and the United States made SEATO a mere extension of NATO and CENTO, already organized in Europe and the Middle East (Clough, 1975, pp. 5-12). The United States appended the treaty to read that an armed attack applied only to "communist aggression" (Clough, 1975, p. 10). The U.S. appendix was aimed at Chinese expansion and clearly reflected the containment policy.

Thailand enthusiastically embraced SEATO and Bangkok was chosen as the pact's military planning location. As the only member of SEATO on mainland Southeast Asia, Thailand was eager to join the military pact and would have preferred a joint military command and joint military forces, modeled after the NATO alliance. Thailand failed to obtain such a military structure, but the Thais did obtain some very positive benefits from joining SEATO.

First of all, the treaty became the "basis of the Thai-U.S. security relationship" which lasted through the critical decades of the 1950's and 1960's (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 613). In order to better contribute to Thailand's participation in SEATO, U.S. military

aid was expanded to improve Thai armed forces and the "largest part of economic assistance was channeled into 'defense support' of the Thai military" (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 22). This U.S. aid contributed to Thailand's economic growth by enabling Thailand to invest more of her own resources for economic development. The outcome was partially reflected in the steady growth of Thailand's gross national product. From the time of the SEATO treaty in 1954 to 1959, the "actual value of Thai security expenditures increased by 250 percent" (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 613).

Although officials in Bangkok gave whole-hearted support to SEATO, there was opposition on the part of some Thai factions. From 1955 to 1957, a "left opposition" did emerge which stressed nationalism, peace, and neutrality while attacking the Thai military's authoritarian form of government and the U.S. support for the ruling military clique (Brimmell, 1959, pp. 348-350). However, these factions were never able to combine their efforts into a unified political movement. The "left opposition" was suppressed in 1958 when all political parties were banned, and the Thai government drove leftist and communist elements out of the universities, trade unions, and newspapers. These moves by Thai authorities, carried out under the guise of a perceived "communist threat", effectively dampened all opposition to Thai support of SEATO.

The official Thai enthusiasm for SEATO continued into the early 1960's until events in neighboring Laos cast doubt on SEATO's ability to act decisively in the face of communist activities.

Communist Pathet Lao troop movements near the Thai border were perceived by Bangkok as a prelude to aggression against Thailand. When Thailand requested SEATO assistance, the SEATO response consisted of only vague statements of support but no effective military action. Thailand's initial disappointment was followed closely by what the Thais considered to be a failure on the part of the United States to uphold a commitment to preserve a pro-Western government in Laos (the United States yielded to pressure from Britain and France to promote a neutralist regime). The U.S. stance in Laos greatly disillusioned some military and political leaders in Bangkok, who began to voice a desire to revert to a neutralist foreign policy (Toye, 1967, pp. 183-187; Weatherbee, 1970, p. 25; Nuechterlain, 1965, p. 201; Tanham, 1974, p. 21).

Thailand thus became the first nation to express doubt about the "viability and effectiveness" of SEATO (Tanham, 1974, p. 21). Thailand's fears were simply that SEATO and the United States would not consider Thai national interests vital enough to provide protection in the event of communist aggression. These fears were substantially reduced by a joint statement issued on 6 March 1962 by U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Thanat Khoman, the Thai Foreign Minister.

The Rusk-Thanat agreement marked another plateau for U.S.-Thai military cooperation. The agreement placed a unique interpretation on Article IV of the SEATO treaty. Dean Rusk and Thanat Khoman agreed that the United States would act to oppose any commu-

nist aggression in the treaty area without depending on the "prior agreement of all other parties to the treaty, since this treaty obligation is individual as well as collective." This interpretation meant that disinterested members such as France could no longer obstruct cooperative action.

The Rusk-Thanat agreement was issued as a joint statement by the American Secretary of State and the Thai Foreign Minister on 6 March 1962:

> The Secretary of State reaffirmed that the United States regards the preservation of the independence and integrity of Thailand as vital to the national interest of the United States and to world peace. He expressed the firm intention of the United States to aid Thailand, its ally and historic friend, in resisting Communist aggression and subversion.
>
> The Secretary of State assured the Foreign Minister that in the event of such aggression, the United States intended to give full effect to its obligations under the treaty to act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. The Secretary of State reaffirmed that this obligation of the United States did not depend upon the prior agreement of all other parties to the treaty, since the treaty obligation was individual as well as collective (Department of State Bulletin, 26 March 1962, p. 1187).

The explicit declaration that the United States' commitment to Thailand was individual as well as collective was of great significance to Thailand. The agreement became a bilateral partnership within the general framework of SEATO, which would meet any

threat of internal or external communist aggression toward Thailand. Furthermore, the United States extended to the Thais a very comforting assurance that Thailand's independence and integrity was of "vital interest" to the United States.

All-in-all, the Rusk-Thanat agreement was expressed in powerful language and if backed up by action would constitute nearly unconditional U.S. military support of Thailand. The test of the agreement was not long in coming. Communist Pathet Lao forces were again moving toward the Mekong River, Thailand's northeastern boundary. Less than two months after the agreement, President Kennedy dispatched 5,000 American troops to Northeast Thailand in response to a Thai request for a show of force. Upon dispatching the U.S. force on 15 May 1962, the agreement was mentioned by the President. He said:

> A threat to Thailand is of grave concern to the United States. I have, therefore, ordered certain additional American military forces into Thailand in order that we may be in a position to fulfill speedily our obligations under the Manila Pact of 1954, a defense agreement which was approved overwhelmingly by the U.S. Senate and to which the Secretary of State and Foreign Minister of Thailand referred in their joint statement of March 6, 1962 (Department of State Bulletin, 4 June 1962, p. 904).

The Thais emerged from the Loatian crisis of 1962 apparently satisfied that U.S. military support could be depended upon. Thailand was more firmly committed to the American camp than ever before, and the turn of events did not go unnoticed by Peking. At the height of the Laotian crisis, the communist radio transmitter of the "Voice of the People of Thailand" (Siang Prachachon Thai)

went on the air and began to attack the Thai government as a new style American colony which was to be an aggressive base against its peace-loving neighbors. This event will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three, but it is pointed out here to illustrate that as Thailand moved closer to the United States, Peking expressed more hostility toward Thailand. This trend was to make the establishment of formal diplomatic ties a very difficult process in the 1970's.

The Thais also used the Rusk-Thanat agreement as the legal basis for the American troop buildup in Thailand. Bolstered by U.S. willingness to support Thai interests, the Thais elected to allow certain American troop units (none of which were combat units) to remain in Thailand after the Laotian crisis. The Thais issued a statement saying:

> In consideration of the provision of the joint statement of March 6, 1962, issued by the United States Secretary of State and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which the following important provision is included: 'The Secretary of State reaffirmed that the United States regards the preservation of the independence and integrity of Thailand as vital to the national interest of the United States and to world peace. He expressed the firm intention of the United States to aid Thailand, its ally and historic friend, in resisting Communist aggression and subversion', and pursuant to the obligations under the SEATO treaty, the United States Government and His Majesty's Government have agreed that some units of the United States forces be stationed in Thailand for the purpose of cooperating with the Thai Armed Forces in defending and preserving the peace and security of the Kingdom of Thailand against the threat of the pro-Communist troops which are presently approaching the Thai territory (Department of State Bulletin, 4 June 1962, p. 905).

The discussion up to this point illustrates how the military relationship between Thailand and the United States had grown over a period of twelve years. By 1962, the military ties had developed to the point that U.S. troops were stationed in Thailand to "cooperate" in preserving "peace and security" for Thailand. If the military relationship between Thailand and the United States did not pose a perceived threat to Peking at this point, the next joint effort by the United States and Thailand surely would.

The close military cooperation between Thailand and the United States just described set the stage for what was to develop into the major military endeavor of the United States and Thailand. That major endeavor was, of course, the joint effort to aid the Republic of Vietnam in its struggle with the Vietnamese communists. Beginning in the Mid-1960's, the Thai government permitted American planes to use bases in Thailand in order to launch raids into North Vietnam, Laos, and South Vietnam. As the war grew, so did major American military construction in Thailand. The United States ultimately built six modern airfields in Thailand, one of which was used to base long-range B-52 bombers. A giant naval base was also constructed at Sattahip on the Gulf of Thailand to receive incoming equipment and supplies needed to carry out the extensive air war based in Thailand. As part of this military endeavor, a network of excellent paved roads was constructed by American military engineers to link Sattahip and the air bases. This construction was basically complete by 1969 and, at that time, about

11,500 U.S. Army and over 33,000 U.S. Air Force personnel were stationed in Thailand. With the exception of about 3,000 personnel who acted as advisors to the Thai Armed Forces, this influx of American strength was concerned with carrying out the war in Indochina (Senate Hearings, 1969, pp. 615-618).

At this point, it is critical to the discussion to address how this close Thai-U.S. military relationship was perceived by the communist leaders in Peking. Peking viewed with alarm the start of U.S. bombing in North Vietnam and the introduction of regular U.S. combat troops into South Vietnam in 1965. When the U.S. began to bomb North Vietnam on 7 February 1965, Peking's leaders were even more perplexed that U.S. planes were using airbases in Thailand to carry out the raids. While the Chinese leaders could probably accept the fact of U.S. military and economic aid for Thailand, Thailand's political support for the U.S. policy in Vietnam, and Thailand's ties with SEATO, what Peking was not prepared to accept was the "American buildup" in Thailand in order to carry out the war in Indochina (Gurtov, 1975, p. 22).

Soon after the start of the American bombing, Peking's propaganda began to signal clearly that Thailand's decision to allow U.S. planes to use Thai bases was inimical toward Peking. Peking warned that Thailand would have to bear the responsibility for allowing the U.S. to use its territory for "aggression" against North Vietnam. These type of messages were published in Jen-min jih-pao within a month after the bombing of North Vietnam started

(Gurtov, 1975, p. 25).

The threat to Thailand was not vailed, and stressed often. The articles emphasized that Thailand was on a "self-destruct" course and would suffer "terrible consequences" if the U.S. continued to use Thai bases. Peking linked these threats to the possibility of a "people's war" and "the patriotic struggle of the Thai people". It is difficult to overlook the fact that the armed insurgency started in northeast Thailand in August 1965, just seven months after the start of U.S. bombing raids in North Vietnam. There is no conclusive proof that the insurgency started because of the U.S. presence on Thai bases, but the start of the insurgency was threatened many times and the implication cannot be dismissed lightly.

The U.S. military presence in Thailand in 1965 and 1966 was probably not a threat to the security of the PRC. However, in 1967, Radio Peking and the Voice of the People of Thailand began to stress Thailand's role as an "aggressor base" aimed at "the underbelly of China". One particular broadcast by the Voice of the People of Thailand accused Thailand of "criminal action" against China. These acts included, for the first time, the stationing of B-52 bombers in Thailand (VPT, 3 and 13 June, 1969 as quoted in Taylor, 1974, p. 296). Definitely, the threat potential was now present in Thailand to cause the Chinese to perceive a threat of considerable magnitude.

Hanson Baldwin identified the threat which the B-52 bombers

posed to the Chinese leaders. The bombers moved from Guam to U Ta Pao airbase in early 1967, ostensibly to reduce the flying distance to South Vietnam (2,550 miles to 425 miles). However, Baldwin also discussed the "symbolic" extension of U.S. interests into areas other than Southeast Asia. As an example he listed the distance the big bombers could fly to reach potential targets in China; Nanning (850 miles), Lop Nor (2,000 miles), and Peking (2,100 miles)(New York Times, 8 April 1967, p. 3). The importance of these planes could not have been lost on Peking, and it is reasonable to say that the Chinese leaders perceived a threat to their security.

Based on this discussion of threat perception, the remainder of this chapter will refer to the threat as the possibility that the U.S. military presence in Thailand could be turned on China in the form of air attacks. With this perception of threat defined, it is understandable why the U.S. military presence in Thailand posed a major obstacle to the evolution of diplomatic relations between the PRC and Thailand.

Much as it did in Korea, the Thai government dispatched combat troops to oppose the communists in South Vietnam. A Thai brigade arrived in South Vietnam in 1966 and was later replaced by a full division of well-trained combat troops. The Thai division performed the same operations as an American force of equivalent size (Senate Hearing, 1969, p. 624).

However, there are those who charge that it was "highly

"unlikely" that Thai leaders would have sent the division had the United States not provided the monetary backing for such a commitment (Kirk, 1971, p. 181). The United States paid all the expenses for the 11,000 man division, including training, equipping, transporting, and even bonuses and allowances. The total cost averaged $50 million a year from 1966 to 1969 (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 657). However, this monetary approach tends to overlook the fact that the Thais felt they were performing the role of "loyal allies" who were trying to help the United States. After all, it was the Thais who provided manpower which served in South Vietnam in place of additional U.S. troops. For this sacrifice, the Thais felt they were unjustly "attacked and vilified" (Tanham, 1974, p. 22-23), especially after 169 Thai soldiers were killed in action and another 890 wounded through September 1969 (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 626).

The discussion up to this point illustrates how closely Thailand had allied herself with the United States in the conduct of foreign policy in Southeast Asia. The development of such close military ties constituted what Clarke Neher called a "continuity of political process". Neher maintained that this continuity was based on the faith that the United States would come to the aid of Thailand in any period of national emergency caused by a communist threat. Thailand vigorously espoused a staunch anti-communist line and cooperated fully with the United States in carrying out the Vietnam War, believing that the United States

commitment to Thailand was unconditional (Neher, 1970, p. 167).

While Neher's analysis might seem to be over-stated, he is not alone in his appraisal of the Thai reliance on the U.S. military commitment. Two other authors also share Neher's views. While the United States remained the paramount power in Southeast Asia and was committed to victory in South Vietnam,..." the Thai(s) had no reason to conduct . . . a self-examination..." (Parker, 1973, p. 333). Donald Weatherbee agreed when he pointed out that during the critical decades of the 1960's, when events in Thailand and Indochina moved so rapidly, that there were "strains and voices of criticism on both sides". However, the ". . . similarity of Thai and American government's views of ... security in Southeast Asia... was not severely challenged..." (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 21).

THE NIXON DOCTRINE

This "policy of continuity" was carried forward until the late 1960's, when the political climate in the United States began to change in a manner which indicated that the U.S. military commitment was no longer unconditional. President Johnson's decision in 1968 to stop the bombing of North Vietnam and not to seek re-election were two of many developments which culminated in the election of Richard M. Nixon in 1968. Shortly after his election, Nixon shocked the Thais with the "Nixon Doctrine" which reflected a changing environment in Asia that threatened to undermine the foundations on which Thai military and foreign policy was based. At this time, the policy of "continuity" began to

transform itself into a policy of "fundamental change" as the Thais began to reexamine their security interests and the U.S. troop presence in Thailand.

President Nixon first expressed the Nixon Doctrine during a press conference at a stopover in Guam on 25 July 1969. Essentially, he stressed that "Asian wars would be fought by Asians" and that the United States would provide economic and military aid and a nuclear shield for the countries of Southeast Asia. He made these statements at the start of an Asian trip and immediately afterward visited the capitals of the Philippines, Thailand, and South Vietnam. Upon his return to the United States, he formalized his doctrine in a speech on November 3rd, 1969, and later included the doctrine in his U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's (Nixon, 1970, p. 55).

President Nixon stressed that the United States would keep its treaty commitments, and provide a nuclear shield if a nuclear power threatened the freedom of a nation allied with the United States, or a nation whose survival the United States considered vital to its security and the security of the region as a whole. In cases involving other types of aggression the United States would furnish military and economic assistance when requested and as appropriate. But the nation directly threatened would assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense. A Pacific power, the United States would remain involved in Asia, but would share military responsibility with the

peoples of Asia (Nixon, 1970, p. 56).

Three days after his press conference on Guam, President Nixon met in Bangkok with Thai government officials. He reassured the Thais that the United States would honor its obligations to SEATO by saying, "The United States will stand proudly with Thailand against those who might threaten it from abroad or from within. Our determination to honor our commitments is fully consistent with our conviction that the nations of Asia can and must increasingly shoulder the responsibility for achieveing peace and progress in the area. (Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 16-23 August 1969, p. 23510).

While these statements appeared to be reassuring to Thai officials, some were very dubious of the assurances offered them by the United States. Rather than accept the Nixon Doctrine at face value, voices of discontent expressed doubt that such a doctrine could be carried out if American congressional opinion feared such a doctrine might lead the United States into another military involvement similar to Vietnam (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 31 July 1969, p. J1).

The fears expressed by some Thai leaders are understandable when the Nixon Doctrine, as it applies to Thailand and Southeast Asia, is examined closely. The doctrine is ambiguous and confusing on a number of points which the Thai leaders could not have overlooked. First of all, the doctrine maintained that the United States would keep all its treaty commitments, and President

Nixon personally assured the Thais that the U.S. would honor it's commitments to Thailand. Ambiguity resulted because the basis of the U.S. commitment in Southeast Asia was the desire of the U.S. leadership to contain Communist China. Yet, U.S. military forces were to be withdrawn from Southeast Asia, thereby reducing the capability to carry out such a commitment.

Secondly, President Nixon pointed out that the hopes of the United States were for an Asia of "strong nations drawing together for their mutual benefit on their terms, and creating a new relationship with the rest of the international community" (Nixon, 1970, p. 57). This statement implies that the nations of Southeast Asia would be able to handle their own affairs without the military assistance of the United States if threatened by a communist attack. However, the Thais knew that efforts to draw the Southeast Asian nations together were embryonic and had produced no notable results which would support such ambitious goals. (Gordon, 1969, pp. 150-165). For the immediate future there was no such grouping willing or strong enough to unite militarily against a communist attack on one of its members (Kirk, 1971, p. 191).

When the Nixon Doctrine was applied to the Southeast Asian environment by Thai leaders, then it was understandable why Thailand began to cast about for a new (or at least modified) military and foreign policy vis-a-vis the United States. In reaction to the dramatic political events in the United States

in 1968, the 1969 Nixon Doctrine, and the changing Southeast Asian environment, Thai leaders began to stress the theme that Thailand must depend on herself. After President Nixon's pledge in Bangkok that "the United States will proudly stand with Thailand against those who threaten it", Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman stated:

> We told President Nixon that Thailand is not going to be another Vietnam. We told him that we never asked for American soldiers to come and fight in defense of Thailand in an insurgent war. This includes even a covert invasion of the kind North Vietnam is carrying out in South Vietnam (New York Times, 20 August 1969, p. 14).

Thanat began to demonstrate that he intended to find a foreign policy that was less dependent on the United States. He undertook a number of foreign policy initiatives which seemed innovative and energetic, policies that could not have been undertaken earlier because of the close U.S.-Thai relations. In the fields of economic, military, and diplomatic policy, Thanat sought change.

The most dramatic change in Thai attitude during 1969 concerned the military presence of U.S. troops in Thailand. For the first time, Thai leaders called for the withdrawal of American troops stationed in Thailand. As early as February 1969, Thanat Kohman had stated that the U.S. troops were in Thailand only to carry out the war in Vietnam. After the Vietnam war, U.S. troops were to depart Thailand, since they were not present for the security of Thailand. Thanat elaborated that the Thai-U.S. agreement was "valid only for the duration of the Vietnam War" (Asian Recorder,

30 April-6 May 1969, p. 8906).

Thanat's remarks constituted the first official statement on the subject of troop withdrawals and planted the seeds for removing the U.S. military presence in Thailand. It is worthy of note that Thanat made this statement almost five full months before President Nixon visited Bangkok to explain the new U.S. policies contained in the Nixon Doctrine.

The Thai Foreign Minister then took the initiative in suggesting to the United States that talks begin concerning the partial withdrawal of the United States troops from Thailand. Thanat made this suggestion on 23 August 1969 in pursuit of the policy of self-reliance noted above. The following month he and the United States Ambassador to Thailand, Leonard Unger, opened talks in Bangkok. The initial agreement was to withdraw 6,000 American troops by 1 July 1970 (Senate Hearings, 1969, pp. 769-770). Emphasis on reducing the American presence in Thailand continued and Thanom Kittikachorn told Vice President Agnew in January of 1971 that an additional 9,800 American troops were to be withdrawn by July of 1971. The withdrawal of these troops was completed before 30 June 1971, and reduced the total U.S. force level in Thailand to 32,000 (Alpern, 1974, p. 88).

Thanom further stated that by 1972 the Thai troops in Vietnam would be withdrawn (Neher, 1971, p. 137). This move would serve two very evident purposes as Thailand sought to become more self-reliant in 1971. The removal of Thai troops from

Vietnam would serve to help loosen the close military ties between the United States and Thailand, plus it would add about 10,000 combat experienced Thai troops to Thailand's internal defense forces. These moves are evidence that Thailand was preparing to make her own way militarily and not rely so heavily on the United States. To facilitate this effort, the Thai government announced a new five year plan for self-reliance on national defense. This plan increased defense expenditures to 25 percent of the total budget where it had only been 15 percent in 1964 (Astri Suhrke, 1971, pp. 431-32; Kirk, 1971, pp. 186-192).

As part of the effort to become more self-reliant, the Thai leaders undertook several moves on the international scene involving communist governments which probably could not have been made while Thai-U.S. military ties were so close. Thanat Khoman was able to bring about a reconvening of the Thai-North Vietnamese talks which had been broken off in 1965 when U.S. planes from Thai airbases began to bomb North Vietnam. The talks resumed in the spring of 1970, ostensibly to discuss the repatriation of 40,000 Vietnamese refugees residing in northeast Thailand. While no agreement was reached, a joint communique was issued on 25 May 1970, which stated that the talks had taken place in a "spirit of mutual understanding" and both governments would remain in contact. (Taylor, 1974, p. 350).

Also for the first time, Thailand signed trade agreements with Eastern European nations and on Christmas day of 1970, Thai-

land signed her first trade agreement with the Soviet Union. The agreement with the Soviets provided for "expansion of direct trade and development of economic relations between the two countries on the basis of equality and for mutual benefit". (Asian Recorder, 1971, p. 10003). These diplomatic moves toward communist nations by Thailand would probably have been unthinkable as recently as 1967 and reflect the Thai sincerity in adjusting foreign policy matters to reflect current demands on Thailand to modify her close military ties with the United States.

THAI OVERTURES TO PEKING AND U.S. TROOP REDUCTIONS

As Thailand maneuvered to adjust to the new thrusts and rivalries which would make up a new balance of power in Southeast Asia, the most obvious "new" approach involved cautious diplomatic moves toward China. As if anticipating the shift of U.S. priorities in Southeast Asia, Thailand began to make overtures toward Peking. Five months before Nixon promulgated his new doctrine, Thanat Kohman had publicly stated that Thailand and Peking should begin talks at the diplomatic level. Thanat made these statements in The Bangkok Post on 21 February 1959 (FBIS, II, 24 February 1969, p. J1.). Clearly, Thanat's early opening toward Peking was based on rising public and congressional pressures in the United States which clamored for U.S. disengagement in Southeast Asia. His comments in The Bangkok Post on 19 March 1969 reflected the need to reassess Thailand's foreign

policy in the event U.S. assistance was reduced. (FBIS, II, 20 March 1969, p. J1).

These public statements by the architect of Thailand's foreign policy were of major significance. As the Thai Foreign Minister, Thanat was well known and highly respected internationally. Thus, his statements can be considered as an accurate reflection of Thailand's proposed intent to open a dialogue with Peking. Of equal importance is the Thai willingness to open a dialogue with the power which had expressed no intent to reduce or terminate the armed insurgency it was carrying out in Thailand, an insurgency which Thai leaders considered to be the chief threat to Thai security.

Within a week, Thanat used The Bangkok Post again to emphasize that the time to re-evaluate Thailand's position with the West had arrived. Of greater importance than stressing a loosening of ties with the West however, was his reference to a changing attitude toward China. Thanat proclaimed that Thailand was not anti-Chinese and inferred that in a world of changing alliances, the enmity between China and Thailand could be reduced. He stated that, "enemies have become the best of friends, allies the worst of enemies". (FBIS, II, 26 March 1969, p. J3). Two months later, Thanat stresses the same theme of reducing hostility and called for "friendly talks" with Peking even though the two countries were still enemies. Still using the Bangkok Post, he is quoted as saying "the sources of danger to us are Peking and Hanoi, and

we should go right to the sources to try and have friendly talks for peace and security". (FBIS, II, 22 May 1969, p. J1).

Peking did not respond publicly to these Thai offerings, instead the proposals were officially ignored. However, in an unofficial way of signalling her recognition of Thai peace offerings, Peking's propaganda support for the insurgency in Thailand began to drop off noticeably in mid-1970. (Tanham, 1974, p. 24 and Taylor, 1974, p. 350). This shift in propaganda will be addressed in detail in Chapter Five, but it is significant to mention at this point that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) did not issue or broadcast any further statements on Thailand's activities in Indochina.

Also, it is significant that various actions on the part of the Thai leaders during the period of Chinese silence contributed to a situation of reduced tension between China and Thailand. Peking probably noticed with favor Bangkok's decisions in 1970 to have American troops pulled out of Thailand, to begin the withdrawal of Thai troops from South Vietnam, and not to send Thai troops to fight in Cambodia.

In any event, sixteen months passed before the next major move by Thanat. Quoted in the Bangkok Post on 10 September 1970, Thanat suggested that his remarks on China constitute a "public offer" by the Thai government to "sit down and meet with Peking representatives". He further claimed that Communist China was interested in secret talks with Thailand (FBIS, IV, 11 September 1970, p. J1). As if to add credence to the "secret talks" state-

ment, China allowed a former Premier of Thailand, the exiled Pridi Phanomyong who had been residing in Peking, to leave for exile in Paris. Rumors spread that Thailand had also provided Pridi with a passport and a pension and that Pridi would be the go-between for the secret talks between Peking and Bangkok. (Taylor, 1974, p. 350.).

While no conclusive evidence has confirmed a role by Pridi, it is noteworthy that the next important public announcement concerning talks between Thailand and China confirmed the role of a "third country" as a go-between. Thanat announced that Peking had gone through a third country in expressing an interest in opening talks with Thailand. (FBIS, IV, 10 May 1971, p. J1). Thailand's response to Peking's bid was very favorable. As a matter of fact, Thanat chose this opportunity to refer to Communist China as "the People's Republic of China". (FBIS, IV, 17 May 1974, p. J1). This marked the first occasion that any Thai official had ever publicly used the official name, having previously used "Communist China" in a pejorative manner, and the reference symbolized a Thai change of attitude toward Peking.

Also in May, 1971, Thanat called attention to the news that Peking and Hanoi backed guerrillas had decreased their number of attacks against government installations in northeastern Thailand. The Foreign Minister also observed that the Chinese were toning down their diatribes directed against Thailand (see page 35). As an appropriate response, Thanat requested that the

government-owned Thai radio network reciprocate by easing its antagonistic attitudes toward Marxist countries. (Shuck, 1973, p. 259).

President Nixon's announcement in the summer of 1971 (July) that he would visit Peking seemed to give the Thais a boost toward accelerating the start of trade relations with China in an effort to east tensions. Thanat stressed that Thailand was well-qualified to do business with Peking, particularly because of its large Chinese population, "the happiest Chinese in the world". He summed up his appraisal by stating,"...if any country can deal effectively with the People's Republic of China, it is Thailand..."(Starner, 1972, p. 18). (Once again, Thanat used the official name of China as opposed to the previous Communist China).

The events in the fall of 1971 which preceeded Peking's seating in the United Nations indicate the extent to which Thaland was willing to change previous policy in order to bring about better relations with Peking. On 12 September 1971, Thailand announced that after cabinet deliberations, the decision had been made to vote for seating the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. The Thais were in favor of the "two China" policy and did not want to oust the Republic of China. In an attempt to keep the "Two China" policy alive, Thailand co-sponsored an unsuccessful United States resolution declaring that Taiwan's expulsion from the U. N. be voted upon as an "important

question". However, the events leading up to the vote on the Albanian Resolution, which called for the ouster of the Republic of China, led Thailand to abstain from the voting. The roll call vote was 76 to 35, with Thailand and 16 other countries abstaining. (Wei, 1972, p. 466). Afterward, Thanat explained that Thailand "could not have gained anything by voting against it" and noted that the abstention was in the best interest of the country (FBIS, 27 October 1971, p. J2). Nonetheless, the abstention carried the same effect as a vote for the resolution or, in effect, a vote for the seating of the People's Republic of China.

As additional gestures of reconciliation toward Peking, Bangkok withdrew its candidacy for a vacated seat on the United Nations Economic and Social Council when the PRC voiced a desire to fill the vacancy. The United Nations also served as a meeting place where the Chinese and Thai Ambassadors attended each others receptions for the first time. (Taylor, 1974, p. 352; Nation 1 December 1971 in FBIS, 1 December 1971, p. J-1).

A few days later, an article in Bangkok Post, 4 November, reported that the National Security Council had taken several actions to soften Thailand's attitude Peking. These important actions included the removal of the ban on trade with Peking, relaxing existing anti-Communist laws, and permitting visits to the People's Republic of China by Thai athletic teams and non-political missions (FBIS, IV, 4 November 1971, p. J1). These official actions by the Thai government reflect a significant

change on the attitudes of the Thai leadership, and demonstrate a willingness to make substantial changes in order to bring about better relations with Peking.

Yet, all was not well in Bangkok as Thailand cast about for a new or revised foreign policy. Domestic matters were complicating relations between the Thai bureaucracy and the National Assembly, there was criticism of formulation and conduct of foreign policy, and there was a general disorganization in the Thai government. The response to this situation was a "coup" carried out by Thailand's ruling military elite.

The coup occured on 17 November 1971. The 1968 Constitution was abrogated, the National Assembly was disbanded, political parties were banned, and a Revolutionary Group was designated to assume direct rule. In the finest Thai tradition, the coup was bloodless and, of course, it did not affect the Monarch. The two top leaders of the Thai government, Thanom Kittikachorn, the Prime Minister and General Prapas Charusathira, the Minister of the Interior, retained their positions of power. Nor were the Thai people themselves affected since they had lived under Thanom's decree from 1963 to 1969 when the first elections were held (U.S. News & World Report, 1971, p. 91).

The critical aspect of the coup was that a portion of the political elite was excluded from the decision-making of the government. Ousted was the Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman. The person most often identified with the Thai reprochement with Peking, even

referred to as the architect of the new China policy, was now out of the picture. This development could have brought about a crumbling of the carefully conceived plan to establish ties with Peking.

Such was not to be the case. Within seven months General Prapas, who took over the conduct of foreign affairs, announced that the PRC had extended an invitation to Thailand to participate in a ping-pong tournament in Peking. The Thai government gave its approval on 3 August 1972 and the fact that Thanat Khomon was no longer carrying out the Thai foreign policy quieted any fears that the Thai leaders would reverse the trend toward closer relations with Peking.

The Thai ping-pong team which visited Peking was accompanied by Dr. Prasit Kanchanawat, a Thai-Chinese who was Under-Secretary of Commerce. Dr. Prasit was received on 5 September 1972 as a state guest by Peking (even though he was an unofficial visitor) and was granted in a forty five minute meeting with Chou En-lai. The Chinese Premier sent greetings to Thai government leaders and to the King of Thailand, thus "strongly suggesting a degree of recognition of the Thai government". (Parker, 1973, pp. 334-335).

The meeting between Chou and Prasit marked a new era in Thai relations with Peking. It was the first official meeting between representatives of the two countries in 27 years. (Alpern, 1974, p. 90). The fact that the Chinese Premier would receive the Thai official seemed to demonstrate a sincere desire on the part

of Peking to establish closer, friendlier relations.

Chou also broached other topics of great interest to Thailand during the interview. He stressed that overseas Chinese should be loyal to their countries of residence and obey the host country's laws. Chou also seemed to take for granted the U.S. military presence in Thailand. Of even greater impact was the Chinese foreign minister's response when the question of insurgency was raised. As he had told Phillipine visitors a year earlier, the Chinese did not interfere with the internal affairs of other countries but would support various peoples in their fight to overthrow foreign imperialism. (Taylor, 1974, p. 355). As a measure of good will, Peking gave a substantial amount of publicity to the Thai ping pong team during the visit.

During the visit the Chinese deputy minister of Economic Relations with Foreign Countries informed Prasit of the fact that China was willing to open trade with Thailand, either on a government-to-government basis or on a government-to-people basis. Thailand then elected to open commercial relations with China and a trade delegation attended the Canton Trade Fair in October of 1972.

General Prapas addressed the trade delegation on 11 October 1972 as it departed Bangkok and gave official sanction to the shifting policy toward China. "This is the first time we are sending a trade mission to China after World War II...Now the situation has eased, and we are turning to each other...because

we must move with the changing world situation". (FBIS, 11 October 1972, p. J1).

The efforts by the Thai leaders to move closer to China was looked upon by the United States as perfectly acceptable in light of the Nixon Doctrine. Perhaps the best capsulization of the U.S. appraisal of the emerging Sino-Thai relationship was a speech delivered before the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangkok by Ambassador Leonard Unger. The speech was made on 17 January 1973, soon after Prasits' return from Peking.

Ambassador Unger praised Prasit for making an excellent beginning at exploring a fuller relationship with China. Because of the new era of power relations, Bangkok had begun to explore "contacts with countries which it was formerly isolated...the United States welcomes such an opening of channels of communications..." The Ambassador to Thailand elaborated by pointing out that while a valid Thai-U.S. relationship was still necessary, the relationship should be "less intense" in order for Thailand to work out a broader set of relationships with Peking. Yet, he still held out the offer of the United States to meet its security commitment to Thailand within the framework of the Nixon Doctrine. (Department of State Bulletin, 19 March 1973, pp. 330-334).

In essence, Ambassador Unger put the United States on record as being totally in agreement with Thailand's policy to loosen its ties with the United States while working out a broader range of relations with Peking. This endorsement, coming from

the US Ambassador, signalled to both governments that the U.S. leaders would not pose any obstruction to the evolving relationship.

The door to understanding and perhaps closer cooperation seemed open, but formal Sino-Thai relations were held in abeyance. The reason for this pause, after so promising a start, was primarily due to domestic turbulance in Thailand. By the summer of 1973, there were numerous indications of confusion within the Thai ruling group. The US withdrawal from Southeast Asia, the ceasefire in South Vietnam, as well as the domestic insurgency took Thailand's attention away from Peking.

These internal events culminated with the convulsive reactions of October 1973 in which the Thanom-Prapas government was overthrown during a surge of student rebellion and the two leaders were forced to leave the country. A new openness was to develop in Thai political life characterized by a restructuring of government offices, and a highly publicized new constitution for 1974.

The new Thai government of Sanya Dharmesakdi wasted no time in stating its position concerning relations with China. Charunphan Issarangura, the new Foreign Minister, was quoted in the New York Times (30 October 1973) as saying that Thailand would seek a closer relationship with the People's Republic of China (It is significant that the new government used the official PRC designation of the Chinese government). The dialogue between the China and Thailand, which had almost halted due to the internal

political confusion in Bangkok, showed immediate signs of resuming (FEER, 5 November 1973, p. 13).

The Chinese did not hesitate in signaling their willingness to accept the new Thai government. On 25 October 1973, just days after the revolt in Bangkok, the PRC released an announcement of major import. Major General Chatchai Chunhaivan, Deputy Foreign Minister, reported that the PRC would support Thailand's application for membership in the U. N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This marked the first time that China had ever expressed open support of Thailand. Thus, it appeared that the movement toward closer relations between Thailand and the PRC would continue under the new Sanya government.

The new government did not slow down the effort to work out a better understanding with Peking. Just two months after the October change of government, the Thais sent an official delegation to Peking led by the Deputy Foreign Minister, Chartichai Chunhaven. The delegation was the first official body ever sent to the communist capital. The visit revolved mainly around future trade principles and a contract was signed whereby the PRC would sell Thailand 50,000 tons of Chinese diesel oil at "friendship prices" (FEER 18 October 1974, p. 41). While in Peking, Chartichai's delegation was received by Chou En-lai.

At the same time, the new Thai government continued to stress a further change of emphasis in Thai-U.S. military relations. The emphasis continued to be on lessening the military

relationship between the two countries and placing more emphasis on economic and technical cooperation. In his first policy statement in January 1974, the new Foreign Minister, Charunphan Isarankun stressed this point firmly when he said:

> Thailand's future relations with the U.S. will have to be modified and adopted to changing circumstances. During the past decade one characteristic of our relations with the U.S. has been an over-emphasis on military co-operation. This needs to be adjusted in order to achieve a more truly balanced relationship...(FEER, 18 October, 1974, p. 3).

This message was reportedly passed on to U.S. Deputy Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, Robert Ingersoll, when he visited Bangkok in February 1974, and to Kenneth Rush, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, when he visited the Thai capital in March 1974. In any event, on 29 March 1974, the U.S. acquiesced to a program of U.S. withdrawal for the following year. The program called for a one-third cut in U.S. troop strength and the closure of two airbases. This program went into effect and by September of 1974 U.S. strength was down to 27,500 men and 350 aircraft, and Takli and Ubon airbases were closed (FEER, 18 Oct 1974, p. 3).

The program also projected the closure of the command center of the U.S. air war in Indochina, Nakhorn Phanom, by the end of October 1975. By that time, only 16,500 U.S. troops were to remain in Thailand. This reflected a drop from a high of 50,000 in 1972 during the height of the American bombing in

Indochina. This number also reflected the lowest number of U.S. troops in Thailand since 1966. (Shuck, 1975, p. 230 and FEER, 17 October 1975, p. 5).

The new Prime Minister, soon after taking office, also expressed his ideas about Thailand's new policy direction. Before the newly appointed interim National Legislative Assembly he stressed that:

> the government...will take steps to further good relations with all countries, which are friendly toward Thailand, including countries with different political ideologies..

Sanya repeated these ideas as part of his government's policy statement to the National Legislative Assembly on 7 January 1974. (Shuck, 1975, p. 230).

During the early months of 1974, Sanya put these statements into effect as the Thai government established diplomatic relations with the Marxist governments of Romania, Mongolia and Czechoslovakia. Before the year was over, Bulgaria and East Germany would also be included. He also continued trade talks with the PRC and North Korea (FEER, 18 October 1974, p. 5).

Sanya dispatched a trade mission to Peking in December 1974. The mission was led by Amand Panyarachan, the Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations. Ostensibly, the mission was to enlarge upon trade agreements between Thailand and the PRC, but reportedly Amand was also to work out a draft of a joint communique that would announce diplomatic ties between

the two countries (FEER, 27 June 1975, p. 18). However, that task appears to have been carried out by the next delegation to visit Peking.

General Chartchai Chunhaven, who led a delegation to Peking a year earlier as Vice Minister, was now Minister of Foreign Affairs and took a delegation to Peking in early January 1975. Chatchai's visit proved to be critically important for reasons of trade and as a vital step toward establishing diplomatic relations. As a trade mission, the Thais were able to secure from the PRC an agreement to sell and deliver to Bangkok 75,000 tons of high speed diesel oil at a "special assistance price" (FBIS, 13 January 1975, p. J1). Diplomatically, Chatchai was granted a forty-five minute interview with Chou En-lai. When Chou asked about the upcoming elections in Bangkok, Chatchai assured him that whatever new party formed a government, Thailand's policy toward China was not expected to change.

In the same Nation newspaper article, Chatchai drew attention to a very critical aspect bearing on the future of Sino-Thai relations. Chatchai discussed Chou's reference to U.S. troops still stationed in Thailand. Chou said the Soviet Union was expanding "too far, too fast" in the Indian Ocean and that the PRC recognized the need for continued US presence in Thailand. Chou even recognized that U.S. planes could fly recon missions from Thailand to keep tabs on Soviet ships without PRC objection (FBIS, IV, 15 January 1975, p. J2-J3. and FBIS

IV, 16 January 1975, p. J1).

This statement by the Chinese Premier clearly indicated that the PRC was satisfied with the extent of U.S. withdrawn from Thailand and the extent to which the U.S. military presence had been reduced. Chatchi's interview with Premier Chou En-lai seemed to indicate that the path was clear toward establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. The obstacle of US military presence in Thailand was apparently reduced to the level that it no longer constituted an obstacle, and less than six months later formal diplomatic relations were established.

The events in early 1975 moved rapidly in Bangkok, mostly as a result of frustrating political events of an internal nature. Sanya Thammasak stepped down as Thailand's Prime Minister. Sanya was replaced by Seni Pramoj, who emerged after the January elections as the leader of the party with the largest bloc of seats in parliament. Seni formed a rather confused coalition government on 13 February which lasted eight days. A new coalition then formed and Seni's younger brother Kukrit became Thailand's new Prime Minister (Morrell, 1976, pp. 154-161).

Kukrit Pramoj emerged from this rather foggy turmoil and quickly began to set his house in order. He especially took actions to let Peking know that his intentions were to continue Thailands approach toward close Thai-Chinese relations. He also announced on the floor of the House that his intentions were to repeal anti-communist laws and achieve a total U.S. withdrawal

from Thailand within twelve months (by March of 1976) (Morrell, 1976, p. 157). These remarks were intended to signal that the Thai government had no intentions of reversing the trands that were moving along with strong momentum.

It was to be Kukrit who would travel to Peking as the head of the Thai delegation which would cement formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Barely four months after taking office, the Thai Foreign Minister traveled to Peking on the last day of June and received a warm welcome during an airport ceremony attended by Vice-Premiers Teng Hsino-ping, Chen Hsi-lien, and Hua Kuo-feng. Thousands of Chinese greeted the Thai delegation and a guard of honor from the People's Liberation Army performed military honors.

The lavish reception set the tone for the two-day visit of the Thai delegation. The Chinese apparently went to great lengths to demonstrate their satisfaction that events had progressed to the final establishment of formal diplomatic relations. Chou En-lai met with Prime Minister Kukrit later in the day. Though still hospitalized, Chou received Kukrit and the principal members of his official party.

That same evening, the Thai delegation was received as guests of honor at a grand welcome banquet in the Great Hall of the People (Nixon was hosted there the evening of his visit also). Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping hosted the ceremony in the name of Chou En-lai, and during the banquet, both he and

Prime Minister Kukrit delivered speeches (see Appendixes B & C for complete texts) (Peking Review, 4 July 74, pp. 4-13).

In his speech Vice-Premier Teng reiterated China's promises not to interfere in the internal affairs of Thailand and reassured Thailand that friendly relations between the two countries could exist. Teng said:

> ...Foreign aggression and interference are impermissible and are doomed to failure. We consider that countries with different social systems can develop state relations on the basis of five principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each others internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence.

Teng's message here was that the insurgency which China sponsored in Northern Thailand was relegated to a very low priority and that the PRC valued Thailand's friendship on a state-to-state basis far more than Peking cared to foster the "people's struggle". Also paramount in the message, Teng insinuated that contact between Thailand and the PRC was the fault of the United States. Teng charged that:

> After the Second World War, the situation in Southeast Asia remained in constant tension and the relations between the Southeast Asian countries and other Asian countries were extremely abnormal because one of the superpowers persisted in a war of aggression in Indochina. Now that superpower has finally suffered irrevocable defeat..and had to withdraw from Indochina...contacts between our two countries were unfortunately interrupted for a time, owing to imperialist obstruction and sabotage (ibid, p. 11).

The Thai Prime Minister responded with a message which

touched upon the same points. Kukrit stressed that Thailand would follow an independent course in its foreign policy (i.e. not developing ties with any one power at the expense of another, as it had with the United States), and he also broached the issue of non-interference in one another's internal affairs (i.e. the communist insurgency in Northern Thailand). The Prime Minister stated that:

> ...The foreign policy objective of this government (Thai) is to follow an independent course in promoting peaceful coexistence on the principle of friendship with all countries professing good intention towards Thailand without regard to differences in political ideologies or governmental systems, and based on the principles of justice, equality, and non-interference, in either direct or indirect forms, in the internal affairs of each other. It is for this reason that the recognition and normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China had high priority in the conduct of the foreign policy of my government (Ibid. p. 12).

The two speeches summed up the fact that Thailand and the PRC had been able to overcome two major obstacles to closer relations. For their part, the Thai leaders had loosened their close ties with the United States and had vowed to maintain an independent foreign policy. The PRC, on the other hand, had reduced her support for the insurgency in Northern Thailand to the point where it was no longer a direct threat to the security of Thailand.

More importantly, the two countries assured each other that each would continue these new policies in the future. This assuranoe led to the signing of the joint communique the follow-

ing day, 1 July 1975. After a brief, but cordial meeting between Mao Tse-tung and Prime Minister Kukrit in the morning, the Thai delegation proceeded to accomplish what various Thai leaders had worked toward for the past five years.

In a joint communique, Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj and Premier Chou En-lai established diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand. The communique reaffirmed the same major points made in the speeches of the previous evening (See Appendix A for the full text of the communique). The brief ten-point communique also formalized Thailand's recognition of only one China, and dictated that all official Thai representatives would be removed from Taiwan within a month. The PRC also stated that the dual nationality of the Chinese in Thailand would no longer be recognized, thereby opening the door for Chinese to become Thai citizens if they desired. The communique closed with an agreement to exchange Ambassadors as soon as practicable (Ibid. pp. 8-9).

The official signing of the joint Communique on 1 July 1975 culminated a series of events which Thanat Khoman had initiated almost six years before. The process had been slow but had gained momentum as the changing power relationships in Southeast Asia began to emerge more clearly. As these new power relationships emerged, Thailand took advantage of the situation to reduce the United States military presence in Thailand in order to follow a more pragmatic foreign policy; one which included

diplomatic relations with Peking.

This chapter first traced the events which led to a close US-Thai military relationship. In a step-by-step process, Thailand became allied so closely to US interests in Southeast Asia that China looked upon Thailand as an enemy linked with the US threat to PRC security. The threat to Peking was perceived by the Chinese leaders as being the large US military presence in Thailand, especially the powerful air force units which were capable of operating into mainland China. Therefore, the U.S. military presence in Thailand constituted an obstacle which had to be resolved if Thailand and the PRC were to develop closer relations.

The discussion then dealt with the changing international environment which precipitated the U.S. military withdrawal from Southeast Asia and traced the efforts by Thailand to seek a more self-reliant foreign policy. As part of the U.S. withdrawal from Southeast Asia, Thailand was able to begin negotiations to reduce the U.S. troop level in Thailand. As the level of U.S. troops in Thailand began to drop, Thailand was successful in establishing a dialogue with Peking and more amiable relations began to evolve.

This chapter concludes with the assertion that as Thailand reduced the level of U.S. military presence in Thailand to the extent that Chinese leaders no longer perceived it as a threat, the dialogue between Thailand and the PRC moved the two governments closer to the establishment of diplomatic relations. By 1975, the U.S. troop presence in Thailand had been removed

as an obstacle to closer Sino-Thai relations and the two countries established formal diplomatic relations on 1 July 1975.

CHAPTER III: THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THAILAND

This chapter will discuss the evolution of the Thai Communist Party (CPT) and its role in supporting insurgency in Thailand. The discussion will identify the CPT as the organization that provides leadership, training, and ideological orientation for the insurgency in Thailand. Furthermore, the discussion will reflect that communist Chinese influence is evident in many facets of the CPT. Especially evident is the effort of the CPT to model itself after the Chinese Communist Party and stress the tenets of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The ability of the Chinese communists to influence the CPT in a manner favorable to themselves (or opposed to the Soviets or North Vietnamese communists) is also demonstrated.

A word on source material needs to be inserted here. In tracing the evolution and activities of the CPT, one of the frequently used sources is a document entitled "Communist Insurgency In Thailand". This document was published in Bangkok in 1973 and was prepared by the Royal Thai Government's Communist Supression Operations Center. In the preface signed by Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn, the document is referred to as a "White Paper" describing the insurgency in Thailand

which is provided external support by "certain proponents of an ideology foreign to Thailand" (This reference is clearly aimed at the PRC and North Vietnam). The White Paper is obviously biased in its interpretations of external support for the insurgency; however, the statements should not be disregarded hastily. While overstated, these interpretations are critical to this thesis because they reflect the Thai perception of the threat posed by the PRC's support for insurgency in Thailand.

The latter portion of the chapter will deal with the Chinese communist approach to using propaganda in support of insurgency. This appraisal is presented as background for a better understanding of how the CPT used Peking's assistance to support and conduct the insurgency in northern Thailand.

BACKGROUND

A good deal of information is available concerning the CPT. Numerous authors have written about various aspects of the party and of its activities, yet it is safe to say that "there is no comprehensive study of communism in Thailand" (van der Kroef, 1974, p. 108).

The Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) celebrates December 1, 1942 as its official founding day. On this day, cadre members acting as agents of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) convened a meeting labeled the "First Congress of the Party Representatives." (Communist Suppression Operations Command,

hereafter CSOC, 1973, p. 3). The members in attendance were Chinese and Vietnamese, but nonetheless named the offshoot of the CCP the Communist Party of Thailand.

However, Communist interest and activity in Thailand was not new. In fact, the ideological and organizational roots of the party can be clearly discerned two decades before the official founding of the CPT. Russian communists, who came to power in November, 1917, decided to spread communism to Asia by maintaining and developing communist movements within anticolonial movements. This approach was expressed as a manifesto "calling on the workers and oppressed nations to arise" and was issued at the Fourth Comintern Congress in 1922 (Kirk, 1971, p. 28).

To carry out this new manifesto, Chinese from Shanghai and Vietnamese sent by Ho Chi Minh entered Thailand in 1925 to lay the basis for a new party. While the Chinese worked among their fellow Chinese in Bangkok, the Vietnamese carried out their work in the Vietnamese settlements in northeast Thailand. However, the Chinese were the principal targets of communist doctrine. The large Chinese population was in many ways still loyal to China and offered a logical and receptive target. The Chinese were accustomed to operating with secret societies, therefore the clandestine nature of communist activity was a natural approach to activity and organization. In 1931, the Chinese Communist Party of Siam (CCPS) was formed along with the Youth League of Siam, both of which were dominated by

Chinese. It is significant that Communism in Thailand has always been, and still is, viewed by the Thais as primarily an alien political association dominated by Chinese. This association can be considered an asset to Thailand's attempt to suppress communism because of the long-standing suspicion of the Chinese (Kirk, 1974, p. 29). This factor will be mentioned again later in the chapter.

A year later when the Thai coup established a constitutional form of government to replace the absolute monarchy, the Communist Party of Siam (The Chinese prefix was conveniently dropped in an effort to take on a Thai appearance) played no role. Yet, the party tried to enhance its image by claiming partial credit for the coup and circulated leaflets in Chinese, Thai, and English which made it appear as if the party had participated. During the following year, the party also tried to convince the Thais of the merits of a communist country (CSOC, 1973, p. 2). The Thai government became uneasy over the excessive claims, coupled with calls for a communist movement, and passed the first anti-communist law in 1933. This law made the CPS illegal, but the party only went underground and its work continued (CSOC, 1972, p. 1-2).

However, the party's influence on Thai political events was insignificant during the late 1930's and during World War II (except for the formal founding of the CPT mentioned earlier). The party was unable to make its presence felt until 1946, when Thailand was compelled to repeal the "anti-Communist Act of

1933." The repeal was the price paid for Soviet agreement to Thailand's entry into the United Nations (Tanham, 1974, p. 31).

The communists made notable gains, but most of their influence was in the Chinese community of Bangkok. Chinese schools, the Chinese-language press, and the Chinese community in general were areas where the communist influence was most visible. The Royal Thai Government (RTG) had already embarked upon a new suppression of the communists when mainland China fell in 1949. With China now controlled by the communists and the CPT associated with the Chinese in Bangkok, the RTG naturally scrutinized more carefully the activities of the Chinese in Thailand. By 1952, this suspicion on the part of the RTG led to the Act of Communists which made communism unlawful (Tanham, 1974, p. 32). This act followed closely the Second Congress of the CPT which had led to increased canvassing for membership and dispatching cadres to rural areas (CSOC, 1973, pp. 3-4).

Between 1952 and 1961, the CPT infiltrated various labor and student groups, extended the communist movement to the countryside, and organized political groups which had no overt communist connotation. In an effort to give itself more of a Thai character during this period the CPT made a considerable effort to train more Thais to carry out party work. Nonetheless, the CPT remained far more Chinese than Thai. Also in an effort to train CPT members more effectively, selected individuals were sent to communist China for "indoctrination in

Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-tung's thought" and those that had already returned were ready to move beyond merely mobilizing the masses. Consequently, at the Third Congress in 1961, the CPT resolved to resort to "revolutionary armed struggle" against the RTG (CSOC, 1973, p. 5).

CPT DIRECTION OF INSURGENCY

The RTG believed that the decisions reached during the Third Congress "Clearly revealed the Maoist control of the Thai communist movement." (Tanham, 1974, p. 34). Furthermore, armed struggle was now to become the proper strategy for revolution in Thailand, and plans were made to implement an active insurgency in Thailand. The intent was to develop the insurgency slowly by training guerrilla bands in selected base areas. According to the CSOC White Paper, in 1962 a Northeast Region Jungle Headquarters was formed to plan the insurgency, and in Northeast Thailand a Farmers Liberation Association was formed to support the guerrillas (Tanham, 1974, p. 34). Thus, the "formal decision" to mount an active insurgency was made in 1961 and 1962 (CSOC, 1973, p. 5).

In 1962, another development emerged which has played a key role in the insurgency in Thailand. A clandestine communist radio station calling itself the "Voice of the People of Thailand" (VPT) began broadcasting. Originally, VPT was located in Laos, but has since relocated to Yunnan province in China. The VPT

will be discussed in detail later in the chapter, but it is important to mention three points at this time. First, the VPT was to become the "semi-official" radio station of the CPT and was used to broadcasting all important messages and statements which the CPT desired to release. Second, the VPT had a very strong pro-Chinese character and praised the works of the CCP and Mao Tse-tung regularly. Third, partly as an offshoot of the second point, the VPT broadcasts were strongly anti-Soviet, thereby leaving no doubt as to which Communist leadership the VPT and the CPT looked to for guidance and leadership. (Taylor, 1974, p. 289).

A brief recapitulation of the CPT is necessary at this point before continuing. The examination reveals that the Thais perceived that the CPT as being composed primarily of Chinese residing in Thailand, a minority of Thai members, a very positive leaning toward the Chinese communists, and an expressed dedication to armed insurgency against the RTG. Consequently, the CPT did not have a strong appeal to the Thai people and had mobilized only limited support to carry out the insurgency. In effect, Jay Taylor called the CPT, "...the weakest communist organization of any in Southeast Asia..." (Taylor, 1974, p. 288). Therefore, in order to carry out the planned insurgency the CPT established a series of front organizations.

The Nationalistic Movement for Freedom and the Neutralist Front were announced in 1963. (Tanham, 1974, p. 35), but it was a year later before an effective organization emerged

to weld the factions together. For the next three years, the CPT was to remain in the background and rather than expose itself as the primary source of leadership for the insurgency, the "front organizations" appeared to take control.

As a first step toward focusing attention away from itself the CPT used the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of PRC to send a greeting to the Communist Party of China. The greeting attacked the RTG and US imperialism and called for the creation of a "united front." The text reads in part:

> The Communist Party of Thailand immediately proposed that all the democratic classes strata, public organization and individuals should unite, form a patriotic democratic united front, drive the U.S. imperialists out of the country and overthrow the traitorous fascist and dictatorial government. The Communist Party of Thailand now calls on all the forces that are against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys to unite immediately and form a patriotic democratic united front...the Communist Party of Thailand is willing to cooperate with any groups or individuals that are against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys ... the people of Thailand will win final victory in their cause of independence and democracy just as the Chinese people have done. (NCNA, 1 October, 1964).

One month later, the Thai Independence Movement (TIM) proclaimed a "Manifesto" on 1 November 1964. The manifesto was very similar to that of the CPT a month earlier. A reference is made to the successful explosion of a Chinese atomic bomb, which tends to link the manifesto to China and of course, calls for the expulsion of U.S. imperialists from Thailand and the overthrow of the "dictatorial reactionary" Thai government.

The next development in the "front tactics" was not

long in coming. On 1 January 1965 (only three months after the CPT called for a united front), the Thailand Patriotic Front (TPF) arrived on the scene. In a long statement the TPF stressed a six-point program:

> Only when all compatriots, communities, political groups and parties are united, make concerted efforts and struggle unremittingly in various forms against the enemy, can we drive U.S. imperialism, dictatorial and antipeople's puppet government, and see the emergency of an independent, democratic peaceful, neutral and prosperous Thailand. (PR, 12 February 1965).

An analysis of these three proclamations revealed that the CPT, TIM, and TPF were very similar in content and style. All three called for the expulsion of U.S. imperialism, overthrow of the Thai government, and common interpretation of Thailand's economic and political shortcomings. Also, all three organizations utilized the VPT to broadcast their proclamations which contained numerous phrases laudatory of Peking.

Thus, it is not surprising that ten months later, in November 1965, the TIM merged with the TPF after the TIM membership unanimously passed a resolution that TIM would become a member of the Front and follow the TPF political leadership. While the TIM emphasis was on cooperation and coordination, this "must be translated to mean accepting the Front's political leadership" (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 53).

The leadership of the TIM and TPF should be mentioned here. Of significant importance is the fact that they all resided in Peking and were identified by Peking as the Front's principal

public figures. Donald Weatherbee, in his excellent monograph The United Front in Thailand, lists the following personalities:

1. Phayom Chulanon - He is the TPF "permanent representative" to Peking. A former Lieutenant Colonel in the Thai army, Phayom has lived in Peking since 16 April 1965, after fleeing Thailand where he was implicated in an abortive coup. Phayom is a member of the Front's Central Committee.

2. Mon Kon Nanakan - He has lived in Peking since March 1964. He had been arrested in Bangkok for communist activities in 1952 and imprisoned until 1955. After his release, he dropped out of sight until he surfaced in Peking. He is the "assistant permanent representative" of the TPF in Peking.

3. Kularb Saipradit - He was a well-known journalist and literary figure in Bangkok, who went to Peking in 1961. He broadcasts for the Chinese and his delivery is "dramatic, fiery, and avowedly Maoist."

4. Vattanachai Chayakit Dhives - He was a naval officer who was implicated in the death of the Thai Monarch in 1946. He was disgraced and has lived in Peking for "a number of years". He frequently appears as a spokesman for the Thai resident community in Peking (Weatherbee, 1970, pp. 53-57).

The picture that emerges is that of exiled Thais banded together in Peking. The leadership seems to work closely with the CCP and most probably any deviance from Chinese policy would be noticed immediately and dealt with quickly by the CCP. Be-

cause of their close association with the Chinese communists, any speech or article on their part can probably be accepted as having at least tacit Chinese approval. Therefore, their statements have a significant analytical value.

As previously discussed the CPT had remained in the background since calling for a United Front. However, with the outbreak of the armed struggle in Thailand, the CPT emerged toward the end of 1966 as the "manager of revolution in Thailand" (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 62). After almost two years, the CPT surged to the forefront of the insurgency and in language not to be mistaken, declared itself as the leader of revolution in Thailand. The implication was that the TPF would now support the CPT in the armed struggle.

On 6 November, 1966, the Central Committee of the CPT, in a message to the Albanian Communist Party declared that "the Thai people, guided by the Thai Communist Party and oriented by Marxism and Leninism, have taken up arms ..." (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 62). A few days later (1 December 1966), the CPT called for support of the armed struggle in a style which reflected Chinese influence:

> We want to make known here also that we are ready at any time to cooperate with any group of patriots in the struggle to drive the Americans out of the country and overthrow the Thanom-Prophet clique... You must hold aloft the banner of the Marxist-Leninist line. You must study seriously Mao Tse-tung's thoughts, which are the very essence of Marxist-Leninist theory...The Communist Party of Thailand appeals...To step up the development of the armed forces...You must study the guerrilla warfare tactics of Comrade Mao Tse-tung. (VPT, 7 January, 1967).

One author points out that these statements indicate that the CPT was conforming with communist Chinese doctrine. While not opposed to alliances, Chinese theory has "consistently rejected a subordinate role for Communists" and has stressed the leadership of the party even during the phase of a broad national front (Valkenier, 1969, p. 202).

The Chinese media endorsed the new leadership role of the CPT and duly noted the wisdom of following the example of Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese communist experience of armed struggle:

> The armed struggle of the Thai people, which is being waged along the line proclaimed by the Communist Party of Thailand...conforms to the well-known theory of Mao Tse-tung, the great teacher of the world revolutionary people who in 1948 said that state power grows out of gun barrels. This is the truth. This truth can stand all tests of time and society. (Peking Radio, 7 August 1967).

> The people of Thailand are advancing along the road of armed struggle under the guidance of the great Mao Tse-tung's thought and the influence of the victorious Chinese revolution. Following the Chinese people's war against the Japanese and for national liberation, a great number of Mao Tse-tung's brilliant works, including articles dealing with the problems of Chinese revolution... were introduced into Thailand. (Peking Radio, 19 August 1967).

The TPF apparently accepted this change of events without opposition or disagreement, and broadcast it's intention to be subservient to the CPT. "The Patriotic Front of Thailand on 1 January 1968 strongly declared that it is determined to support the armed struggle of the people who are under the direction of

the Communist Party of Thailand" (VPT, 1 March 1968). From Peking, Phayom Chulanon, the TPF's permanent representative, accepted the secondary role and called for the disciplining of the TPF to the requirements of the CPT (Peking Radio, 7 January 1969).

The subordination of the TPF was also evident when the CPT issued a communique on the Party's twenty-sixth anniversary (1 December 1968). The CPT Central Committee adopted a new ten-point program without any reference to the TPF's six-point program published in January, 1965. (VPT, 7 January 1969). The TPF stated its intention to fall into line and in a statement dated 25 days later, stressed that it "strongly supported" the ten-point program which "points out the direction and purpose of the struggle" (VPT, 4 February 1969).

These statements point out that "the CPT had been elevated to a position of clear predominance within the leadership of the peoples armed struggle in Thailand" (Lovelace, 1970, p. 168). Upon obtaining the pinnacle of leadership in the armed struggle in Thailand, there remained one more essential organizational task for the CPT to accomplish in order to carry out the armed struggle in Thailand. An organization to bring about "more efficient and unified" military operations, where only uncoordinated small unit actions existed, was badly needed. The Thai Peoples' Liberation Armed Forces (TPLAF) was created to perform this task on 1 January 1969.

The TPLAF was formed to function under the "absolute leadership" of the CPT and was to follow the Party's ten-point

policy. The communique which formed the TPLAF also ordered its officers and men to adhere to a number of tasks which Mao had established to disciple the Chinese People's Liberation Army (Mao Tse-tung, 1963, p. 341). The revolutionary soldiers were expected to carry out ten tasks which included:

> to study and firmly grasp the thoughts of
> Mao Tse-tung
> to strengthen political work in armed forces
> to heighten vigilance at all times
> (Weatherbee, 1970, pp. 70-71)

The formation of the TPLAF marked a new stage in the armed rebellion of the Thai Communists. "It (the TPLAF) made the Communist Party of Thailand another armed political group to follow the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) in South Vietnam in openly declaring its intention to seize political power through implementation of Maoist political and military lines" (Li, 1969, p. 59). The CPT was also similar to such front organizations as the Laotian Patriotic Front (Neo Lao Hac Xat), and the less well known Malay National Liberation League (MNLL) (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 7). The CPT saw itself with a role that is "part of a wider struggle being conducted by their Chinese, Vietnamese, and Laotian comrades-in-arms" (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 4). It is chiefly in this sense that the "revolutionary developments in Thailand can be linked to policy concerns of the Chinese People's Republic" (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 103).

The conclusion thus drawn is that the CPT is the one organization that selects, organizes, disseminates, and directs

the communist approach to revolutionary developments in Thailand. All other communist organizations in Thailand are subordinate to the CPT and follow its lead. In turn, the CPT adheres to the Chinese communist model of revolution and the theory of revolution as espoused by Mao Tse-tung. In turn, the Chinese communists lend stature and impetus to the CPT by publicizing the Party's successes through the Chinese propaganda media. (This aspect of Chinese support will be discussed in the latter part of this chapter).

All operations discussed thus far are either closed to observers (the formulation of policy in Peking) or they are of a clandestine nature (CPT operations within Thailand). Also, the lines between the exiled Thais in Peking to the CPT in Thailand are obscure, as are the lines between the CPT and the insurgent forces in Thailand. However, on the basis of the investigation of the operation of the CPT up to this point, certain tentative conclusions can be drawn. The exiled Thais in Peking probably influence the insurgency in Thailand through the apparatus of the CPT. The CPT then carries out the insurgency through various front organizations and guerrilla units. There is not sufficient information available to prove this hypothosis convincingly, but the investigation has not identified other research which presents any other plausible alternative.

Therefore, for the remainder of this thesis, the CPT will be addressed as the organization which directs the insur-

gency in Thailand, and the VPT will be considered the primary media-vehicle by which the CPT directs propaganda throughout Thailand. Various front groups assist in carrying out the insurgency in Thailand and look to the CPT for direction. Also, the Chinese communists probably work with the exiled Thais in Peking to exert a degree of influence over the CPT and the conduct of insurgency in Thailand.

This investigation of the VPT and the CPT and its links to Peking is only complete through 1969. The relationship during the years 1970 to 1975 will be addressed in Chapter Five. The rational for this demarcation is that 1969 is the high point of Chinese support for the insurgency in Northern Thailand. From 1970 to 1975, there is a discernable decline in support which is demonstrated in Chapter Five. The intent up to this point is merely to suggest the links between the Chinese and the CPT and to demonstrate that the CPT is the organization which controls the insurgency in Thailand.

THE NATURE OF CPT PROPAGANDA

The emphasis of this chapter will now shift to propaganda as it applies to the insurgency in Thailand. While it is extremely difficult to measure the extent of material support or leadership training that Peking has provided to the insurgents in Thailand, the propaganda support is more readily measurable. While the investigation of Chapter Five will demonstrate that the communist Chinese have played the pri-

mary role in providing the leadership, training and material support to the insurgency of northern Thailand, the extent of Chinese involvement cannot be conclusively demonstrated. However, the remainder of this chapter will demonstrate that Peking is the major external contributor of propaganda support to the insurgency in northern Thailand. Also demonstrated is the distinctly Chinese communist character of the propaganda content. The reason for examining the Chinese propaganda is because it is normally an accurate barometer of Chinese intentions, and how the propaganda is addressed to the insurgency in northern Thailand is a key to understanding Peking's intentions and rationale.

Propaganda is vitally important to the PRC because it is the primary vehicle used by Peking to communicate to the outside world how the Chinese leaders address various topics. Daily, Peking reaches out to virtually the entire world with a diversified propaganda apparatus; radio broadcasts, movies, touring performers, cultural delegations and a variety of printed material. The apparatus is large and is tightly controlled at the highest levels of the CCP in Peking. The importance of propaganda to Peking can be understood best when it is remembered that prior to the early 1970's, when comparatively few countries maintained diplomatic relations with the PRC, the primary method of PRC communications was through the propaganda apparatus. This factor must be kept in mind when Peking's propaganda approach to Thailand's insurgency is considered. The communist prop-

aganda was essentially the only basis from which Thai leaders could appraise Peking's intent toward Thailand during the period 1965 to 1970 when the insurgency in Thailand was growing into a threat to the RTG.*

Peking's propaganda style is highlighted by some very obvious characteristics. The propaganda is centrally controlled by the CCP; it is a vitally important tool to Peking's foreign policy; Marxism-Leninism-Maoism gives it a polemic aspect; simple themes are stressed repeatedly; class struggle is emphasized as opposed to struggles between states; the propaganda approach differs according to the target audience; the tone is militant; and any significant shift in Peking's foreign policy is readily detectable (Price, 1973, pp. 83-84).

Peking's propaganda was noticable military and stressed support for "wars of national liberation" during the period that insurgency in northern Thailand was growing. Peking also used the propaganda to provide a "practical ideology" containing a "...theoretical plan for making revolution and upsetting established authority..." (Van Ness, 1971, p. 118). In Peking's support of insurgency, this aspect was PRC's the single most im-

*For a more detailed discussion of Peking's use of propaganda to support wars of national liberation see Peter Van Ness, Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy, 1971. A comprehensive examination of Peking's propaganda approach to Thailand is found in James T. Price Peking's Approach To The Minority Groups of Southeast Asia. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of South Carolina Graduate School, 1973.

portant "weapon", given the Chinese lack of economic and military power to project their interests externally (Valkenier, 1969, p. 201).

The economic and military weaknesses of the PRC made Peking's propaganda line more "bark than bite", since much more propaganda was offered to insurgencies than arms. However, in the late 1960's, some writers were cautious and stressed that because of the "...distressing tendency of people to believe, or come to believe, the things they say, it might be unwise to discount such statements as at least partial guides to practical action" (Gelber 1970, p. 689). In the case of Thailand, both American and Thai leaders accepted this caveat and did not dismiss the PRC's propaganda lightly.

The Chinese leaders exercise very close control over the propaganda apparatus and carefully select the information to be disseminated. The CCP utilizes the New China News Agency (NCNA), which is the only news agency in the PRC, to control the content of published materials. NCNA also provides both national and foreign news to be published in all Chinese newspapers (Lin, 1971, p. 132). Radio broadcasts receive close supervision by the CCP also. Radio Peking represents the official voice of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and is operated by the Central People's Broadcast Station (Lin, 1971, p. 118).

The significance of the close supervision by the CCP over the propaganda content is that the pronouncements articulate

what the Chinese leaders want the outside world to know. Especially by following the contents of the tabloid Peking Review and Radio Peking, which contain all major speeches and policy statements made by Chinese leaders which are intended for external consumption, the trends of Chinese foreign policy become evident. Also, because of the tendency for stressing themes repeatedly, any shifts in Chinese policy are noticable immediately.

Peking's propaganda has played a substantial role in support of the insurgency in Thailand. Radio Peking beams broadcasts to Thailand on a daily basis. The broadcasts are aired in the Thai language and occasionally some programs are also aired in English. (Lovelace, 1971, p. 73). The nature of Radio Peking's broadcasts to Thailand was discussed in the first part of this chapter and will not be elaborated upon. However, one very important function of Radio Peking will be analized.

Since 1962, when the VPT began to operate, Radio Peking has made a practice of reproducing broadcasts which originated with the VPT. This practice was especially prominent after 1965 (Lovelace, 1971, p. 72), and is reflected in the early part of this chapter when the practice emphasized important policy statements. Radio Peking not only reflected Peking's official support for the insurgency through these broadcast reproductions but raised the stature of VPT and also the CPT which was touted by VPT as the primary focal point for communist leadership in Thailand.

The fact that VPT is believed to be located in Yunnan

province of southern China might also be very significant for explaining the pro-PRC character of VPT broadcasts. Some writers have also contended that the Chinese completely control the VPT. In the case of the Radio Peking rebroadcasts of VPT programs, Peking would be "...in a peculiar position of 'talking to itself' in order to achieve a double propaganda effect" (Lovelace, 1971, p. 72).

It is also significant that in lending propaganda support to the insurgency in northern Thailand, only the VPT broadcast is the Meo language. Perhaps this is an indication that the Chinese leadership did not want to identify itself too closely with a national minority engaged in an insurgency ostensibly pursuing the "Thai" people's struggle.

This discussion of Peking's propaganda puts the role of the CPT in sharper focus as the organization directing the insurgency in northern Thailand. Without recognizing the prominent role of the CPT, Peking undoubtably would not be as liberal with propaganda support. The influence of the exiled Thais in Peking, while still not addressed with any solid evidence, can perhaps be understood better now that the official nature of the Radio Peking broadcasts has been mentioned. The exiles use Radio Peking with official PRC sanction (in view of the close supervision) and, thereby broadcast material that is obviously acceptable to Peking. That the PRC sanctions the exile broadcasts might lend a higher degree of credence to the idea of the exiles having some form of

influence over the CPT. Granted, this is a tenuous implication, but one not outside the realm of possibility.

This chapter has provided background information that will be useful for understanding Chapter Five. The primary role of the CPT in organizing and directing the insurgency will be brought into sharper focus in Chapter Five. Also, the effective use of propaganda to support the insurgency will draw upon the discussion just provided.

CHAPTER IV: THE MEO OF NORTHERN THAILAND

The discussion up to this point has involved an approach that addresses Thailand, the CPT, and the Chinese communist influence as they apply to the entire geographical entity of Thailand. The same is true for the insurgency in Thailand. The approach is correct, for the CPT does direct the communist movement and the insurgency country-wide and Peking has provided varying degrees of support for the insurgency throughout the country. However, in Chapters Four and Five the focus will narrow.

The investigation will address only the conduct of insurgency in northern Thailand. Also, only the Meo hilltribes who carry out that insurgency will be discussed. The insurgency in Thailand encompasses four regions; northern, southern, central, and northeastern. The rationale in selecting only the northern insurgency is because it is the only region which is considered to be primarily a Chinese-supported endeavor. The Meo hilltribes are addressed because they are considered to be the primary vehicle for conducting the insurgency in northern Thailand.

With this shift in mind, the following chapter will provide a detailed investigation of the Meo hilltribes. The chapter begins with a brief recapitulation of the Meo migration from China into Thailand. The primary cultural traits and customs of the

Meo are then discussed in order to provide an appreciation of the Meo lifestyle. The importance of this portion of the discussion is to better understand how the CPT has capitalized upon these traits and customs in the recruitment of the Meo.

Of major importance is the effort of the RTG to extend governmental control over the Meo. While extending governmental control into northern Thailand, the RTG instituted a number of policies which alienated the Meo, and over a period of several years a situation developed whereby the Meo became disillusioned with any attempt to have RTG controls applied to them. The result was a situation which the communists could utilize to foment hostility toward the RTG and draw the Meo into an insurgency directed against the RTG. This situation will set the stage for the description in Chapter Five which addresses the actual conduct of the insurgency by the Meo hilltribes.

TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEO

There are no less than twenty different hilltribes presently residing in Northern Thailand. Many of these non-Thai minority groups have been living within or astride Thailand's borders since before the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Others have entered Thailand only recently. It has only been in the last 100 to 150 years, for instance, that immigrants of Tibeto-Burma stock (Lisu, Lahu, and Akha), as well as Chinese affiliated tribes (Meo and Yao) moved in a southerly direction into the four-

teen northern provinces of Thailand (Manndorff, 1967, pp. 527-8). These hilltribes of Northern Thailand total approximately 200,000 people and occupy the rugged mountainous terrain that makes up the northern one-fifth of Thailand's geographical area (Young, 1966, p. iii).

The Meo constitute one of Thailand's largest and most important non-Thai minority groups. The population of the Meo hilltribes is constantly changing due to their migratory habits and the constant influx of new Meo arrivals into Thailand. Therefore, any attempt to calculate the size of the Meo population in Thailand can only be estimated. Gordon Young conservatively states a total figure of 45,800 Meo in Northern Thailand (Young, 1966, pp. 38-9), while Peter Kunstadter gives a similar figure of 48,500 (Kunstadter, 1967, p. 397). General Prapas Charusathira, Thailand's former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, officially referred to the Meo as the second largest tribe in Thailand (ranking after the Karen who number about 75,000) with a total population of "about 50,000" (Prapas, 1969, p. 66).

The migration of the Meo into Thailand has occurred primarily within the last fifty years, and the migratory movement has generally been in a north-south direction, principally from Laos, and secondly, from Burma (Lebar, 1964, p. 77). While the origins of the Meo are not well documented, one author states that their history can be traced back some 4,000 years to Southern China, generally in the area of Kweichow Province (Young, 1966,

p. 37). During the Han-Chinese southward expansion of their empire, the Meo were crushed about 800 B.C. and driven by the Han-Chinese into the mountains of west and southwest Kweichow Province (Weins, 1967, pp. 130-166; Price, 1973, pp. 15-22).

The Han-Chinese refer to the Meo as "Miao," which means "plant shoots" (Weins, 1967, p. 73), "rice shoot" (Lebar, 1964, p. 64), or simply "sprouts" (Young, 1966, p. 37). Lebar points out that an estimated seventy or eighty sub-varities of Miao live in South China today, but only a few have been studied and described. The better known varieties are the He or Hei (Black Miao), the Hua (Flower) Miao, Pe or Pei (White) Miao, Hung (Red) Miao, and Ch'ing (Blue) Miao (Lebar, 1964, p. 64). The differences between these sub-varieties are marked by dialect differences and minor variations in dress and other customs.

The heartland of the Miao in South China is located in the area of Kweichow Province. Averaging 4,000 feet above sea level, extremely cut up and precipitous, and with a wild and sparsely settled landscape, "Kweichow is the most impoverished province in all of South China" (Lebar, 1964, p. 65). Though concentrated in this one area, the Miao spill over into Kweichow's border areas of Yunnan, Szechwan, Hunan, and Kwangsi.

The population figures for the Miao in South China have been wide-ranging and probably rather inaccurate. For instance, Wiens places the 1937 population in Kweichow Province at 609,643 while the 1939 population decreased to 548,141. Weins' explana-

tion of this decrease includes a continued southern migration out of the province and takes into consideration the Chinese policy that tribesmen were considered to have become assimilated into the Han-Chinese culture and no longer appeared in the registration as tribesmen (Wiens, 1967, p. 280). By 1947, the Miao in all of Southern China were listed as totaling 1,500,000 by Chinese historian Chang Ch'i-yun, but the Communist Ya-Kuang Atlas listed 2,480,000. Wiens, however, gives no explanation for this last puzzling disparity.

Lebar uses the 1953 figures of the Chinese People's Republic census which lists 2,500,000 Miao in South China of which 1,425,000 resided in Kweichow Province (Lebar, 1964, p. 65). Lal quotes the 1957 People's Handbook as reflecting 2,510,000 Miao in South China and a 1961 monograph entitled The Nationalities in China which gives the population figure of 2,687,590 Miao living in the same area (Lal, 1970, pp. 5-6).

Unfortunately, Lal did not include the number of Miao that reside within the confines of Kweichow Province, though it seems probable that the bulk of the 1957 and 1961 population is to be found in Kweichow. Within Kweichow, over 70 percent of the Miao population is concentrated in the southern and southeastern portion of the province. It is in this part of Kweichow that the Communist government has established two autonomous regions, one of which is the Miao Autonomous Region of Kewichow (Tang, 1961, p. 231). Tang also points out that the only other Miao autonomous

region in Communist China is located nearby in western Hunan Province (Tang, 1961, pp. 236-237n).

Historically, the Miao have been generally despised and exploited by the Han-Chinese, especially during the reign of the Manchu and Republican governments before the Communist takeover. The Miao were considered inferior to the cultured Han-Chinese and ranked near the bottom of the social hierarchy in South China (Lebar, 1964, p. 65). Despite this cultural inferiority, the Han-Chinese have attempted to acculturate the Miao. Culturally speaking, the most potent acculturative force in Miao history has been the movement of Han-Chinese into Miao areas. Wiens pointed out that with the Han-Chinese Migration into South China, tribal and cultural separation has become less well-defined and that the rate of "Sinicization" of the Miao was accelerated (Wiens, 1967, pp. 280-281). This Sinicization has accelerated even more noticeably since the Communists took over mainland China in 1949.

Generally, the Miao are characterized as highly industrious, relatively intelligent, frank and honest, highly aggressive under certain conditions. Above all else, the Miao are very independent (Department of the Army, 1970, p. 601). This tribal, and to a lesser extent, individual independence stems from their many conflicts with the Han-Chinese and can be traced back over a period of several thousand years. Gordon Young stresses that it was this high degree of independence that caused the Miao to resist the superior Han-Chinese culture. Rather than submit to acculturu-

ration, clans of Miao started their southward migrations in order to avoid domination by the Han-Chinese. From Kweichow Province, the Miao scattered, "traveling hundreds of miles into southern Yunnan, Tonking, Burma, Laos, and within the last 100 years, into Northern Thailand" (Young, 1966, p. 38).

The Miao that journeyed into Northern Thailand are called "Meo" by the Thais (and will be referred to as Meo throughout the remainder of this thesis) and refer to themselves as "H'moong". The Meo of Thailand, just as their predecessors in China, are divided into tribes on the basis of linguistic and cultural differences. Young describes three distinct tribes of Meo in Northern Thailand; the Blue Meo, the White Meo, and the "Gua-M'ba" or Arm-band Meo.

The most visible difference to be found among the three tribes is in dress habits. Like their cousins in China the Meo are given their names based on their dress. The major differences in dress are found in the women's dress; the Blue Meo women wearing skirts and hair styled atop the head, while the White Meo women wear pants and turbans.

The second major difference among the Meo is that of linguistic differences. The Meo of Northern Thailand speak dialects similar to the Miao dialects used in Southern China, which are tonal and reflect strong Chinese influence. While there is a wide range of dialects among the Meo, the dialects are to a great degree mutually intelligible. Lao (from Laos) and Shan

(from Burma) are important second languages for the Meo, although Thai is becoming more and more important. Since there is no written script in the Meo language, Thai may become increasingly more valuable in the future as a means of written communication.

In addition to differences of dress and language, the Meo tribes of Northern Thailand also differ in their settlement patterns. The White Meo are found primarily in Nan and Chiengmai Provinces, while the few Gua M'ba are found only in northern Nan Province. More widely scattered are the Blue Meo, who can be found in the border areas of Nan and Chiengmai Provinces, while the few Gua M'ba are found only in northern Nan Province. More widely scattered are the Blue Meo, who can be found in the border areas of Nan and Chiengmai Provinces, in southern Tak, in Prae, and in northern Petchaboon and Pitsanuloke Provinces (Young, 1966, pp. 38-39).

While these three differences help distinguish between Meo tribes, other salient features shared by all Meo in Northern Thailand (principally physical and socio-economic features) allow all three groups of Meo to be treated together for further examination. The following description of common characteristics provides strong evidence that for a political analysis, all of the different Meo tribes of Northern Thailand can be addressed under the heading of "Meo".

The most salient feature shared by all Meo is that of physical appearance. The Meo are very "Chinese" in appearance

and only a shade darker in complexion. They are a sturdy, handsome people, and the men are generally tall (5'7") for hilltribesmen. The Meo are clean-living and healthy as a whole, and, unlike most peoples of Southeast Asia, they do not chew betel nut as a rule. These traits notwithstanding, the Meo suffer from a high rate of opium addiction (about 12 percent) due to the availability of the drug and are highly susceptible to malaria because of primative medical practices (Young, 1966, p. 42).

Religious practices constitute another factor that do not vary among the Meo. Almost all of Thailand's Meo are animists who have retained some of the Chinese religious customs which they had adopted before coming to Thailand. The Meo believe in a supreme spirit who has no particular form and is present everywhere. This legendary spirit is said to have taught the Meo all that they know, including the cultivation of opium (Young, 1966, p. 39).

The principal practitioner of religious functions is the shaman, who can be either male or female. Bernatzik explains the shaman's role as not necessarily being hereditary but involuntary; a person is possessed by a spirit which then allows the shaman communicative powers with a teacher-spirit. The shaman is then able to interpret omens, foretell the future, and exorcise evil spirits. The shaman does not engage in black magic or sorcery, and when not engaged in his religious services, the shaman functions as an ordinary member of society (Bernatzik,

1947, pp. 176-180, as quoted in Lebar, 1964, p. 81).

Reverence to notable dead ancestors and rituals concerning departing souls play an important role in Meo religious beliefs. The "three souls" concept is the dominant belief dealing with ancestor worship. This belief posits that every person has three souls which separate upon death. One soul goes to a heaven, the second remains in the grave, and the third soul is reborn in the next child born into the "sib" or surname group. Great emphasis is placed on the funeral arrangements to insure that the three souls are "shown the right road" and are protected from evil spirits between death and burial (Lebar, 1964, p. 81).

The Meo are also known for their unique selection of village locations. The Meo prefer to live on the highest mountain tops. They habitually locate their villages at elevations of 4,000 feet and higher if terrain permits. They are true mountaineers and live by the proverb: "To the fish the water, to the birds the air, to the Meo the mountains" (Embree, 1950, p. 86). The village site is normally selected just under the summit of a mountain ridge, near a reliable water source from which water can be channelled through the village by bamboo troughs. The Meo construct large houses even though the average household is only eight people (Young, 1961, p. 41). A village usually consists of about thirty-five houses which are clustered irregularly about the chief's house, which is located in the center (Lebar, 1964, p. 78).

The site of the village is normally located in dense monsoon rain forest which the Meo have reduced to low brush by repeated burnings. These villages are not permanent and have no defensive walls or stockades. Due to soil deterioration, epidemics, or the urging of a shaman, the village location is moved when deemed necessary. The time spent at one village location varies considerably. The average is ten to fifteen years, with some sources stating a low of six years and others more than fifteen years. At any rate, the Meo tend to stay longer in village sites than do other hilltribes of Northern Thailand (Young, 1966, p. 41).

Within walking distance of their villages are the fields which the Meo depend upon for their chief source of food (Lebar, 1964, p. 78). Swidden agriculture is practiced almost exclusively and crops are planted so that they mature at varying dates in order to provide food throughout the year. The main food crop is mountain or dry rice, while maize and buckwheat are of less importance. Sugar cane, yams, cucumbers, hemp, and cotton are also raised.

Economically, the Meo are considered to be among the "upperincome" group when compared with the other hilltribes of Northern Thailand (Young, 1966, pp. 42-43.) Cultivation of opium is the primary reason for the Meo's fiscal well-being. However, Young stresses that this is only partly because of the Meo's propensity to cultivate the opium poppy. The Meo are

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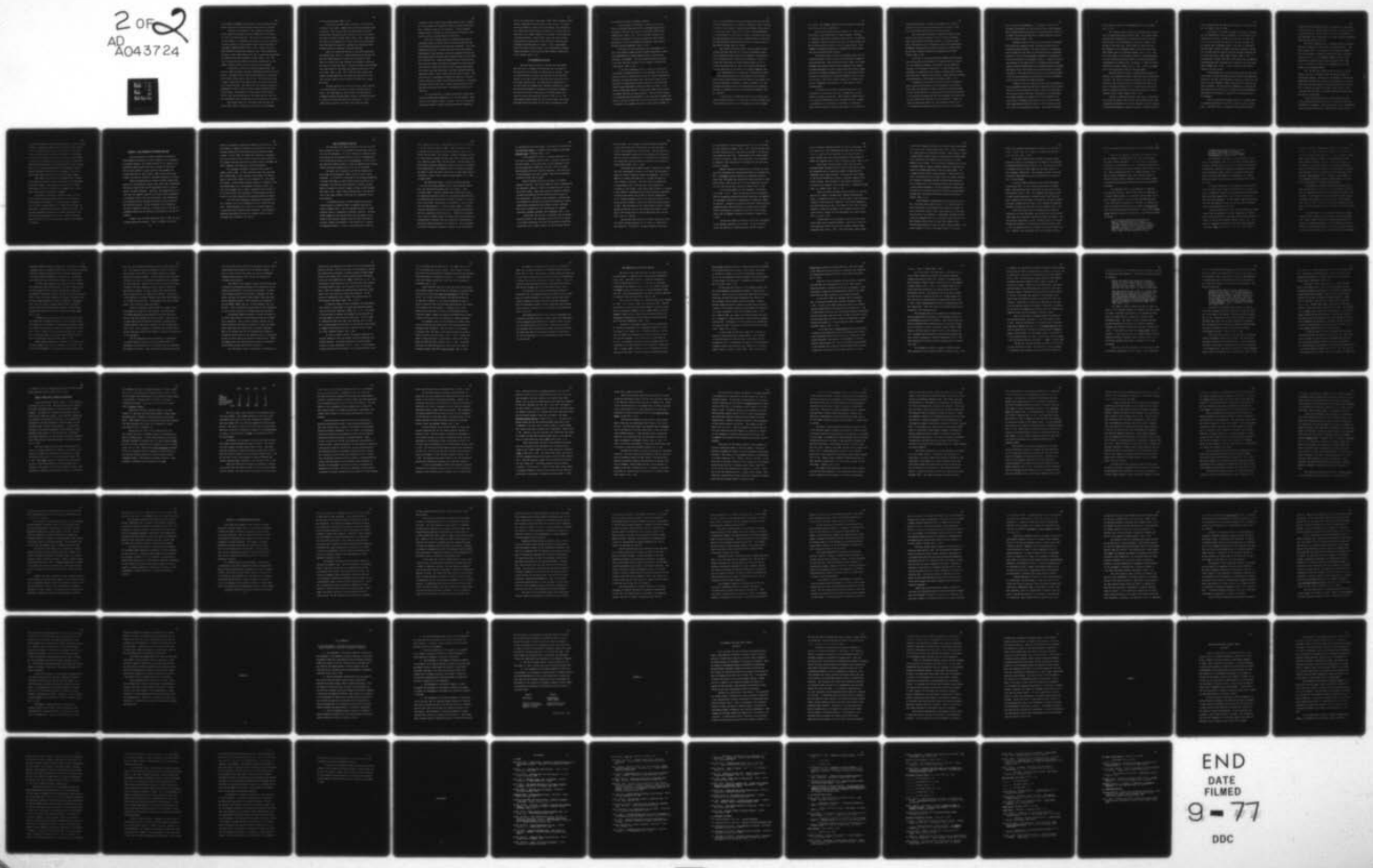

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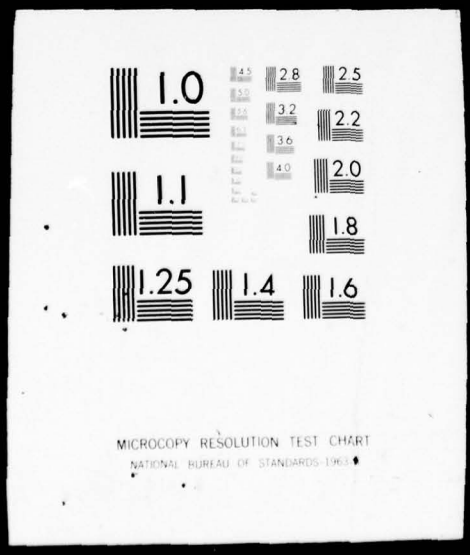

great animal husbandsmen and also have a natural business ability, hence a good deal of income results from the sale of livestock.

However, any discussion of Meo economy and agriculture cannot escape the prominent role that opium plays in the everyday life of the Meo hilltribes. While there are some Meo groups living northeast of Pitsanuloke that have given up the cultivation of opium, the Meo as a whole remain the most vigorous growers of the poppy in Thailand (Kirk, 1971, p. 164). Next to rice, the poppy remains the second most important crop. Some villages have virtually a cash economy based on the sale of opium and the purchase of foodstuffs and other necessities (Lebar, 1964, p. 79). The topic of opium and the problem it poses for the Meo will be addressed in greater detail in the latter part of this chapter.

Politically, the Meo are relatively sophisticated, compared to other hilltribes, and have a developed political structure. However, the highest level of political integration at the native level is the village (Lebar, 1964, p. 80). The village chief and a group of elders decide all issues that do not come to the attention of Thai officials. The elders, who are normally the heads of households and clans, form the primary internal administration of a Meo village. The importance of this group of elders lies in the fact that they are the heads of the family and the clan, the only traditional social institutions that are important to the Meo.

Meo village chiefs are "invariably chosen by their own elders rather than on a hereditary basis" and are the spokesmen

for the village (Young, 1966, p. 45).

These chiefs normally report straight to the local Thai officials at the county (Amphur) level and form the primary link to the RTG. Some village chiefs have gained power and wealth through plural marriage and many offspring and may have judicial functions in several villages (Lebar, 1964, p. 80). These chiefs are likely to be repositories of tribal lore and technical knowledge, and they are expected to represent the village and their extended families in important religious functions.

While the present day Meo have no political system above the village level, there is a legend believed by the Meo that the political sophistication of the Meo was once second to none. There is a belief that a Meo "kingdom" once existed in China and was ruled by a great Meo "king". The Meo of Thailand once believed that a Meo king will rise again among them and lead them to victory (Lebar, 1964, p. 80). The "victory" in Meo folklore was against the Han-Chinese but the present day application of the term "victory" seems to be the uniting of all Meo into a great Meo nation.

Although the Meo live in some of the most remote regions of Northern Thailand, they are not totally isolated from outsiders. The large number of Meo and their wide distribution throughout Northern Thailand almost insures a considerable amount of contact with other hilltribes and lowland Thai. It is a common sight to see Meo in and about the cities and towns,

carrying on a brisk trade in the lowland market places. Furthermore, Meo villages are frequently visited by lowland traders who sell a variety of wares to the villagers. In these primarily business contacts, the Meo are bold and quick and display a keen business acuity in dealing with the lowland Thai.

This type of casual business relationship has been the traditional basis for the Meo contact with the lowland Thai and the concomitant policies of the Royal Thai government. This relationship has been one of mutual tolerance and non-interference. Traditionally, there has been little open antipathy but there has been apathy between the "khon muang" (Northern Thai) and the "khon doe" (mountain man). While Hans Manndorff would stress that the Thai look upon the Meo as respected countrymen and state that the term "khon pa" (forest man, which is most frequently associated with the Meo and other hilltribes) is without pejorative meaning (Manndorff, 1966, p. 528), I have found that this is untrue. The term "khon pa" is disdainfully applied and explicitly connotes a savage, uneducated, unclean, and sub-human individual. My personal experience has been that only a casual conversation with a lowland Thai will extract this type of vituperative definition of "khon pa".

It is not difficult to explain why the Thai people would look upon the Meo with condescension, if not open disdain. Basically, it is a matter of ethnic contrast. Each of the characteristics and customs of the Meo discussed previously constitutes

part of the explanation. Each point of Meo culture examined in this chapter constitutes a sharp contrast to Thai culture. The Thais are devout Buddhists, idolize their own monarch, farm lowland wet rice, speak an entirely different language, are fiercely proud of being Thai, and consider themselves far superior to the hilltribes of Northern Thailand. Arnold Abrams sums up the Thai attitude toward the Meo by writing that "most Thais have viewed the hill tribesmen as something akin to savages: crude, opium-smoking people who speak a foreign tongue, follow unfathomable religious customs and despoil fine forest-land with wasteful farming practices" (Abrams, 1970, p. 21).

RTG INTERGRATION POLICIES

Upon this age-old culture of the Meo, the Thai government has tried to integrate the hilltribes into the fabric of Thai political control which is totally alien to the Meo. Given the numerous ethnic contrasts, the Thais and the Meo have been content in the past to more or less avoid each other and to continue their separate ways. The slash-and-burn agriculture of the hill people has prompted their expansion southward at a time when the Thai government is expanding its influence throughout the country as a part of the process of becoming modern and a clash of cultures was inevitable (Butwell, 1969, p. 92). The relationship between the Meo and the Thai government will now be discussed within the context of the overall governmental policy

for non-Thai hilltribes of Northern Thailand.

In the process of extending its control over the hill peoples of Northern Thailand, the Thai government began its involvement in 1953 with the program of the Border Patrol Police (SEATO Record, 1969, p. 35). This involvement intensified in 1959 when the Ministry of Interior assigned the Public Welfare Department to carry out research and development activities in Northern Thailand (Manndorff, 1966, p. 530).

The outcome of the research was the establishment of a Hill Tribe Division within the Public Welfare Department in 1963. Also established was a Tribal Research Center located at the University of Chiengmai. The center began operation during the fiscal year 1964-1965, and was formally opened in October 1965 (SEATO Report, 1966, p. 26).

As the Thai government began to extend its control over the peoples of Northern Thailand, it was inevitable that the traditional policy of noninterference could not continue indefinitely. Basically, the Thai government gave three major reasons for the necessity of extending governmental control over the hilltribes. General Prapas Charusathira elaborated them as follows: 1) Because of inefficient methods of agriculture, large tracts of land and timber resources are being destroyed. This has also resulted in interfering with the watersheds of the rivers which irrigate the great rice plains on which the economy of the (Thai) nation depends; 2) Several of the largest tribes were deriving their economic in-

come from the cultivation of the opium poppy, which the late Prime Minister, Marshall Sarit, had banned in December of 1958. The Thai government is determined to suppress opium growing for the sake of its own people and of others in the world; 3) Active development of the hilltribes has now become an aspect of national security for the Thai government because of the communist efforts to infiltrate the hilltribes and arouse dissatisfaction by creating a sense of deprivation (Prapas, 1969, pp. 65-66).

Once agreed that the hilltribes could no longer be left isolated and that there must be a greater relationship between the hill peoples and the general Thai community, the question of how to bring about such a change became paramount. William R. Geddes, who worked with the Tribal Research Center at its inception, maintained that the choice was basically between the complete absorption of the tribes into the Thai community--that is to say "assimilation"--or a program of "integration" in which the tribes would remain more or less separate social entities with cultural distinctiveness but participate in the economic and political processes of Thailand. Geddes' treatment of the contributions and dysfunctions of the assimilation and integration policies are important and will be discussed here (Geddes, 1967, pp. 554-556).

If the policy of assimilation were to be followed, then the hilltribes would have to be educated in the Thai language and culture and there would be far less emphasis on tribal language

and culture. But complete assimilation of the tribes in the foreseeable future is not a possibility.

Many factors militate against assimilation. Some of the tribes have a very strong sense of tribal integrity. The Meo, for instance, almost never intermarry with outsiders. Attachments to languages, customs, religion, and family and group systems cannot be broken within the space of one or two generations. Also, attempts to assimilate usually are accompanied by social disruptions and eventually hostile reaction.

On the other hand, a policy of integration would call for promoting economic, social, and political development through existing institutions. This policy would foster respect for tribal languages, but political and economic integration would demand increased knowledge of the Thai language and some persons, having acquired the necessary language ability, will find greater opportunities for advancement by identifying themselves more or less with the Thai. Some loss of tribal culture will probably occur as will a lessening of the identify of tribal people to their original groups.

For these cogent reasons, Geddes cautions that it is unrealistic to view the two policies of assimilation and integration as extreme alternatives. While complete assimilation is not a practical possibility in the foreseeable future, a degree of assimilation is an inevitable consequence of integration. Thus, the most realistic approach would appear to be a policy of

"open-ended integration" in which the tribesmen have a right to assimilate the Thai culture and blend with Thai society if they wish, yet assimilation would not be forced upon them.

This "open-ended integration" stressed by Geddes in 1964 seems to have become the general policy of the Thai government toward the hilltribes of Northern Thailand. In General Prapas' words, "Our policy is one of integration rather than assimilation, although no obstacles will be placed in the way of tribal people who do wish to identify themselves completely with the Thai" (Prapas, 1969, p. 68).

The policy of the Thai government stresses that the attention fostered upon the hilltribes is to prepare them for ultimate full citizenship and permanent land rights, two key rights not available to hill peoples in the past. To reach this goal the government is stressing social, economic, and educational development which aims to improve tribal welfare. These goals are stressed through persuasion, not through force (Prapas, 1969, p. 76).

Perhaps the most salient feature of the Thai government's policy toward the hilltribes is that of population resettlement. Since 1960, the Department of Public Welfare has operated through the Hill Tribes Division to establish four Land Settlement Projects. It is through this program that the Thai government feels that they can best extend their influence over the hilltribes. Prapas defines the operational plan of the Land Settlement Projects as: 1) To persuade the slattered hilltribes to move in to the project

area and settle down permanently. 2) To promote livestock improvement and perennial crop cultivation as well as home industry, and to organize marketing services for the hill peoples as well as to promote the health and education of those moving into the project area (Prapas, 1969, p. 69).

Although progress has been made with hilltribe development and the work has expanded rapidly, the Thai government has encountered enormous problems. The overall program of integrating the hilltribes into the fabric of Thai society has not progressed smoothly nor has the Thai government succeeded in convincing all of the hill peoples of the program's utility. A number of factors have resulted in the application of an integration policy which tended to further alienate many of the non-Thai peoples of Northern Thailand and drive them further away from the process of peaceful integration. Here again the Meo stand out as an excellent example of how the Thai governmental policies have encountered resistance from all the hilltribes of Northern Thailand.

Perhaps the one most important factor that has aggravated the relationship between the Meo and the Thais has been the government's ban on the cultivation of opium. The Meo had developed a very lucrative income based upon the growing of the opium poppy. An average household can produce five to six kilograms of raw opium yearly, providing a cash income of five to seven thousand baht (approximately $250-350, based on a 1975 conversion of one U.S. dollar for approximately 20 baht). Some larger households

may even have an income of ten thousand baht per year (Geddes, 1967, p. 577).

The economic system is quite well developed, and the benefits from opium extend beyond the Meo tribe. The economic system includes Karen tribesmen who are employed by the Meo to work in their fields and also Yunnanese Hans, who act as traders in the selling of the opium crop. Other tribes are involved as well, and thousands of hill tribesmen depend on the annual harvest as their primary means of subsistence (Allman, 1971, p. 37). With this total number of hilltribesmen involved in cultivating opium, it is not surprising the annual harvest in northern Thailand is "approximately two hundred tons...according to a 1968 U.S. Bureau of Narcotics estimate" (McCoy, 1972, p. 247). Such is the magnitude of the problem which faces the Thai government.

Many Meo might be willing to forego opium production if suitable crop alternatives could be found that were as financially lucrative. The task of finding an alternative cash crop is complicated by the fact that most cash crops that will grow in the hills of Northern Thailand are far too bulky and require better means of transportation than are presently available in order to transport them to market (Prapas, 1969, p. 75).

Efforts to substitute suitable cash crops are continuing, and the Thai government seems to have fully grasped the fact that integration and stability in Northern Thailand can best be assured by developing indigenous economies in greater conformity with low-

land civilization and this approach is the basis of Thai policy in the area (Hafner, 1972, p. 464).

The position of the Thai government concerning citizenship and land ownership has further compounded the relationship of the integration of the Meo. The Meo cannot help but feel that they are at best second-class citizens since the Thai government has not granted them citizenship rights. Since Thai law stipulates that only Thai citizens can legally own land in Thailand, the Meo are told that they are living on land that belongs to Thailand and "to which they have no legal right" (Prapas, 1969, p. 65). It was announced in October 1974 that for the first time, the RTG was considering granting citizenship but no positive action was being taken (PEAGAM, 1975, p. 28). In 1977, there has still been no change in the RTG's policy.

The discussion up to this point has touched upon the traits and customs of the Meo hilltribes and has broached the growing disaffection of the Meo as the RTG began to exert its control over the area of northern Thailand, formally inhabited by only the Meo and other hilltribes. The Thai policies implemented to integrate the hilltribes also had the effect of creating a disaffected minority group which was vulnerable to exploitation for participation in an insurgency.

The CPT, supported by Peking, was able to capitalize upon the growing disaffection of the Meo in order to foment an insurgency. The RTG's efforts to integrate the hilltribes served to

provide the CPT with credible inroads to organizing an insurgency. The Thai policies of stopping opium cultivation, discouraging slash and burn agriculture, and the hesitancy to grant citizenship and land ownership to the hilltribes were to become the most effectively used propaganda themes of the CPT.

The CPT has fashioned their propaganda program in northern Thailand by adhering to a basic tenet of insurgent warfare. The tenet stresses that "...the character of the government against which the insurgency is aimed, determines the range of effective counterpolicies i.e., the propaganda themes and many of the advantages the insurrectionary group may exploit" (Pye, 1964, p. 165). The specific content of the propaganda will be addressed in the following chapter.

That the CPT would utilize the Meo to carry out the insurgency was fully in consonance with the Chinese concept of revolutionary warfare. Historically, the Chinese, to include the Communists since 1949, have ascribed "great importance" to minorities, since the key element to revolutionary warfare is not tactice or terrain, but people's attitudes (Connor, 1969, p. 58). In the Meo, the CPT found a ready-made disaffected minority that was ready for exploitation.

Justus van der Kroef put the entire situation in historical perspective when he wrote that the region was ideal for development of insurgency. The large expanse of wide, inhospitable, little developed, historically unadministered tribal territory

of northern Thailand was for centuries the scene of frequent tribal movements. Politically, these tribal groups had enjoyed a great degree of autonomy and had been nominally ruled. These tribal groups not only spilled over national frontiers, but had ethnic ties and cultural memories associated with their migrant origins. It was only to be expected that Peking would seek to exploit the situation during the period of Sino-Thai hostility (van der Kroef, 1972, p. 8). In their exploitation of this situation, the CPT adroitly fashioned a highly effective insurgency. How the insurgency was fashioned is the topic of the following chapter.

This chapter has traced the Meo migration into Thailand and discussed the primary cultural traits and customs which make up the Meo lifestyle. This discussion is crucial to a better understanding of how the CPT was able to emphasize Meo cultural traits and customs to recruit Meo insurgents.

The efforts of the RTG to extend its control over the Meo hilltribes was also discussed because of its importance to understanding the insurgency. The RTG instituted a number of policies which alienated the Meo and, rather than contribute to integration, created hostility between the Meo and the RTG. The resulting situation was characterized by Meo disaffection with the RTG and the opportunity for the CPT to exploit a minority group in order to carry out an insurgency against the government of Thailand.

CHAPTER V: THE INSURGENCY FOR NORTHERN THAILAND

The second obstacle to formal diplomatic relations between Bangkok and Peking was the PRC's support for the insurgency in northern Thailand. The primary purpose of this chapter is to explain how Peking lowered the level of support to the extent that the Thai leaders no longer perceived the insurgency in northern Thailand as a major threat. When this had been accomplished, the path was cleared for diplomatic relations to develop.

Before explaining how the leaders in Peking lowered their support for the insurgency, several other topics must be addressed. The first of these is how the CPT approached the Meo in order to exploit the armed insurgency. Basically, the examination will reflect that the communist approach was low-key and was implemented to capitalize on Meo traits and customs and to take advantage of the animosity which was developing between the Thai authorities and the Meo hilltribes. During this phase of the insurgency, the role of Peking is difficult to identify except in the area of propaganda support and the training of Sino-Thais to lead the insurgency.

However, once the armed insurgency began in 1967, the role of Peking became more apparent. There is evidence that the in-

surgency was primarily supplied by communist Chinese sources. Also, the evidence of Peking's involvement in the direction of the insurgency through the CPT and Chinese-trained leadership became stronger. By late 1968, the Chinese had fashioned an insurgency that was the most critical to Thai leaders, and Peking emerged as the paramount external power which provided training, equipment and arms, leadership, and direction to the Meo insurgents.

The insurgency increased in intensity and reached its highest point in 1969. In 1970, during the same time frame when Thai leaders began to make overtures toward Peking, the Chinese began to lower their support for the insurgency in a very noticeable manner. As Thai-Chinese tensions eased on a diplomatic level, the Chinese support for the insurgency continued to drop. By 1973, the insurgency was no longer considered by Thai leaders to be the most critical (the insurgency in the Northeast having replaced it, and that insurgency was supported primarily by Hanoi).

From 1973 until diplomatic relations were established in 1975, Peking's role in the insurgency was still evident but subdued. Peking apparently was careful not to provide support to a degree which would alarm the Thai government. The propaganda emanating from Peking reflected the lessened tension, and was noticeably less strident in its content.

THE CPT APPROACH TO THE MEO

The discussion will begin with how the CPT approached the Meo hilltribes in order to form the Meo into the primary vehicle to carry out the insurgency. It is very difficult to identify actual participation by the communist Chinese, except in propaganda activity through Radio Peking and the Peking Review. The CPT activities were more visible; however, it must be remembered that Peking's probable influence through the CPT is not to be overlooked.

The major form of support by the CPT and Peking in the early stage of the insurgency (1967) was in the form of radio broadcasts. In an effort to capitalize on the growing disaffection of the Meo hilltribes, the VPT carried the major portion of the propaganda. To facilitate their approach to the Meo, the VPT began to broadcast in the Meo language as early as 1967 (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 86). Often, these broadcasts were in the Meo dialect of the target audience, which made the propaganda content more authentic.

In addressing the Meo, the VPT followed several basic characteristics of communist China's propaganda approach discussed in Chapter Three. The VPT displayed an ability to adapt different levels of propaganda to different audiences. The most notable example of this characteristic was the absence of any stress on the "glorious thought of Mao Tse-tung" which was, by contrast, evident in broadcasts to the lowland Thai. Instead, the emphasis shifted to a level of less theoretical content in

which emphasis was placed on the "denunciation of Thai oppression of the Meo" (Casella, 1970, p. 204). Also, the themes of the propaganda were kept simple and the propaganda was intense (repeated over and over). For instance, a typical broadcast directed at a Meo audience stresses the theme that "the U.S.-Thanom clique has constantly looked down on the Meo people...The Meo people have earned their living for generations without the help of an oppressive administration...The Communist Party of Thailand is leading the people to rise and stage a revolution...the Meo people have no alternative...than to take up arms and fight against it..." (VPT, 30 August 1969).

The themes were simple: the Meo of Northern Thailand "...are not only being oppressed, but are also despised, threatened, and prevented from making their own living..." (VPT, 31 January 1968). "The Meo tribesmen have earned their living for generations without the help of an oppressive administration... the Communist Party of Thailand is leading the people to rise and stage a revolution...The Meo have no alternative ...than to take arms and fight against it..." (VPT, 30 August 1969). A similar broadcast reiterates the role of the CPT in supporting minorities which are oppressed by Thai authorities. "Under the reactionary rule of the U.S. Thanon clique, the people of the various minority nationalities of Thailand have been subjected to discrimination, insult, and ruthless oppression and exploration. Only the Communist Party of Thailand is genuinely fighting for the interests of

the oppressed and exploited people of the minority nationalities" (New China News Agency, 28 November 1969 in Survey of the China Mainland Press, 4 December 1969, p. 39).

In the approach to the Meo of northern Thailand it is this type of propaganda approach common to Peking's style which was most evident. On a daily basis, the VPT addressed the Meo and encouraged their traditional distrust of the Thai people, while praising the role of the Meo insurgents. Since the start of VPT broadcasts in the Meo language, there was no significant variation in this type of appeal.

Radio broadcasts were only one aspect of the CPT's approach to the Meo. The vitally important task of communicating the insurgent's appeal on a face-to-face basis was left to the CPT's mobile teams. These small groups of insurgents operated invisibly from mountain hideouts beyond the surveillance of Thai authorities. The mobile teams attempted to influence Meo hilltribesmen by visiting Meo villages and presenting a low-key program which stressed Meo participation in small committees. This type of approach was very characteristic of communist approaches throughout Southeast Asia (Zimmerman, 1976, p. 25).

Donald Kirk, who has spent considerable time in northern Thailand writing on the insurgency, points out that the appeal of the mobile groups was very basic and generally stressed the traditional lack of rapport between the low-land Thai and the

Meo hilltribes. As an example, the mobile groups promised Meo village chiefs that they could continue to cultivate opium, despite the government ban on the practice. The same held true with the government restriction on the destruction of large portions of forests (as preparation for slash and burn agriculture), even though this practice ruined many tracts of soil during the monsoon season (Kirk, 1971, p. 163).

The methods used by mobile groups to infiltrate a village have been investigated by Justus van der Kroef, who has spent a number of visits to Thailand studying the insurgency. One or two members of a mobile team might enter a village ostensibly to visit friends or relatives. The visit would be extended into a semi-permanent stay if the newcomers could establish an acceptance in the village. Every effort would be made to cultivate a small number of "sympathizers" who would articulate grievances. The mobile group would then attempt to form the sympathizers into a "village committee" which could take over the work of the mobile group and attempt to politicize village grievances against the RTG. This technique not only worked toward turning a village against the RTG but also won over young men who might be lured away to CPT training areas to become armed guerrillas (van der Kroef, 1974, pp. 119-121).

During these infiltrations, the mobile groups most often articulated village grievances in the context of opposition to Thai authority. The theme of "alleged corruption, unfairness

and the brutality" of Thai officials who have dealt with the Meo was used extensively (Tanham, 1974, p. 59). The CPT stressed that the Thai officials did not care about the welfare of the Meo and only helped the ethnic Thai. They pointed to the limited number of medical facilities, roads, and schools built in the mountains as examples of Thai insincerity in providing for the health and welfare of the Meo.

Material rewards were often held out to the Meo for joining in the insurgency and resisting Thai efforts to integrate the Meo. A propaganda leaflet distributed in Chieng Rai province stated that "the mobile team welcomes the people and begs to solve their problem. When we get rid of all your oppressors, you will get free tractors and free electricity" (Kirk, 1971, p. 164).

In recruiting members for the insurgency, the CPT has also proven itself expert in adapting to local environments. Like the propaganda broadcasts mentioned previously, the emphasis on recruitment of Meo has not emphasized the traditional communist approach. Attempts at recruitment have been "characterized by pragmatism rather than doctrinarism, oriented toward obtaining initial participatory involvement on the part of the villager rather than an immediate ideological conversion" (Alpern, 1975, p. 687).

An excellent example of adapting to the local enviornment is the insurgent approach to Meo customs. The CPT has proven itself very skillful in capitalizing upon old Meo customs in

order to influence individual Meo men to join the insurgency. One such custom ("bai tiew") whereby Meo men visit other villages in search of prospective wives was used to lure young Meo men to secure villages where they can be subjected to CPT training and observe the communist form of life in operation (Lebar, 1964, p. 75).

A carry-over from the custom of "bai tiew" and inter-marriage between villages is that of having a Meo who has joined the insurgents select a bride from another village where the communists hope to gain influence. The groom will then attempt to use his new marriage as an inroad to influence members of the bride's village. This procedure is particularly effective if the bride is the daughter of the village chief, a respected village elder, or a shaman (Price, 1973, p. 91).

Another excellent technique used by the CPT is to win over the son of a tribal or village chief, thereby influencing the father. Ultimately the hope is to use the chief to have the entire village or tribe follow the communists. The obvious advantage to this subtle approach is that if any member of the tribe or village refuses to follow the insurgents, he is turning his back on his entire tribe or village, but most importantly, his family (Price, 1973, p. 59 and p. 90).

Another aspect of the insurgency favoring the CPT grows from a basic tenet of guerrilla warfare. That tenet is that violence feeds upon itself as unrest and resentment spreads among dissidents (Pye, 1964, p. 165). After the initial armed clashes

between Meo insurgents and Thai forces, the VPT began radio broadcasts (in the Meo language) which sent waves of unrest throughout the rugged mountains inhabited by the Meo. Father Harold J. Thiel, a Roman Catholic priest living in a Meo village in Northern Thailand, related how the Communists used this unrest to recruit members in his village. In an interview he explained that as the insurgency began to spread, strangers appeared at night and led groups of villagers mysteriously into the nearby jungle. The villagers used an alibi of "going hunting" to explain their absence, but returned with new rifles, money, and combat training; all provided by insurgents who had converted some hearby huts into a staging area. The returning villagers also brought back a newly aroused resentment of the Thai government, having been lectured on how the Thais obstructed the Meo by outlawing opium, seizing land, and banning traditional agricultural practices (Abrams, 1969, p. 12).

These Communist blandishments were well-received by the Meo, "especially when backed by terror". For those Meo who remained unconvinced, the insurgents have raised the prospect of grave retribution; however, such a harsh approach to recruiting does not seem to be widespread. Undoubtedly, some Meos may have joined the insurgency more out of fear than conviction, but most Meo insurgents seem willing to oppose Thai authority with communist guns without any need for threats (Abrams, 1969, p. 13). As one official of the U.S. Government states, "It does not

require must communist indoctrination to induce a Meo to shoot at a Thai. In most cases all it takes is to provide the Meo with a rifle" (Casella, 1970, p. 207).

To cap their presentation to the Meo, the mobile teams raised the prospect of an independent Meo kingdom in the mountains of Northern Thailand (Abrams, 1969, p. 12). The CPT was not slow to recognize this bit of Meo legend and capitalize upon it to stir villagers imaginations. The subsequent actions of the Thai authorities inadvertently may also have contributed to this concept of a Meo kingdom.

As early as 1968, government forces vacated many mountainous areas which, in turn, provided sanctuaries for approximately 1,000 guerrillas which constituted the main force at that time (Casella, 1970, p. 204). The Communists then began to refer to these vacated mountains as "liberated areas" (see VPT broadcast on page122) and also began to use them for intensive training exercises, avoiding the more costly, time consuming and dangerous business of moving back and forth into Laos (Abrams, 1970, p. 20).

Entire hill areas of Nan and Chiang Rai provinces were abandoned by the Thai government, and the Thai Army could re-enter these areas only in periodic large-scale infantry operations. The Thai military authorities, in turn, "adopted a policy of attrition through encirclement in the surrounding lowlands" (Abrams, 1970, p. 21), and predicted that the government forces would regain control. However, other authorities were less optimistic and some

doubt the government will ever secure the mountains (Abrams, 1969, p. 14).

There are two important reasons why some observers doubt that the Communist "liberated areas" will ever be effectively controlled by Thai authorities. The first reason is theoretical and evolves from the historical trend of autonomous regions used by the PRC to control her internal minorities (Price, 1973, pp. 33-37). While information is still not readily available, it remains a distinct possibility that these "liberated areas" in northern Thailand could be addressed as new "autonomous regions" by the Meo and declare their separateness from the central Thai government.

The Communists were in a good position to capitalize upon the RTA's strategy. When the CPT issued its communique on 1 December 1968 (see page 67) adopting a new ten-point "Statement of Present Policy", the fifth point addressed "autonomy" of the nationalities (minorities) of Thailand. The Chinese were quick to publicize the CPT's policy statement in Peking Review. After the VPT had broadcast the message on 7 January 1969, Peking Review indorsed the policy ten days later. The fifth point reads as follows:

> 5. The various nationalities shall enjoy the fight of autonomy within the big family of Thailand; they shall enjoy equal rights; respect each other, support and help each other; religions, languages, culture as well as customs and habits which are not harmful to the people shall be respected; oppose national oppression and racial

> discrimination; economy, culture, education and public health shall be developed generally in the areas of all nationalities. (Peking Review, 17 January 1969, pp. 19-20).

The influence of the Chinese is very evident in the context of this paragraph. Not only is the policy guidance similar to China's internal policy, but the use of the term "nationality" is instructive. Rather than using more frequently heard terms, such as minorities, tribes, clans, or folk-groups used by the Thais and even the Meo themselves, "nationality" is uniquely Chinese and used in state and party constitutions (Price, 1973, pp. 37-38).

The second reason which casts doubt upon the Thai government's ability to secure these "liberated areas" is a matter of military capability. There was doubt whether the Royal Thai Army (RTA) could have invaded those areas in order to drive out or destroy the Meo insurgents. The Thai Army's chances of achieving that feat were doubtful at best, as one such attempt discussed later in this chapter will illustrate.

Peking's influence and control over the insurgency is most evident when the leadership of the Meo insurgents is examined. Exactly as the CPT drew its leadership from Sino-Thais trained in Peking, so did the Meo insurgents (Abrams, 1970, p. 22). The leader of insurgency in Northern Thailand was Song Noppakakum, a Sino-Thai (FEER, 13 May 1972, p. 18). As of 1977, Song re-

tains this position). Sone was born between 1915 and 1920 in Thailand. Once a school teacher in Bangkok, he joined the Thai liberation movement during World War II. After the war, he spent eight years in China as a member of the fledgling CPT before going to NVN to supervise a training camp for Thai cadres. He is a member of the Central Committee of the CPT and during the period of this study, was believed to have been based in northern Laos overseeing "all CPT infiltration into the northern area of Thailand" (Asia Yearbook, 1973, p. 300-301). Other members of the leadership in northern Thailand remain anonymous, but most have had the benefit of training outside Thailand.

The insurgency in northern Thailand is generally structured in three levels. At the top are the Sino-Thais like Song, and it is significant that there are no reports of any Meo at the top level. At the second level are those Thais and Meo who have traveled to Laos, Peking, or North Vietnam to receive training (Kirk, 1971, p. 159). The third level of the insurgency is composed of Meo hilltribesmen who are recruited to join the guerrilla units.

The second level of the insurgency demonstrates strong communist Chinese influence and is worthy of further investigation. There is ample evidence that Peking has been deeply involved in training Meo insurgents in Laos, Peking, and in North Vietnam and then reinfiltrating them back into northern Thailand. In a speech in early 1968 General Saiyud, who headed the Communist

Suppression Operation Center, charged with coordinating the counter-insurgency effort in Thailand, charged that of the 150 Meo guerrillas in Nan and Chieng Ria provinces, most of them were believed to "have been trained by Communists in Peking, Laos, and/or Hanoi and reinfiltrated back into Thailand" (Kirk, 1971, pp. 162-163).

The most often mentioned training site for Meo tribesmen was located near Hanoi, North Vietnam. Hoa Binh training school was first reported to have started training Meo in 1962, and approximately twenty Meo graduates returned to Northern Thailand in 1964 to carry out low-key propaganda activities. By 1965 however, Meo were conducting weapons training in addition to propaganda (Race, 1974, pp. 94-95). Between 1962 and 1965; over 500 insurgents (449 men and 138 women) were trained in North Vietnam and most were reported to have been trained at Hoa Binh (CSOC, 1973, p. 27).

The PRC took a more direct role in 1970 when North Vietnam turned over to Peking the majority of the training for guerrilla cadres for the insurgency. Peking then established a number of training sites in Yunnan province and in Northern Laos (Kirk, 1971, p. 262). There have also been some reports that at least one of these sites moved into Thailand after the Meo secured a base in the Phu Pan mountains (Parker, 1973, p. 330).

While numerous examples are available of how these training sites worked, one of the most complete is cited here. One of the first CPT members to be captured in northern Thailand had

been sent into Thailand after being trained in Peking, Hanoi, and Laos. The insurgent was born in Bangkok of Chinese parents and went to China in the 1950's for a Chinese education (a common practice for overseas Chinese). While in China, he was recruited in 1964 by the branch of the Chinese Foreign Ministry responsible for Thai operations. Sponsored by the TPF, he was given refresher training in the Thai language and sent to Hanoi for political and military training. At least a dozen other Thais and Sino-Thais trained with him, all sponsored by the TPF. The group received additional training in Peking in late 1965, before spending all of 1966 training in Laos. The training in Laos was on propaganda, civic action and combat operations.

Sent into Thailand in February 1967, he joined a mobile team headed by a former Thai army sergeant. The team worked in northern Thailand and was composed of two other Sino-Thais, and two local Meo tribesmen who acted as guides. There were ten of these teams in Nan and Chiang Rai provinces charged with developing political and military apparatus in Meo villages (Race, 1974, p. 98). This technique of controlling and providing training for hand-picked cadres allows Peking to influence the direction of the insurgency.

The CPT demonstrated their flexibility in capitalizing on another minority cultural trait which enabled the CPT to superimpose an entire hierarchy of leadership upon the traditional Meo political structure. Since the Meo had no political structure

above the village level, the CPT used the mobile teams to form a communications link between the CPT and the Meo villages. In order to carry out this task, there was no need to emphasize "communist participation", when all that was required was "insurgent participation".

This aspect of the communist Chinese approach would seem to parallel the technique developed in the treatment of her own "minority nationalities" over the past two decades. In China, the Han Chinese reserve the top rungs of leadership for themselves, and while the minority group leaders retain some traditional leadership capacity, their positions are subservient to the Han Chinese (Weins, 1967, pp. 147-225, Moseley, 1972, pp. 318-319). Hence, the minority leaders serve as mere lieutenants to carry out the dictates of the Chinese-directed leadership.

The Chinese communist approach to the Meo hilltribes is one which draws heavily on the Han-Chinese tradition of appealing to minorities. Every attempt is made to approach and influence the Meo on the basis of traditional cultural and ethnic terms, while being very subtle about all things "Communist". There is no evidence that the CPT leadership has attempted to further Meo participation in the Communist Party or to encourage the Meo to follow closely the thoughts of Mao Tse-tung. Rather, the emphasis has been low-key and has stressed the traditional breech between the Meo and the Thai authorities.

Of a more direct nature, there exists a proliferation of

evidence that the insurgency in northern Thailand was supplied primarily by the PRC. From the first days of the insurgency, the Meo were armed with an assortment of Chinese weapons including "60MM morters, B-40 rockets, AK-47 rifles and non-metallic land mines spirited in from neighboring Laos (FEER, 13 May 1972, p. 14). The rough jungle terrain along the Laos-Thailand border makes resupply from nearby bases in Laos a very convenient task for the insurgents. While the equipment and weapons come through Laos, there seems to be little doubt as to where they originate. As the governor of Chieng Rai flatly charged, "The communists get all their supplies from China" (Kirk, 1971, p. 163).

In numerous clashes with Meo insurgents, Thai authorities "have captured a large number of weapons and explosives manufactured by the Chinese Communists" (CSOC, 1973, p. 14). The extent of this provision of weapons and equipment is best reflected in the large number of Meos reportedly under arms. By 1973, 2,000 to 3,000 Meo had been given small arms (Darling, 1973, p. 552). Also, enough equipment was available so that the Meo could operate in company and battalion-size units, some with morters, mines, and rocket launchers (Tanham, 1974, p. 60).

In order to support the Meo, the Chinese communists reportedly operated at least two support systems through Laos into Northern Thailand. One system extended from the South China province of Yunnan (Zimmerman, 1976, p. 27-28). A second system, operated with the North Vietnamese, ran from Dien Bien Phu across

Laos to Pak Beng near the Thai border. (See CSOC, 1973, p. 10 for an excellent map of these routes). Recent reports indicate that this route has extended into Thailand and ends in Nan province. "Given the paucity of indigenous resources..." in Northern Thailand, these support systems have been vital to the insurgency (Zimmerman 1976, p. 28).

Other observers agree and it has been stated that without this external support from the PRC the insurgency in northern Thailand could not exist (U.S. News and World Report, 21 May 1973, p. 82). So critical are the weapons and supplies provided by the PRC that it appears "...the outside leadership is able to secure its position over both foreign-trained Meo and local cadres by its control over the supplies..." (Marks, 1973, p. 941). These two critical points, the use of CPT leadership and the logistical support, suggest how Peking was probably able to exert a degree of influence over the insurgency in northern Thailand.

The emphasis placed on the insurgency in northern Thailand by the CPT was also evident when the increasing numbers of insurgents were considered. From the start of the insurgency in February 1967, the number of Meo guerrillas had only grown to 150 by the end of that year (Kirk, 1971, p. 136). In 1968, the number of guerrillas grew to approximately 1,000 as CPT mobile teams recruited more Meos (Casella, 1970, p. 204). The growth continued into 1969 when Ambassador Unger placed the number of insurgents between 1300-1600 (Senate Hearings, 1969, p. 628).

The number of insurgents peaked in 1970, increasing to 3,000, twice as many as reported in Northeast Thailand that year (Kirk, 1971, p. 163). This dramatic increase enabled the guerrillas to start military operations in groups as large as one hundred men, as opposed to only ten or twenty men two years before. It is also significant that this number remained relatively stable between 1970 and 1973 (Tanham, 1974, p. 62 and Marks, 1974, p. 941).

The discussion up to this point has been intended to demonstrate that the communist Chinese were involved in the insurgency in northern Thailand as the primary external power which trained, supported, and gave direction to the Meo insurgents. While the insurgency probably could not have been viable without Chinese support, the major role in conducting the insurgency was played by the CPT.

The examination will now turn to how the insurgency was conducted in northern Thailand in order to more fully demonstrate how the insurgency was fashioned into a threat to Thai security in a relatively brief period of time. In just over two years, the insurgency grew from localized clashes to full scale battles and spread over most of the northern provinces of Thailand as the CPT took advantage of the cleavage between the Thai authorities and the Meo.

THE INSURGENCY AS A THREAT TO THE RTG

The start of the armed insurgency is usually dated from an armed clash on 17 February 1967 in Nan province (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 86). Reacting to reports of armed Meo insurgents, a platoon of Border Patrol Police (BPP) was sent to investigate a sighting in the village of Huai Poo Lai. The platoon followed and engaged a group of fourteen Meo in a brief exchange of small arms fire. During this engagement, the first in northern Thailand, one Thai policeman was killed (Race, 1974, p. 96).

The situation continued on a relatively light scale throughout 1967: only nineteen clashes were reported in 1967. The BPP, in an effort to deal with the growing number of reports of armed Meo were consequently engaged in more clashes similar to the engagement in Huai Poo Lai. While starting in Nan province, the insurgency had spread into Tak and Chiang Rai provinces by the end of the year (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 86).

The start of the armed struggle did not go unnoticed by the VPT who has mentioned these engagements frequently to note the spread of the "peoples war" to Northern Thailand. The VPT began to mention the engagements in regular broadcasts in both Thai and Meo languages. Also stressed was the leadership of the CPT. For example, the "flame of armed struggle" under the leadership of CPT "will undoubtably burn down the northern area" (VPT, 31 January 1968). Chinese sources in Peking also voiced approval of the start of armed insurgency in Northern Thailand.

Peking Review noted the spread of communist operations in Northern Thailand and ascribed the progress to the "correct leadership" of the CPT in creating "an excellent revolutionary situation and set for all oppressed nations and people of the world another glorious example of fighting for independence and liberation" (PR, 20 October, 1967, p. 35).

As the scope and intensity of the insurgency spread, the BPP found themselves overextended and unable to cope with the situation. This in turn led to Royal Thai Army (RTA) units being moved into the North and almost immediately the character of the insurgency took an ominous turn for the worse. Interior Minister Prapas was quoted as saying that these Thai units were "rushed" to the northern provinces in mid-October and during the later part of December of 1967 (van der Kroef, 1974, p. 117). But, unlike the BPP, the regular Thai army units were not trained or equipped for jungle operations and had no special language qualification. Consequently, the RTA units did not perform well and began to suffer "very heavy casualties" from mines and booby traps (Race, 1974, p. 103).

In early 1968, the RTA units lashed out at the Meo insurgents in predictably heavy handed fashion. After ordering all Meo hilltribes in critical sectors to move down from the mountains to live in "resettlement villages", the RTA reportedly napalmed villages where insurgents were suspected to be hiding (FEER, 7 March, 11 April, 25 April 1968). Also, an article in

Bangkok World reported on 18 April 1968, that those who refused to move down and be resettled would be considered with "suspicion" and "suppression operations" would be taken against them (Race, 1974, p. 103).

These two tactics, napalming and resettlement, needlessly drove many Meo into cooperation with the CPT, which used the situation adriotly to increase the size of the insurgency. Also, the burden of caring for the displaced Meo (4,000 by June 1968) complicated the RTA's operation in the northern provinces.

By the end of 1968, the insurgency had also engulfed Loei, Pitsanuloke and Phetchabun provinces (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 86). A total of 108 armed clashes were reported in northern Thailand during 1968 (up from nineteen the previous year). Also of significance is the fact that because the insurgency was spreading over such large areas and because of high casualties, the RTA was the motivating force which prompted the communists to begin raising the prospects of "an autonomous Meo state in Northern Thailand" (Taylor, 1974, p. 294).

In the same issue of Peking Review which first mentioned autonomy for the minorities, an article entitled "Thai People's Armed Forces March from Victory to Victory" claimed that recent events indicated "a new stage in the development of the Thai people's revolutionary war". This "new stage" was made possible by the CPT which had "integrated Marxism-Leninism- Mao Tse-tung thought with the concrete revolutionary practice of its own

country..." (PR, 17 January 1969, p. 22).

Up to this point in the insurgency, the Meo had only reacted to RTA or BBP patrols and had not initiated offensive offensive operations on their own. However, in November 1968, the Meo began an offensive which focused attacks on resettlement villages (Taylor, 1974, p. 294). On 22 November 1968, one of these attacks was directed at the village of Hui Sai Tai in Phitsanulok province. The purpose of the attack was to intimidate Meo who were trained by the RTA as a village defense unit. Nine Meo from the village defense unit were killed (Kirk, 1971, p. 168), clearly demonstrating the risks of cooperating with the Thai authorities. This tactic was to be used effectively by the insurgents as the insurgency grew.

The increased tempo of the insurgency in northern Thailand was paralleled by a decrease in the insurgent activity in the northeastern provinces of Thailand. Until this decline, the RTG had considered the northeastern sector as the most critical sector in terms of a threat to internal security (1965 to 1968). However, with the spread of "people's war" to the provinces of Loei, Phetchabun and Phitsanulok, northern Thailand became "the most critical" insurgency in Thailand (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 86). This distinction as the most critical insurgency was to continue until 1973.

The insurgency continued to expand in Thailand during 1969, especially in the northern provinces (Lovelace, 1971, p. 62).

In addition, the combination of military operations and Meo refugees being forced off their land had upset the economy to the extent that in large areas of the North it was completely destroyed" (Marks, 1973, p. 932). At this juncture General Saiyud of the Communist Supression Operations Command (CSOC), decided to change the strategy of the RTA. Instead of forced resettlement, new centers would be opened in the valleys where Meo could move voluntarily. Education, medical attention and other services would be offered to the Meo so that when they returned to the mountains, they might retain some degree of loyalty to the RTG (Kirk, 1971, pp. 165-166). The RTA was to conduct fewer operations in the mountains and instead, protect the lowlands. This shift in strategy was practically an admission that the RTA could not eliminate the Communist threat and the insurgency continued to grow.

Also, in early 1969, propaganda support from Peking for the CPT-led revolution increased to a new level (Taylor, 1974, p. 296). With the establishment of the Thai People's Liberation Armed Forces (TPLAF) (see page 67) the People's Daily declared that the situation was "excellent and getting better" (People's Daily, 9 January 1969), and "the Chinese people, now steeled in in the Cultural Revolution, would...provide more powerful backing to the revolutionary people of Thailand..." (NCNA, 3 January 1969).

The Meo also received increased attention by the CPT during the latter half of 1969. The broadcasts (in Meo) attempted to capitalize on the animosity between the Thai government and

the Meo hilltribes and call attention to the leadership of the CPT in helping stop Thai oppression. Two separate broadcasts in White Meo stressed:

> How can the Thanom clique change its traitorous nature? It will certainly continue to suppress us and suck our blood. The Meo people of all nationalities have no alternative other than to rise up, take arms, and fight against it (VPT, 30 August 1969).

> Under the reationary rule of the U.S. - Thanom clique, the people of the various minority nationalists of Thailand have been subjected to discrimination, insult, and ruthless oppression and exploitation. Only the Communist Party of Thailand is genuinely fighting for the interests of the oppressed and exploited people of the minority nationalities (SCMP, 4 December 1969, p. 39).

The number of violent clashes rose again in 1969 to a total of 112 in Northern Thailand (up slightly from 108 in 1968), but based on the RTA's new approach of not sweeping the mountains, the number reflects a substantial increase of Meo initiated attacks. The tempo of violence remained high and the Meo maintained the initiative by constantly ambushing, harassing and attacking isolated posts and units (Tanham, 1974, p. 60). In the words of an article in Peking Review, the insurgency "...like a prairie fire...has rapidly spread across the length and breadth of Thailand" (PR, 21 February 1969, p. 13), and the Meo insurgents had earned a prominent role in that insurgency.

The role of the CPT leadership in the successes of 1969 was mentioned repeatedly in VPT broadcasts. Also stressed was

the fact that the RTG was taking note of the insurgency and Thai efforts to suppress the "people's war" were being frustrated. A VPT broadcast in Thai alleged that the events of 1969 signified a "transitional period in Thailand's history" brought about by the "growth and victories of the people's armed struggle". The broadcast elaborated:

> The fact is that there has been a change in the situation in our country. Now the well-armed enemy who used to be so arrogant, is fearful and frantic. The people have been able to tame this arrogant enemy and are rising up to control the nation. All this is the result of the people's armed struggle led by the Thai Communist Party, which is guided by Marxism-Leninism and Maoism. (VPT, 22 November 1969 in FBIS, 25 November 1969, p. J1).

As pointed out in Chapter Three from 1965 to 1969 the entire Thai insurgency had been "gradually but completely made over in the image of the Chinese revolutionary model" (Lovelace, 1971, p. 63). During this period, Peking referred to the Thai insurgency more often than any other insurgency in Southeast Asia, including the one in Vietnam, and Peking praised the Thai insurgency as being "the model and varification of Mao's revolutionary doctrine" (Taylor, 1974, p. 296).

Each year since the start of the insurgency in Thailand, Peking's propaganda coverage had increased. The increase was especially noticable in the 1967-1969 period. The increase was reflected in the number of broadcasts and also in the hostility of the language used. This gradual increase of verbal propaganda support rose to its highest level in 1969 (Taylor, 1974, p. 296).

The statements of the CPT, the articles in the Chinese media, plus the rebroadcasts of the VPT and Radio Peking reflected an "uncompromising commitment to violence and the implicit shadow of Chinese power" (Weatherbee, 1970, p. 88).

From 1967 to 1969, the insurgency in northern Thailand grew to its highest level. Also, the Meo involvement was increasingly mentioned in broadcasts of the VPT and in printed dispatches emanating from Peking. However, there is one curious ommission on the part of Peking's propaganda approach. Peking did not broadcast to the Meo in the native dialect (Lovelace, 1971, p. 73). Instead, Radio Peking broadcast in either Thai or English and made few original references to the Meo. The same was true for NCNA articles, which made few references to the Meo even though numerous VPT and CPT references to the Meo were printed. The implication is that Peking may have realized that in order to fully legitimize the insurgency in Thailand, the Thai people had to carry out the insurgency and that the use of a minority group as the primary vehicle would have adverse effects.

In 1970 the tempo of violence remained high in northern Thailand and mostly favorable to the Meo guerrillas. While keeping up a series of constant harrassing ambushes and raids, the CPT and the Meo insurgents seemed to be intent on building up the liberated areas, stockpiling food, and generally preparing for a protracted conflict (Tanham, 1974, p. 60). Also, the level of training was such that the Meo were able to operate in large units

of a hundred or more men, whereas they had only operated in small groups previously (van der Kroef, 1974, p. 123).

PEKING'S REDUCTION OF SUPPORT FOR INSURGENCY

A major watershed in Peking's support for the insurgency in Thailand occured in 1970. The Chinese very clearly began to alter their propaganda approach to the Thai people's "armed struggle". As pointed out in Chapter Three, Peking's media reflects policy change very quickly. After vigorously supporting the insurgency in Thailand for five years, it was immediately noticeable in 1970 when references to China's support for the insurgency began to appear less frequently. A trend quickly developed in the Chinese propaganda in which Peking no longer expressed strong support for the guerrilla war in Thailand. Also highly significant was the fact that no further statements by the CCP were made concerning insurgency in Thailand (Taylor, 1974, p. 350).

This very significant move toward Thailand came about as part of a "sharp diminution of Peking's open support for insurgency" throughout Southeast Asia as China began to change her foreign policy after th Cultural Revolution (Leng, 1975, p. 790). While NCNA continued to originate its own articles, as well as carry VPT broadcasts, the CCP statements and references to the support of the "Chinese people" declined. When references to Thailand were made whether official or unofficial,

the statements referred to Thailand's support of the war in Indochina, not to the insurgency in Thailand (Taylor, 1974, p. 350). Of only slightly less significance was the failure of Radio Peking, on the birthday (1 December 1971) of the CPT, to announce a congradulatory message. This was the first time in six years such an omission occurred.

These were critically important signals to the Thai leaders at a time when the Thai Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman, was making public statements concerning peace and trade with China. These signals did not go unnoticed by Thanat who requested that Thai broadcasts also reduce their antagonistic content (see pages 35 and 37 of Chapter Two).

During the years 1970 to 1973, Peking carried out a very evident reduction in propaganda support for insurgent movements in Southeast Asia. In 1970, Peking endorsed six different insurgent movements in Southeast Asia 374 times through the NCNA. By 1973, only five insurgencies were endorsed a total of 32 times (Leng, 1975, p. 790). Drawing from Current Background published by the U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong, Leng Shio-chun constructed the following table which reflects Peking's reduced propaganda support. Each Chinese endorsement reflects a single broadcast or published article released by the NCNA.

	1970	1971	1972	1973
Burma	9	2	2	2
Indonesia	5	4	4	2
Malaysia	113	38	22	11
North Kalimantan	15	8	2	0
The Philippines	26	13	7	2
Thailand	188	135	116	15
TOTAL	374	200	153	32

This chart gives a good indication of how Peking's policy focus was changing. Even though Thailand bore the brunt of the endorsements (more than all the other insurgencies combined in every year except 1973), the trend was significant and well worth mention. Once again, it must be noted that none of these endorsements were by the CCP or inferred the support of the Chinese people as a whole. All were either from NCNA or rebroadcasts of VPT or CPT announcements.

Nonetheless, the insurgency in northern Thailand continued with Chinese supplied weapons and material support. The level of the armed struggle increased significantly in 1971. Well-armed guerrillas operated in company and battalion sized units, some of which had nortors, mines and rocket launchers (Tanham, 1974, p. 60). By the start of 1972, the insurgents in northern Thailand were causing 1,000 government casualties a year (Darling, 1973, p. 552).

There were basically two reasons the insurgency continued to grow even after the Chinese signaled in 1970 that their support would be reduced. The first reason is grounded in the tenet, men-

tioned earlier, that violence feeds upon itself as the insurgency begins to grow, and it takes on a momentum of its own. Given the fact that by 1970 the insurgency had recruited and armed hundreds of Meos in northern Thailand, it was not likely that those guerrillas would necessarily lower the level of their participation. The same applied to the leaderships of the insurgents who, by virture of their longer periods of training and ideological committment, were probably less inclined to curtail their participation in the insurgency.

The second reason arises from one of the objectives of guerrilla warfare which strives to draw the enemy government (in this case, the RTG) into a series of self-initiated and primarily military operations (Zimmerman, 1976, pp. 29-30). The insurgency achieved this objective and beginning in 1972, the RTC conducted large-scale military operations in northern Thailand. These actions, carried out by the RTA, were generally non-productive in a military sense, involved expenditure of large amounts of resources, caused serious losses for the military, and were psychologically self-defeating because the insurgents resumed political and military activities as soon as RTA units departed the area. Furthermore, the military operations were an attempt at extending military control, when the essence of the insurgency problem demanded an extension of governmental control in an effort to eliminate the disaffection of the Meo. The tenet of extending civilian control as opposed to military dominance had been evident for several decades

before the RTG chose such an alternative (Paret, 1964, p. 125).

The increased military operations of the RTA gave the appearance that the insurgency had spread widely and that the intensity of the conflict had escalated markedly. However, the possibility exists that if the RTA had not initiated the military operations, the level of insurgent activity might have remained relatively stable or might even have decreased. This interpretation seems plausible since the major activity of the insurgents in 1970 had been to build base camps and training sites, and the primary insurgent military operations consisted of harassing attacks, raids, and ambushes (Tanham, 1974, p. 60).

The best example of how the RTA carried out these large military operations was the "Phu Kwang" operation launched in January of 1972. The Thai leaders considered the insurgency in the northern provinces to be such a significant threat that the equivalent of two divisions of Thai troops moved into the "tri-province" area of Phitsanulok, Loei, and Phetchabun (Darling, 1973, p. 552). Not only was this the biggest operation even launched by the RTA, but, for the first time ever, the First Division was deployed from Bangkok to fight the Meo insurgents (Tanham, 1974, p. 98). The operation was grimly similar to the search-and-clear operations in Vietnam and involved over 12,000 Thai soldiers.

A force of approximately 500 Meo hilltribesmen reportedly occupied the tri-province mountain area and, though continually pounded by Thai artillery and air strikes, put up a fierce resis-

tance. The Meo were able to resupply themselves with food and ammunition hauled into the area by back-pack and mule train from Laos throughout the entire operation and, despite their small number, were not nearly as handicapped as they might have appeared. The Meo were seemingly more than able to hold their own against the Thai soldiers. Although casualty figures were initially secret, one observer stated that "it is known that thirty Thais were killed and two hundred wounded in the first six weeks of the siege" (Christian Science Monitor, 11 April 1972, p. 7). Two years later George Tanham, who was the counterinsurgency specialist in the US Embassy at the time, cited a casualty figure of seven hundred Thai soldiers while Meo casualties were "negligible" (Tanham, 1974, p. 98). Reports at the site indicated that 150-200 Meo were killed or wounded, but when Thai soldiers gained control of the main Meo base, no enemy bodies were found (FEER, 8 April 1972, p. 6).

After three months, the Thai troops withdrew and the Meo base was reoccupied by the insurgents and it became as much a refuge as the "U Minh swamps" or the "Seven Mountains" in Vietnam (FEER, 13 May 1973, p. 18). The results were quickly made part of the VPT propaganda broadcasts and began to stress the Meo achievement. One such broadcast claimed that the liberation forces had not only foiled the "...Phu Kwang operation and won splendid victories..." but had also "...wiped out 830 enemy troops, downed or damaged 40 planes of various types, wrecked 10 army vehicles... and seized a large number of weapons and war materials..." (VPT,

18 May 1972 in FBIS, 25 May 1972).

While this broadcast was probably overstated as to Thai casualties and downed aircraft, the Thai units did lose a good deal of war material, which the Meo could put to immediate use. There was one unconfirmed report from Bangkok that the Meo had captured such a large quantity of U.S. M-16 ammunition that they sent a delegation to Laos to purchase M-16 rifles (U.S. News and World Report, 21 May 1973, p. 82).

The operation expended a large amount of scarce governmental resources; one unconfirmed report listed a cost of $3.5 million. The three month effort also exposed numerous deficiencies in the ability of the Thai authorities to carry out such a large combined operation. There had been little coordination made with local authorities and the operation was carried out based on inadequate intelligence (Parker, 1973, p. 332). In total, "little was accomplished" in destroying the Meo base areas to killing or capturing insurgents (Tanham, 1974, p. 99).

Two points are worthy of mention concerning the "Phu Kwang" operation. The first concerns the possibility that the operation was not necessarily desired by Thai leaders. The RTG had been pressed to undertake division-sized operations by American officials in Bangkok. George Tanham who was in the US Embassy in Bangkok at the time, revealed this bit of information, and indicated that U.S. advice would be evaluated more critically afterward (Tanham, 1974, p. 99).

The second point is that the communist propaganda emanating from Peking did not capitalize on the Meo success in a very enthusiastic manner. The CCP made no announcement at all (as previously discussed) and the articles in Peking Review did not make mention of PRC, CCP, or the Chinese people's support of the "Phu Kwang" victory. The PR did reiterate the leadership of the CPT, mentioned high casualty rates for the "U.S.-Thai reactionaries", and praised the "patriotic armed forces and people" for their fighting skill. However, there was no mention of Meo insurgents actually participating in the battle. (For example see PR, 17 March 1972, pp. 16-17). This is a significant omission and may have been interpreted by Thai leaders as a reduction of support for the insurgency in northern Thailand since no praise or encouragement was stressed for the insurgents who actually did the fighting.

Soon after the "Phu Kwang" operation, the propaganda reflected an additional signal to the Thai leaders. The tone of Peking's propaganda was lowered in the way Thailand's leaders were addressed. The content of the propaganda dropped its denunciation of the Thai leaders in 1972. (Parker, 1973, pp. 331-332). In the early part of the year, there were still references to the "Thanom-Prapas clique" and the "U.S.-Thanom clique" (PR, 17 March 1972, pp. 16-17), but the references were beginning to decline. By the end of 1972 the denuciations were no longer used by Peking. This reflected a less hostile attitude toward the leadership in Bangkok which had been attacked harshly in previous years.

In 1973, the Thai government lowered its military profile in the northern provinces. Only one "large" military operation was carried out and only two battalions of Thai marines were involved. This was the first use of the Thai marines in counterinsurgency operations, and their mode of operation was more cautious and deliberate. There were no notable engagements and the casualties were kept down to about seventy Thai marines. However, once again the accomplishments of the operation were minimal just as the "Phu Kwang" operation had been the year before. (Tanham, 1974, pp. 98-99).

The matter of Meo participation during the period of 1970 to 1973 deserves special attention at this point. While the level of military activity had the appearance of escalating, it is notable that the number of insurgents in northern Thailand did not increase. As mentioned earlier, the number of Meo guerrillas escalated dramatically from 1967 to 1970; growing from 150 to 3,000 in less than four years. However, the number remained fairly constant from 1970 to 1973. George Tanham gave a figure of only 2,500 Meo guerrillas in 1973, supported by about 800 village militia (Tanham, 1974, p. 62). Another author estimated 3,000 Meo guerrillas in 1973, which he believed was a 15 to 20 percent increase over the 1972 number. (Marks, 1974, p. 94).

The number of Meo guerrillas, given their basic disaffection with the Thai government, could probably have been substantially increased if the leadership of the CPT had undertaken a

vigorous recruitment program. After the introduction of large numbers of RTA units into northern Thailand, the CPT had at their disposal an appealing propaganda theme. That theme could have been expressed as, "Meo people of the mountains, the oppressive U.S.-Thai reactionaries are invading your homeland. Protect your home and family, take up arms, and resist the hated enemy troops. The Communist Party of Thailand will show you the way." Given the communist's expert use of propaganda resources and their keen appreciation of adapting propaganda to social grievances, the oversight was probably intentional on the part of the CPT. Furthermore, if the oversights were intentional, the reason was probably either to voluntarily follow Peking's example, or perhaps the Chinese leaders used their influence to pressure the CPT into overlooking the opportunity. Of course, no evidence is available to demonstrate the implication but the matter does reflect a reduction in the PRC and CPT propaganda support for "armed struggle" in northern Thailand.

The military operations of the Meo insurgents during 1973 were also notably low-key. No operation was undertaken on a large scale or in such a manner that would have alarmed the Thai authorities. This absence of critical insurgent activity was noted within months after Prasit had been told by Chou En-lai that the PRC would not interfere in other countries internal affairs. (Prasit's interview with Chou had taken place in early September 1972). The reduced insurgent activity soon after

Chou's announcement could have been interpreted as an indication of Peking's sincerity in reducing Chinese support for the insurgency. The situation in northern Thailand might also have appeared more sanguine because of the increased activities of the North Vietnamese-supported insurgency in northeast Thailand which began to pick up noticeably by the end of 1973 (New York Times, 28 December 1973, p. 18, Bangkok Radio, 1 February 1974 and in FBIS, 6 February 1974, p. 51). Also noteworthy is that after Prasit's visit to Peking, the VPT toned down its broadcasts by halting the attacks on the "Thanom clique". The VPT maintained that policy for the duration of Thanom's tenure in Bangkok (Parker, 1973, p. 335). While this step by the VPT cannot be proven as an instance of following Peking's lead in no longer denouncing the Thai leaders, it is at least an indication that there were parallel efforts reflecting close coordination between the two communist medias.

This situation in 1973 while seemingly still the most critical militarily, reflected a movement that was essentially one of an aggravated minority group which was relatively small and had a fragmented non-Thai political base. Therefore, the chance of the insurgency spreading out of the mountains in northern Thailand to influence and include the ethnic Thai was minimal (Darling, 1973, p. 553). Potentially the most dangerous region in Thailand was the Northeast and in recognition of this fact, Thai authorities began to shift their emphasis away from the

northern insurgency and the Northeast again assumed the role of the most critical insurgency in Thailand; a role which the region had previously held until late 1968.

Lt General Saiyud, who was the director of the Communist Suppression Operations Command and was charged with the overall responsibility of combating the communist insurgency throughout Thailand, signaled the shift of Thai emphasis in an interview as early as March of 1973 (Jenkins, 1973, p. 26). Saiyud's interview constituted the first public statement by a Thai official that the emphasis was shifting away from the north. However, some close observers in northern Thailand had called attention to the fact as early as 1971 that the Northeast had remained the principal communist target area. Arnold Abrams suggested that the communist had only feinted to the north in order to gain time to build up an infrastructure in the Northeast. (Abrams, 1971, pp. 21-24). While the intent at this point is not to address the Northeast insurgency in depth, there is ample agreement that the emphasis did shift to the Northeast in 1973 and that the insurgency in that region was directed by North Vietnam and was not significantly influenced by Peking (Alpern, 1975, pp. 684-686; Marks, 1973, pp. 942-943).

The major event that reflected Peking's sincere intent to lower its activity in northern Thailand occurred in early 1974. Defense Minister Thawi Chulasap in his capacity as Chairman of the Thai Olympic Committee visited the People's Republic of China

in February. Granted an interview with Premier Chou En-lai, the two leaders discussed Peking's support for insurgency in Thailand. In a Nation interview, Thawi related that Chou told him that PRC support for local insurgents was "a thing of the past" since "we now have a democratic government appointed by his majesty the king" (Nation, 17 February 1974 in FBIS, 19 February 1974, p. J1).

Chou's statement was the most profound articulation of Peking's approach to Thailand any Chinese official had made during the period of this examination. The implication of the statement bears scrutiny on at least three counts. First, Chou's words constituted a public confession of the PRC's support for insurgency in Thailand; it was tantamount to Peking's first official admission of previous support to local Thai insurgents. Second, it gave the Thai leaders their first official public statement of what the PRC was going to do about the insurgency in Thailand. Third, and most important, was the stated intent that the PRC would not support the insurgency any longer.

Chou's statement was received warmly in Bangkok and it reflected how much progress had been made since Thanat Khoman started the first cautious dialogue with the PRC. As if anticipating the question of if and when diplomatic relations could be established, Chou continued his statement and said that he would like diplomatic relations with Thailand "very soon" (ibid, p. J2).

The obstacle of Peking's support for insurgency was now reduced to the point where Thailand no longer considered it un-

acceptable. As described in Chapter Two, the formal procedures of establishing formal relations were delayed for another year, primarily because of Thai internal political turmoil. During the intervening period, Peking proved to be very patient and exhibited an understanding of Thailand's problems, and no events occurred which might cause the Thai leaders to re-appraise the threat.

During this interregnum, the insurgency in northern Thailand, while evident and still of concern to Thai officials, remained very low-key and posed no threat to the Thai authorities. As a reflection of how the insurgency had receded, a newspaper in Bangkok pointed out that right after the monsoon's end in July and August, the insurgent activity had always picked up, but this year (1974) there was little news of insurgent activity in northern Thailand (Bangkok World, 7 September 1974, p. 2D; FBIS, 7 September 1974, p. J1). This would tend to bear out Chou's pledge not to support the insurgency any longer and to strongly affect Thai leaders perceptions that the insurgency no longer comprised a major obstacle to formal relations with Peking. The level of insurgency remained in the above - mentioned posture up to 1 July 1975 when a Thai delegation traveled to Peking and a formal communique was signed establishing formal diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Thailand and the People's Republic of China.

This chapter has examined the obstacle of Chinese support for the insurgency in northern Thailand. The insurgency was

to have been carried out by Meo hilltribes recruited by the CPT which capitalized on Meo traits, customs, and disaffection with the Royal Thai Government.

The insurgency was supported by Peking in that the Chinese provided material, leadership training, and propaganda support. With this Chinese support, and direction from the CPT, the Meo insurgents became part of a major threat to the RTG. By late 1968, the insurgency in northern Thailand had surpassed the Northeast region in criticality and was perceived by Thai leaders as the major threat to the Thai government. The insurgency continued to grow in intensity until it reached its peak in 1970.

The events in 1970 proved to be a watershed in northern Thailand because as the Thai leaders began their attempt to establish a dialogue with Peking, the Chinese support for the Meo insurgency began to decline noticeably. Peking's support dropped continuously from 1970 to 1973. Propaganda support was the aspect most visibly affected, but also there was a discernable decline in the recruitment of Meo and the initiation of clashes with the RTA.

However, the level of military activity remained high during these years of reduced Chinese support. This military activity was not necessarily because of the CPT or Peking's influence, but was partially due to the fact that the insurgency had gained a momentum of its own. However, the primary reason was because the RTA began to expand its military operations against the Meo by

employing large size units. When the RTA reduced the scope of its operations, the level of the insurgent activity dropped dramatically.

The propaganda emanating from Peking and the VPT also reflected a measurable drop in frequency of broadcasts, along with a noticeable reduction in hostile tone between 1970 and 1973. The combination of these two factors, reduced military activity and a shift in propaganda emphasis, contributed to the change of the Thai perception which shifted in 1973 and focused on northeastern Thailand as the region where insurgency was most critical (the new threat was influenced primarily by Hanoi and not Peking).

The chapter also revealed a noticeable parallel between the lessening Chinese emphasis on insurgency in northern Thailand and the evolution of a dialogue between Bangkok and Peking which was discussed in Chapter Two. In conclusion, after Chou En-lai remarked that Peking would no longer support insurgency in Thailand, the Thai leaders perceived that the Chinese support for the insurgency in northern Thailand no longer posed an obstacle to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This thesis has examined how the evolution of formal diplomatic relations between Thailand and the People's Republic of China from 1965 to 1975 were facilitated by the reduction of two major obstacles. The two obstacles were the U.S. military presence in Thailand and the support of the PRC for the insurgency in northern Thailand. The attempt to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries was brought about by the changing power relationships in Southeast Asia, and in order to pragmatically adjust to the emerging environment, the two countries perceived the need for closer, more harmonious relations.

In a single decade, formal diplomatic relations were an indication of the major change which Peking and Bangkok had made in their perceptions since regarding each other as enemies in 1965. That year, the Thai leaders elected to join the U.S. in carrying out the Indochina war. The influx of U.S. military power which used Thailand as a base from which to launch the air war in Indochina, was perceived by Peking as a threat which had to be reduced before any meaningful dialogue could be started.

During the same period, the Thai leaders perceived that

Peking was supporting an insurgency in Thailand which was aimed at subverting the Thai government. Thai interpretations of the CPT reflected a belief that Chinese influence in the party was significant. The frequent propaganda broadcasts emanating from Peking which encouraged the insurgents and stressed support for the CPT were interpreted by the Thai government as Peking's attempts to subvert their authority. Therefore, China's support for the insurgency in northern Thailand had to be resolved before relations could evolve. After these two obstacles were traced from their origins, the thesis examined how the respective governments went about reducing the two obstacles in an effort to reach an accommodation that would lead to more amiable relations, and eventually result in the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1975.

The origin of the United States' military presence in Thailand was examined first. Soon after World War II, Thailand began to side with the West and in a graduated process began to establish close military ties with the United States. Suspicions of Communist Chinese intentions after their take-over of the mainland, and China's involvement in Korea seemed to confirm Thailand's image of China's hostile foreign policy. Afterward, Thailand sent troops to fight the communists in Korea, elected to receive military aid from the United States, joined SEATO, and signed a bi-lateral security agreement with the United States. By 1965, Thailand was staunchly anti-communist

and had aligned her military policy closely with that of the United States.

The close U.S.-Thai military relations led to the Thai decision to cooperate with the U.S. in carrying out the war in Indochina. This large American military presence in Thailand was perceived by Peking to be the primary threat to China, even though Thailand supported the Indochina war in other ways, to include sending Thai combat troops to fight in Laos and South Vietnam. However, in the late 1960's the United States began to reappraise the situation in Southeast Asia and consequently began to reduce the American military presence in Indochina. Thailand also began to reexamine the military relationship with the United States and began to negotiate for American troop withdrawals from Thailand in order to loosen the close military ties.

At the same time, the Thai leaders began to follow a more flexible course in international relations by opening talks with a number of communist countries. The most important communist country with which Thailand established a dialogue was the People's Republic of China. The events that were to lead to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1975 were traced in order to demonstrate how the Thais placed less emphasis on U.S. military presence. A significant trend is that as moves were made toward closer Sino-Thai relations, the closer military ties between Thailand and the United States were loosened. The most significant aspect of the loosening of military ties was reflected in the

reduction of the U.S. military presence in Thailand. The reduction continued until the Thai leaders had announced that all U.S. combat troops were to be withdrawn from Thailand and Chou En-lai had expressed satisfaction with the U.S. troop level in Thailand. Thus, the major obstacle of the U.S. military presence in Thailand was reduced to a level acceptable to Peking and no longer constituted an obstacle to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Background information was provided in order to illustrate how the Thai leaders perceived that the second obstacle which was Peking's support for the insurgency in Thailand. The role of the Communist Party of Thailand in its support of insurgency in Thailand was addressed and the CPT was identified as the organization which provided the leadership, direction and ideological orientation for the insurgent movement. Furthermore, Thai officials perceived that the CPT was influenced by Peking. This perception evolved because the CPT was organized by Chinese communists in the 1920's, the CPT based its revolutionary doctrine on the Chinese model, and the CPT's frequent references to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Also, the Thais perceived that Peking was able to exert influence over the CPT in order to carry out Peking's policy objectives in Thailand, especially in the case of the insurgency in northern Thailand.

The nature of the propaganda support which Peking provided to support the insurgency in Thailand was also provided

as background information. The Chinese involvement in the insurgency in northern Thailand was most evident and measurable in the organized method by which propaganda was used to lend support to the CPT and the armed insurgents. Primarily through the medium of radio broadcasts, Peking addressed the Thai people and the minority groups of Thailand on a daily basis in order to enhance the role of the CPT and the insurgents in their struggle against the RTG. Therefore, the discussion on propaganda was critical to understanding how Chinese propaganda was used to support the insurgency and the CPT.

The Meo hilltribes were then addressed because they made up the vehicle which the CPT utilized to carry out the insurgency in northern Thailand. A brief explanation of the Meo migration from China into Thailand was followed by an examination of the primary cultural traits and customs of the Meo which the CPT capitalized upon in order to recruit Meo insurgents. The effort of the RTG to extend governmental control over the Meo created a situation whereby the Meo became disillusioned with any attempt to have RTG controls imposed on them. The result was a situation which the CPT could utilize to foment hostility toward the RTG and draw the Meo into an insurgency.

The second obstacle of Peking's support for the armed insurgency in northern Thailand was examined and demonstrated how the CPT, with Chinese material, leadership, and propaganda support, was able to fashion an insurgency which the Thai

leaders perceived to be a threat to Thai security. By late 1968, the Thai leadership considered the northern insurgency to be the most critical in Thailand, and the insurgency continued to grow steadily until reaching its peak in 1970.

The events in 1970 proved to be a watershed in northern Thailand because as Thai leaders began their attempt to establish a dialogue with Peking, the Chinese support for the Meo insurgents began to decline noticeably. Each year from 1970 to 1973, Peking's support for the insurgency dropped more and more. The decrease was most visible in the propaganda support, but was also noticeable in the areas of Meo recruitment and Meo initiated armed clashes with the Royal Thai Army.

Although the level of military activity remained high from 1970 to 1973, the cause did not necessarily rest with the CPT or Peking's influence, but was partially due to the fact that the insurgency had gained a momentum of its own. However, the primary reason was because the Royal Thai Army began to expand the military operations against the Meo by utilizing large RTA units. When the RTA reduced the scope of its operations, the level of insurgent activity dropped dramatically.

The propaganda emanating from Peking and the VPT also reflected a measurable decline in frequency along with a noticeable drop in hostile tone between 1970 and 1973. These two factors, reduced military activity and a shift in propaganda emphasis, contributed to the change of the Thai perception which

shifted in 1973 to focus on northeastern Thailand as the region where insurgency was most critical (northeastern Thailand reflected Hanoi's influence rather than that of Peking).

The investigation also revealed a notable parallel between lessening Chinese emphasis on insurgency in northern Thailand and the evolution of the dialogue between Bangkok and Peking. After Chou-En-lai remarked that Peking would no longer support insurgency in Thailand, the Thai leaders perceived that the Chinese support for the insurgency in northern Thailand no longer posed an obstacle to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

This thesis demonstrated that before the Thai Prime Minister traveled to Peking to establish formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, two major obstacles had been overcome. The Thai leaders had been successful in negotiating a dramatic reduction of the U.S. military presence in Thailand, and Peking's support for the insurgency in northern Thailand had been lowered to the point that it no longer posed a threat to the Thai government.

In an effort to place the establishment of diplomatic relations between Peking and Bangkok in a broader context, some implications for future relations between Thailand and the PRC follow. The first implication concerns the manner in which the loosened U.S.-Thai military relationship was discussed throughout this thesis. No effort was made to determine the extent to

which the overall ties between the United States and Thailand had changed, and it must be emphasized at this point that the loosened alignment between Thailand and the U.S. implies only the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Thailand. This loosening of military ties does not necessarily prejudice Thailand's security, but, as one member of the Brookings Institute points out, might even enhance Thailand's ability to maintain her independence by strengthening the "nationalistic posture and self-reliance of the Thai leaders" (Clough, 1975, p. 205).

The United States remains committed to the policy of remaining an Asian-Pacific power. The new Assistant Secretary of State for Asian and Pacific Affairs, Richard C. Holbrooke, in a testimony before the House International Relations Committee, emphasized that the U.S. continues to have an interest in Southeast Asia and will play an important role there. Thailand is important to the security of Southeast Asia and the U.S. will continue economic aid as part of the continued U.S. interest in Southeast Asia. There was no mention of military aid or emphasis on protecting Thailand from the "obvious security concerns" which stemmed from hostile neighbors and on externally supported insurgency.

Rather than stress the negative aspects of Thai-U.S. relations, Mr. Holbrooks focused on economic assistance programs which were designed to benefit the rural poor of Thailand. One goal was to obtain a 3.5 percent growth rate in annual production

of foodstuffs by 1985. A second goal was to slow down the population increase which tended to cancel the increase in food production. In addition, health and education programs were made part of the economic aid to improve the conditions of the rural poor in Thailand (Department of State Statement, 10 March 1977, pp. 1-5).

This shift in emphasis reflects a movement away from the paternalistic tendency of the U.S. to assume a major responsibility for the Thai government's success or failure, while maintaining an implicit commitment to help defend Thailand in a crisis situation (in order to "play an appropriate role" in regional security). In order to maintain such a relationship, there is no need for U.S. troops to be stationed in Thailand, since there is no external power posing a military aggressiveness. Therefore, the withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Thailand does not necessarily reflect a weaker relationship between the two countries that have such a longstanding security relationship and whose goals in Southeast Asia remain basically similar.

Another implication is the role of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV - the DRV changed its name on 2 July 1976, to reflect the official reuniting of North and South Vietnam) which could have a considerable impact on the nature of future Sino-Thai relations. There is a growing body of evidence "that the goals of the PRC and the SRV do not coincide in Southeast Asia or in Thailand. Hanoi emerged from the Indochina war as the

strongest military power in Southeast Asia and some believe that the SRV also considers itself to be the "cutting edge" of the revolutionary movement in Southeast Asia (Cameron, 1976, p. 25). The Chinese had previously been the sole heir to this claim and the Chinese leaders are aware that the SRV assumption of a leading role in the revolutionary movements in Southeast Asia will be at the expense of Peking (Cameron, 1976, p. 29).

The growing "rivalry" in Southeast Asia between the PRC and the SRV is not a recent phenomenon. Harold Hinton pointed out that the competition has been manifest since the early 1950's (Hinton, 1966, pp. 242-243). Some authors point to this rivalry and suggest that Peking's involvement in Thailand may have been influenced by SRV competition in an area which China had traditionally considered to be in the Sino sphere of influence. Therefore, as Donald Weatherbee has suggested, Peking's support for the insurgency in Thailand was a "political attempt" to limit North Vietnamese expansion (Westherbee, 1970, p. 48).

The recent change of power relations in Southeast Asia has led to the reassessment of the Thai perception of the major threat to Thai national security. While China was perceived as the major external threat during the 1960's, it appears that Hanoi has been elevated to the position of being the greatest cause for concern. In the 1960's both Thailand and the United States viewed the threat to be primarily from Peking and secondarily from Hanoi, according to the appraisal of the U.S. Ambassador

to Thailand, Leonard Unger (Senate Hearings, 1969, pp. 626-627). This perception was sharpened after Peking "increased its aid to the Meo guerrillas" and the North Vietnamese were too deeply involved in the Indochina war to threaten Thailand (Kirk, 1971, pp. 262-263).

Because of the events leading to the establishment of diplomatic relations, Thailand no longer perceives the PRC as the primary threat. Now Thailand must also address the SRV in a different manner. Hanoi has not only emerged from the Indochina war as the strongest military force in the Southeast Asian mainland, but both Laos and Combodia seem to be under strong Vietnamese influence. Thailand is in the difficult position of having provoked the "winning side" in the recent war and must now attempt to reach some sort of accord with Hanoi.

The question is often raised as to whether or not Hanoi has any intention of expanding its influence into Thailand. The North Vietnamese already provide the primary source of external support for the insurgency in northeastern Thailand, and may capitalize on this opportunity to keep Thailand off-balance and prevent a Thai success in suppressing a communist insurgency which would stand out in sharp contrast to the communist political processes in Indochina (Zimmerman, 1976, p. 37). Because of this, the North Vietnamese now seem to have more to gain than the Chinese in supporting an insurgency in Thailand.

Since the PRC and Thailand have established diplomatic

relations, communication between the two capitals has been greatly facilitated. On the other hand, communication between Bangkok and Hanoi is not as satisfactory, therefore the North Vietnamese may want to use the insurgency as a form of communication to Bangkok. This is a situation very reminescent of how Peking used the insurgency in northern Thailand (Lovelace, 1971, p. 90).

The U.S. perception to the North Vietnamese threat is worthy of mention also. Recently, General George S. Brown, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff appraised the military situation in Southeast Asia in a military posture statement to the Congress. General Brown anticipated no major conflict in Southeast Asia but stated that local problems of stability will continue to be a problem. He did point out that the leaders of most Asian nations, including the leadership of the PRC, appreciated the presence of U.S. military forces as a stabilizing element. In the specific case of Thailand, there was no mention of Chinese activity or threat; however, the General was quite specific in stressing that the Thais "primary" military concerns are "vulnerability to attack by Vietnam" and the possibility of expanded Laotian and Vietnamese support for the communist insurgents (U.S. Information Guidance Series, 1977, pp. 1-4). This change reflects a clear shift of perception by U.S. leaders.

The last implication to be mentioned deals with the most critical aspect of Sino-Thai relations. Despite the establishment of formal diplomatic relations, there is evidence that the PRC

still provides an undetermined amount of support to the on-going insurgency in northern Thailand. While the insurgency poses no serious threat to the RTG, the lingering knowledge that some Chinese support still exists must be somewhat disturbing to Bangkok. However, Peter Van Ness points out that the PRC simply cannot give up support for revolutionary movements that look to Peking for leadership. To do so would cost China the respect of those third-world revolutionaries who have looked to Peking for moral leadership and political support (Van Ness, 1976, p. 63). The PRC gains considerable respect and recognition from the support it provides to the type of revolutionary movement that exists in Thailand.

To give up the support for revolutionary movements would also leave the way open for some other communist government to capitalize on the PRC's exit and take over the support. On a world-wide basis, the USSR is the obvious beneficiary of such a move. In Southeast Asia, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) is in a very favorable position to benefit from a PRC decision to withdraw such support. Therefore it would be "naive" to expect Peking to give up her role in world revolution (Leng, 1975, p. 792).

Consequently, Peking's approach to Thailand will probably continue on two levels: First, the state-to-state relationship will continue in order to lend stability to the area of Southeast Asia. Second, at the party-to-party level,

Peking can probably be expected to lend some form of low-key support to the CPT. The state-to-state relationship will undoubtably play the major role in Sino-Thai relations and will probably prove very adequate in advancing the interests of the two governments. Indications are that both Chinese and Thai officials place significant emphasis on attempting to make the new relationship function smoothly and effectively.

Both Peking and Bangkok seem fully aware that their new relationship is being observed closely by officials of other nations who might be interested in closer ties with the PRC. For this reason, the PRC will probably avoid taking any action which would jeopardize the relations. This will most likely mean that the insurgency in northern Thailand will be kept at a level which will not threaten the security of Thailand.

Both governments are interested in a stable, conflict free Southeast Asia in which no great power is predominant in a manner which will increase tension in the region. Toward that end, the events leading to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between Thailand and the PRC have contributed significantly. Hopefully, the trend will continue and contribute to a peaceful and cooperative environment throughout Southeast Asia.

APPENDIX A

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

On the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand

1. The Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand, 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 People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand, 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 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 forfeiting 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 People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand 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.

(Signed)	(Signed)
CHOU EN-LAI	MOM RAJWONGSE KUKRIT PRAMOJ
Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China	Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand

Peking, July 1, 1975

APPENDIX B

VICE-PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING'S SPEECH

(Excerpts)

We are very glad that His Excellency Mom Rajwongse Kukrit Pramoj, Prime Minister of Thailand, has come to China at the invitation of Premier Chou En-lai on an official visit, bringing to the Chinese people the friendship of the people of Thailand. There are among the distinguished guests from Thailand His Excellency Foreign Minister Chatichai Coonhavan and other old friends who have visited our country more than once in recent years as well as many new friends who are here for the first time. I am entrusted by Premier Chou En-lai to host this evening's banquet. Please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, to express our warm welcome to His Excellency Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj and the other distinguished guests from Thailand.

Thailand is a country with a long history. The industrious and valiant people of Thailand have made an important contribution to the treasure-house of Asian civilization by creating their magnificent ancient culture. After the imperialist and colonialist invasion of Asia, the people of Thailand waged a protracted and unyielding struggle to safeguard their national independence. Their struggle won the deep sympathy and admiration of the people of all countries. In international affairs, Thailand actively develops friendly relations with other third world countries, stands for a

peaceful and neutral Southeast Asia and is opposed to power politics and hegemonism. We sincerely wish the people of Thailand new and greater victories on their road of advance.

At present, the international situation continues to develop in a direction favourable to the people of all countries. Thanks to the great victories won by the Indochinese peoples, an excellent situation now prevails in Southeast Asia. After the Second World War, the situation in Southeast Asia remained in constant tension and the relations between the Southeast Asian countries and other Asian countries were extremely abnormal because one of the superpowers persisted in a war of aggression in Indochina. Now, this superpower has finally suffered irrevocable defeat under the counter-blows of the Indochinese peoples and had to withdraw from Indochina. This situation has created very favourable conditions for Southeast Asian countries to act independently and take their destiny into their own hands. It is, however, noteworthy that the other superpower with wild ambitions has extended its tentacles far and wide. It insatiably seeks new military bases in Southeast Asia and sends its naval vessels to ply the Indian and West Pacific Oceans, posing a menacing threat to the peace and security of the Southeast Asian countries. The spectre of its expansionism now haunts Southeast Asia, as it hankers for converting this region into its sphere of influence some day. But the people of the Southeast Asian countries, who suffered untold misery under imperialist and colonialist rule, will never allow any superpower

to subject their countries again to aggression, oppression and control. We believe that the Southeast Asian people, uniting themselves and persisting in struggle, will smash all superpower schemes of aggression and expansion and victoriously guard their countries' independence and sovereignty. History has proved and will continue to prove that Southeast Asia belongs to the people of the Southeast Asian countries, and not to any superpower.

China is a developing socialist country; like the Southeast Asian countries, she belongs to the third world. We have always sympathized with and supported the just struggles of all oppressed nations and oppressed peoples. Through their own protracted struggle, our people have become keenly aware that the destiny of a country can be determined only by its own people. Foreign aggression and interference are impermissible and are doomed to failure. We consider that countries with different social systems can develop state relations on the basis of the five 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. In conformity with these principles China has already established diplomatic relations with many countries. This is a vivid proof that these principles are practicable and full of vitality.

This visit by His Excellency Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj to China has turned a new page in the history of China-Thailand relations. Our two countries are close neighbours, and there is

a kinship-like traditional friendship between our two peoples. Friendly contacts between our peoples can be traced to more than two thousand years ago. There was a period before the colonialist and imperialist invasion of Asia when emissaries travelled in a steady stream between China and Thailand, and the two peoples carried on a brisk economic and cultural interflow. In the history of China-Thailand relations, quite a number of Chinese emigrated to Thailand and have lived amicably with the people there, adding kinship to the relationship between the Chinese and Thai peoples. After the founding of New China, the contacts between our two countries were unfortunately interrupted for a time, owing to imperialist obstruction and sabotage. But that was only a brief interlude in the long history of friendship between our two peoples. We are happy to note that in recent years the traditional friendship of our two peoples has resumed and developed at a rapid pace. Cultural, athletic, scientific and commercial exchanges between the two countries have increased steadily. It is the common wish of our two peoples to effect the normalization of relations between China and Thailand. During this visit of Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj, our two governments will sign a joint communique to announce officially the establishment of diplomatic relations. The Chinese Government and people heartily welcome this development. We wish His Excellency the Prime Minister and the other distinguished guests from Thailand complete success in their visit.

APPENDIX C

PRIME MINISTER KUKRIT PRAMOJ'S SPEECH

(Excerpts)

I feel it a high honour to have been invited to pay an official visit to the People's Republic of China by H. E. Chou En-lai, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. When I received the invitation, I felt great pleasure in having the opportunity to take part in the revival and further strengthening of the traditionally close and friendly ties that have existed for so long between the people of the Kingdom of Thailand and the people of the People's Republic of China, in conformity with the interests and common desires of the two peoples. From the moment I arrived in China, I and my party have been received with a friendship of the utmost warmth. I should like to take this opportunity to thank our hosts and through them to express our deep appreciation to the people of China.

My visit to China is the result of the development of relations between the Kingdom of Thailand and the People's Republic of China that have progressed step by step over the recent years. In these contacts, both sides have cooperated with sincerity in the creation of mutual understanding. In this connection, the exchange of sports teams, doctors, scientists, trade delegations and the visit by Members of the National Assembly have played an important role in drawing our two peoples close together.

The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand to which I had the honour of being appointed Prime Minister, is a democratic government elected by the Thai people and represents all the people of Thailand. The foreign policy objective of this government is to follow an independent course in promoting peaceful coexistence on the principle of friendship with all countries professing good intention towards Thailand, without regard to differences in political ideologies or governmental systems, and based on the principles of justice, equality and non-interference, in either direct or indirect forms, in the internal affairs of each other. It is for this reason that the recognition and normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China had high priority in the conduct of the foreign policy of my government.

The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand wishes to reaffirm that only the people of each country have the right to choose their own political, economic and social system free from outside interference. The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand is convinced that even though the Kingdom of Thailand and the People's Republic of China have differing political, economic and social systems, this should not constitute an obstacle to the development of peaceful and amicable relations between our two countries and peoples on the basis of the principles of Pancha Sila.

At the present time, efforts to establish hegemony and spheres of influence have not declined, and the countries of

Southeast Asia continue to have to oppose all manners of subversion from outside in order to preserve their right to choose their own political, economic and social systems without external interference. For this reason, five countries of the region, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand made the Bangkok Declaration of 1966 establishing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Since 1966, the ASEAN, which is a regional organization for economic and social co-operation, has expanded its activities to cover efforts towards political solidarity too.

The worthy political intent of the ASEAN countries were again demonstrated when representatives of our five nations met in Kuala Lumpur in November 1971 and made the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Southeast Asia to be a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality. The important consideration underlying the Kuala Lumpur Declaration is that the ASEAN countries with the whole of Southeast Asia to be an area free from the rivalry and conflict of all the great powers. In other words, the intent of the declaration is to bring benefits to all the countries in the region regardless of differences in political, economic or social systems. Should the creation of a balance of interests in the relations between the great powers and the nations of Southeast Asia were to succeed, this region might become a zone of stability, which would contribute to the reduction of tension in one area of the world and help to lessen the chance of the occurrence of another world war. This is naturally the desire of all peace-loving people. For this reason, the Government

of Thailand warmly welcomes the pronouncements of the Government of the People's Republic of China in support of the ASEAN and the desire of ASEAN countries to see Southeast Asia a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality.

In actual fact, mutual understanding and sympathy between China and the countries of Southeast Asia have existed since ancient times. In the case of Thailand and China, contacts between Thai and Chinese trace back to thousands of years. Even at the present time, it is a well-known fact that in the southernmost part of China there are many Chinese nationals of the Thai race who are living in peace and happiness under the protection of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. So it is in Thailand, the Chinese in Thailand have lived for many centuries in amity and harmony with the Thai people in conformity with the law of the land and with the customs and habits of the Thai people. At the risk of being unduly boastful, I feel in all sincerity that the success with which Chinese and Thai have lived together is something we should take pride in, because it is unique and this should be generally known.

China is a great country. Throughout the long history of Thai-Chinese relations, the Thai people have looked upon China as one of the countries which is a model of culture. However, in a long friendship, it is perhaps in the nature of things that there should have been a moment of some estrangement to the extent that it gave rise to mutual misapprehension and mistrust. But a quarter

of a century is but a short interval in time. Now within the last three years, Thai people have been able once again to come and visit China and to see the marvels of the New China. On this point, may I mention a few examples. The progress in medicine and science in China that seeks to teach doctors and scientists to serve the people and the training of "barefoot doctors" to provide health care for all the people in the rural areas. Then there is the progress achieved in the field of agriculture that has brought about equality and justice in the countryside together with the development of the efficiency of agricultural production units so as to enable them to meet fully the needs of the people. These lessons are extremely useful to take back for adaption in Thailand.

Nevertheless, the historical evolution of each country is by nature different. A glorious revolution, full of fervour and exciting events, gave birth to the People's Republic of China. The success of the Chinese revolution is continually lauded. But, for the Kingdom of Thailand, our revolution was inspired from above under the leadership of our kings who always understood the need for administrative and social reforms to keep up with the prevailing circumstances. The successes of this wise royal policy accrued to the benefit although the historical evolution of each country might be different, the end result, which is desired by all, is the same, that is, the creation of equality and justice in society and the attainment of parity in the standard of living among the people. This is the objective of the Government of the Kingdom of

Thailand and I am fully aware that it is also the policy of the Government of the People's Republic of China.

I would like to express my earnest hope that the relations between our two countries and peoples, which is being revived, on the basis of sincerity, mutual trust and mutual respect, will draw us close together and yield benefits to both sides in conformity with the hopes of the peoples of both two countries in the times to come.

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