

In memoriam Karl G. Rosenäcker

Serendipity Missed: Report on the Parliamentary Elections in Thailand 1975

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It almost resembles tales from Serendip whose princes were gifted with the faculty of finding happiness, good luck, and fortune unexpectedly: During the past two years which saw the suppression of parliamentary democracy in many a country various groups of firmly determined intellectuals in Thailand as well as the vast majority of her ruling elite led by Their Majesties King Bhumiphon and Queen Sirikit set out in search of a "society in which there should be unity without forced uniformity; there should be room for the non-conformist . . . ; material and spiritual welfare should be available for all, not for the few; human dignity are each individual's sacred due"¹. Encouraged by the successful uprising against the oppressive National Executive Council which eventually led to the exiling of the so-called 'Trio' — Prime Minister Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon, Deputy Prime Minister General Prapad Charusathien, and Colonel Narong Kittikhachon² — visions of a better future were enhanced; strategies and tactics of democratic mass participation were developed; occupational, professional, and student³ groups publicly urged democratization thus providing grounds for direct political action in support of textile factory labourers', hotel workers', or farmers' economic demands. After both the appointment of the care-taker Government headed by Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakdi and the convocation of a National Legislative Assembly by H. M. the King a Constitution was started being drafted in view of fervently desired general elections to be held⁴.

¹ Puey Ungphakorn, "The Society of Siam", In: *Best Wishes for Asia*. Dr. Puey Ungphakorn Speaks Out on Peace, Decency, and Freedom. Bangkok: Klett Thai, 1975, p. 32 f. (NB: Both personal and family names of Thai are related throughout since in Thai society reference is made to the first name.)

² For an account of the Thanom Government see Noraniti Sethabut and Kosin Wongsurawat, "Thailand under Parliamentary Government" (Müang Thai Nai Rabob Rathasapha), Krungthep (Bangkok): Phrae Pithaya, B.E. 2517 (= 1974), pp. 225–302 ("Government of Field Marshall Thanom" — Rathaban Chomphol Thanom).

(NB: For reasons of convenience references to Thai language publications are given by their English translation first supplemented by the original Thai titles in approximate transcription thus omitting essential variations in tone!)

For an authentic and complete account of the October 1973 uprising see "October 1973 Mass Movement" (Khobuan Kan Prachachon Tulakhom 2516), ed. by The National Student Centre of Thailand (Sun Klang Nisit Nak Süksa Häng Prathet Thai), Krungthep (Bangkok): NSCT, 2517 (= 1974), 678 p.

³ Cf. Prizzia, Ross and Narong Sinsawasdi, *Thailand: Student Activism and Political Change*, Bangkok: DK — Duang Kamon, 1974, 222 p.

⁴ A comprehensive appraisal was given by Prudhisana Jumbala, "Hope Rises out of Confusion", In: *BANGKOK POST*, XXVIII, 284, Oct. 13, 1974, p. 12 f.

(NB: For references to *BANGKOK POST* the abbreviation BP is used hereunder.)

I. Political Party Formation: Pedigree Imparts Origin — Moral Reveals Personality⁵

Other than the overthrow of dictatorship in Portugal, e.g. the demission of Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon did not mark the end of an era of incessant 'maréchalocratie'⁶ which might be dated back to the Revolution of 1932 when absolutist power was abolished in favour of parliamentary democracy within a constitutional monarchy⁷. Ever since then so many attempts at democratic rule had been made that recently the 9th Constitution was promulgated paving the way for the 11th general elections to be held upon which the 36th Government was to be formed⁸. Not surprisingly then a plethora of formal and informal, at times legal or illegal political groups had been engaged in all such previous though failed attempts whose total number includes some 60 ever registered political parties alone⁹. The latter multitude is due to the fact that more often than not newly emerg-

⁵ Thai Proverb (Dragun So Chat Marayat So Tua) used to express preference of character to origin (author's translation).

⁶ Term used by Noraniti Sethabut and Kosin Wongsurawat, "Thailand under Parliamentary Government" (see footnote 2), p. 3 quoted from Doré, F., "Regard sur l'histoire politique et constitutionnelle de la Thaïlande". In: *Revue du Droit Public et des Sciences Politiques*, Nov-Dec, 1964.

⁷ Cf. Fistié, P., *L'évolution de la Thaïlande contemporaine*, Paris: Colin, 1967, 390 p. ("Cahiers de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques. Relations Internationales", 156); Rong Syamananda, *A History of Thailand*, Bangkok: Thai Watana Panich, 1973, 2nd ed., pp. 162-186; Wilson, D. A., *Politics in Thailand*, Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1962.

⁸ For the succession of Constitutions see Samröng Inyām, "How did the Constitutions in Thailand go to Pieces?" (Rathathamnun Müang Thai Lom Luk Khluk Khlan Ma Yangrai), In: Chanvit Kasetsiri, ed., "Democracy of the People" (Prachathipatai Khong Chao Ban), Krungthep (Bangkok): Phikhaned, B.E. 2516 (= 1973), pp. 2-9.

For the history of constitutional Government see Noraniti Sethabut and Kosin Wongsurawat, "Thailand under Parliamentary Government" (see footnote 2).

⁹ Informations were obtained for altogether 61 political parties of the period between 1932 and 1971 through the following publications:

"Handbook on the Kingdom's 1975 Elections" (Khu Mü Kan Lük Tang 2518 Thua Racha Anachakon), Presented by the Election News Centre of the PRACHATHIPATAI Newspaper (Sun Khao Kan Lük Tang No.So.Pho. PRACHATHIPATAI Sanö) Krungthep (Bangkok): Prachathipatai, B.E. 2518 (= 1975), 176 p. (NB: Referred to as **PHKE** throughout).

"PRACHACHAT's Outline of Voting '75" (PRACHACHAT Sanö Lük Tang '18), ed. by Khanchai Bunpan, Krungthep (Bangkok): Prachachat, B.E. 2517 (= 1974), (x), 574 p. (NB: Referred to as **POV** throughout).

"Voting 1975" (Lük Tang 2518), Prepared by Volunteer Members of I.R.S. (Cham Tham Doy Klum Asasakh I.R.S. Phay Tai Kan Sanab Sanun Khong), Krungthep (Bangkok): International Research Services Corp., B.E. 2517 (= 1974), (198 p.) (NB: Referred to as **VIRS** throughout).

Furthermore the following sources are quoted elsewhere: "Handbook on Government Elections" (Khu Mü Lük Tang Rathaban), Krungthep (Bangkok): Popular Front Relations Movement to Resist Cheating the Ignorant Masses — People's Anti-Corruption Movement (Fay Pracha Samphan Lä Phoy Phrä Khobuan Kan To Tan Kan Cho Rasadon Bang Luang), B.E. 2518 (= 1975), 64 p. ("Chanuan", Vol. 1, No. 9, January, 1975) (NB: Referred to as **CHGE** throughout).

"Student — Official Monthly Magazine — Third Year Special Comprehensive Issue" (Nisit Nak Süksa — Nitaya San Ray Düan — Chabab Phiset Khrob Rob Pi Thi Sam), No. 6,

ing political leaders had their own parties founded and members recruited among those of some then defunct political parties¹⁰. The most important reason for such ready changes in party affiliation is given by the all pervasive preponderance of individual prestige, status, and relationships within Thai society especially throughout the vast rural areas of the country. It always has been the individual candidate's social esteem in virtue of alertness, cunningness, cleverness, wit and intelligence which counted disregarding any more or less thoroughly elaborated party policy platforms¹¹. Thus only it becomes understandable that the majority of the MPs elected in 1969 and belonging to the United Thai People's Party opposed their party leader and Prime Minister Thanom Kittikhachon. As shown by tab. 1 the UTPP commanded the majority in the House of Representatives supported by many Independents to such degree that the Prime Minister launched another coup d'etat on November 17, 1971 thereby dissolving Parliament, banning all political parties, annulling the Constitution, and reverting to military power once again¹². All dismissed MPs — except three representatives who filed charges against Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon for breach of the Constitution, and who were immediately jailed — retired and abstained from political action until the October 1973 uprising. They then emerged having formed a variety of informal political circles apart from a number of socialist and social democrat groups which had organized resistance particularly among teachers and students against the military regime as early as summer, 1972¹³.

The shift from political party affiliation towards association with informal circles as well as the emergence of new pressure groups is shown by fig. 1. Students' and teachers' political activities were concentrated in two newly formed and loosely organized though highly ambitious and effective groups. Members of the old ruling elite, however, had joined friendship clienteles patronized by six high ranking police and military officers, and to the regional associations of the 'Southern City' (Vieng Tai), 'Northern People' (Chao Neua), 'Northeastern Association' (Isan Samakkhi) and 'United Friends' (Mit Ruam).

After the passing of the new Political Party Act¹⁴ which is part of the Constitution promulgated on October 7, 1974 shortly before the anniversary of the October 1973 uprising some 80 political groups were said to be prepared for registration as political parties. The new legislation decreed that candidates for elections to the House of Representatives¹⁵ whose minimum age was fixed at 25 years no longer

February B.E. 2518 (= 1975), pp. 3–65 "Analysis of Thai Politics" (Vikhro Kan Müang Thai) (NB: Referred to as **STYSCI** throughout).

¹⁰ For detailed facts see Wilson, D. A., *Politics in Thailand* (see footnote 7), pp. 232–252.

¹¹ A poignant description of such a representative was given by Khamsing Srinawak, *The Politician and Other Stories*, ed. by M. Smithies, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973, pp. 1–13 ("Oxford in Asia Modern Authors").

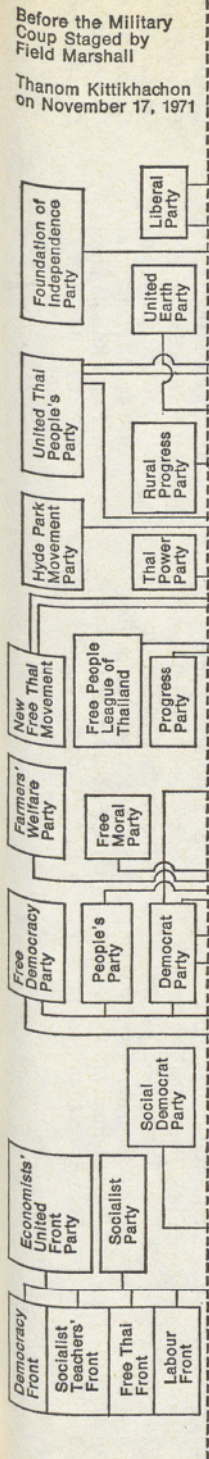
¹² Cf. Noraniti Sethabut and Kosin Wongsurawat, "Thailand under Parliamentary Government" (see footnote 2), pp. 303–321 "Revolution 1971" ("Padiwat 2514").

¹³ For detailed informations see Narong Sinsawasdi and Ross Prizzia, *History of Student Activism in Thailand*, In: Prizzia, R. and Narong Sinsawasdi, *Thailand: Student Activism and Political Change* (see footnote 3), pp. 16–44.

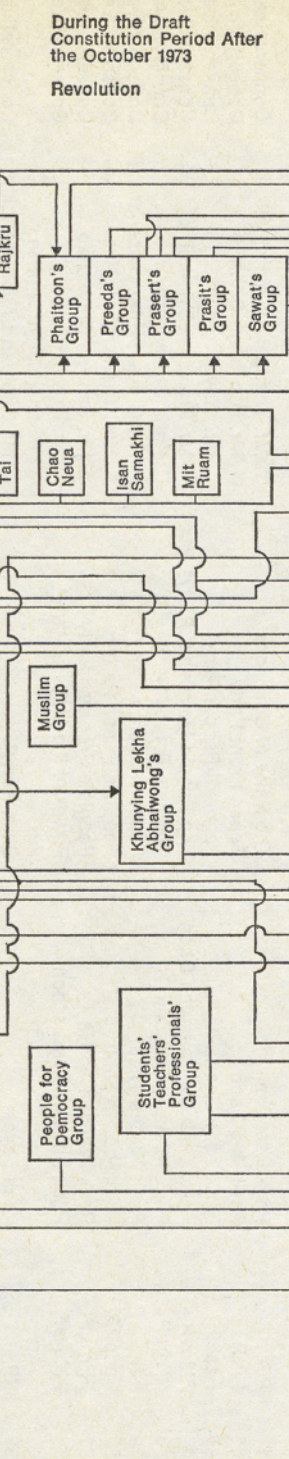
¹⁴ Phra Racha Banyat Phak Kan Müang Pho. So. 2517, reprinted in CHGE, pp. 15–19.

¹⁵ The House of Representatives being the 'House of Commons', there also is an 'Upper House', the Senate; the one hundred Members of the Senate are appointed by H.M. the King upon presentation of a list of 300 candidates through the Government.

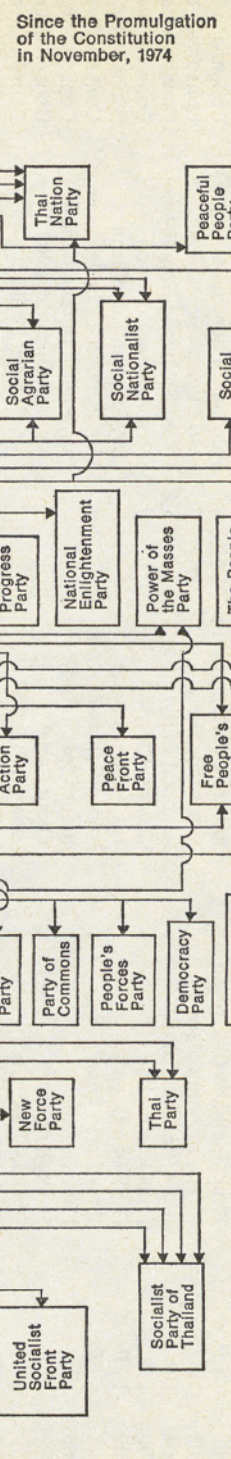
OLD POLITICAL PARTIES AND GROUPS



INTERIM POLITICAL FACTORS (Formal or Informal Groups)



NEW POLITICAL PARTIES



Before the Military Coup Staged by Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon on November 17, 1971

During the Draft Constitution Period After the October 1973 Revolution

Since the Promulgation of the Constitution in November, 1974

Notes: The array of political parties from the left to the right roughly corresponds to their policy platforms. The diagram includes those parties only for which changes were recorded. Therefore parties founded by former Independent MPs are not included. The most important old parties are the Socialist Party and its affiliated groups based in Northeastern Thailand, the Democrat Party which was founded by former Prime Minister Khuang Abhaiwong, the Foundation of Independence Party of the late Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat, and the United Thai People's Party of ousted Prime Minister and Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon.

References: Based on informations gathered from various sources among which articles by Theh Chongkhadikij published under the headline "The Political Scene," by THE BANGKOK POST, Vol. XXVIII, Nos. 242 (Sept. 1, 1974, p. 5), 249 (Sept. 8, 1974, p. 5), 256 (Sept. 15, 1974, p. 5), 270 (Sept. 29, 1974, p. 5) and 284 (Oct. 13, 1974, pp. 5 and 12) proved to be most useful.

Figure 2: Political Parties and Their Leaders as Registered After the Promulgation of the Constitution in 1974

No.	Abbreviation	Thai Proper Name — Transcribed	English Translation*	Party Leader	Political Basis
01	AP	Phak Kasikamakon	Agriculturists' Party	Mr. Saravut Prichabut	Conservative
02	CDP	Phak Phathana Changwad	Country Development Party*	Mr. Sarit Phensapha	Conservative
03	DyP	Phak Prachathipatai	Democracy Party*	Mr. Chumphon Maninot	Conservative
04	DP	Phak Prachathipat	Democrat Party*	Mom Rajawong Seni Pramoj	Conservative
05	FP	Phak Kasetrakon	Farmers' Party*	Mrs. Aphirat Boriboon	Conservative
06	FPP	Phak Seri Chon	Free People's Party	Mr. Praphan Kunphichit	Conservative
07	GPP	Phak Laem Thong	Golden Peninsula Party	Mr. Bunphruk Chadamara	Conservative
08	IP	Phak Athipat	Independence Party*	Mr. Pracha Buranathanit	Conservative
09	LP	Phak Riang Ngan	Labour Party*	Mr. Seri Suchataprakal	Conservative
10	MCP	Phak Riang Ngan	Maha Chon Party*	Mr. Samran Phukao	Conservative
11	NEP	Phak Maha Chon	National Enlightenment Party	Mr. Prachod Prengsangan	Conservative
12	NFP	Phak Si Arya	New Force Party	Dr. Krasae Chanawong	Conservative
13	OPSWP	Phak Songkhro Achip lä Kuson	Occupational Promotion and Social Welfare Party	Mom Rajawong Aphinop Nawarat	Conservative
14	PC	Phak Rasadon	The Party of Commons*	Mr. Thangai Suvannathat	Conservative
15	PFRP	Phak Nao Santi	Peace Front Party	Mr. Banchong Sicharun	Conservative
16	PeacPP	Phak Santi Chon	Peaceful People Party*	Mr. Viriya Kerdsiri	Conservative
17	PMovP	Phak Khabuan Kanmuan Chon	The People Movement Party*	Mr. Thawisak Triphali	Conservative
18	PForcP	Phak Phalang Rasadon	People's Forces Party	Khun Chanyavichan	Conservative
19	PJP	Phak Pracha Tham	People's Justice Party	Mr. Chaisiri Ruangkanchanaset	Conservative
20	PeopPP	Phak Pracha Santi	People's Peace Party	Mrs. Thanavadee Binsri	Conservative
21	PProgP	Phak Pracha Kao Na	People's Progress Party	Mr. Samran Chulachao	Conservative
22	PMassP	Phak Phalang Prachachon	Power of the Masses Party*	Mr. Boonkhum Chansuriryawongse	Conservative
23	SP	Phak Sayam	Siam Party*	Mr. Phaibun Chanramongkhon	Conservative
24	SActP	Phak Kid Sangkhom	Social Action Party*	Mom Rajawong Kukrit Pramoj	Conservative
25	SAgrP	Phak Kaset Sangkhom	Social Agrarian Party*	Mr. Sawet Piampongpan	Conservative
26	SDP	Phak Sangkhom Phathana	Social Development Party*	Mr. Kasem Sarakhun	Conservative
27	SJP	Phak Thammas Sangkhom	The Social Justice Party*	Mr. Tavid Klimprathum	Conservative
28	SUMP	Phak Sangkhom Pracha Tham	Social Masses Justice Party*	Mr. Samrith Namchinan	Conservative
29	SNP	Phak Sangkhom Chat Niyom	The Social Nationalist Party*	Mr. Prasit Kanchanawat	Conservative
30	SPP	Phak Sangkhom Kao Na	Social Progress Party*	Mr. Yat Waidee	Conservative

No.	Abbreviation	Thai Proper Name — Transcribed	English Translation*	Party Leader	Political Basis
31	SFDP	Phak Sangkhom Niyom Seri Prachathipatai	Socialist Free Democrat Party	Mr. Sombun Banlusin	Socialist
32	SPT	Phak Sangkhom Niyom Hång Chat Prathet Thai	Socialist Party of Thailand*	Mr. Somkid Srisangkhom	Socialist
33	SMP	Phak Rathaburud	Statesman Party	Mr. Praphansak Kamomphed	Conservative
34	TP	Phak Thai	Thai Party*	Mr. Phåphåd Thephasadin na Ayuthaya	Conservative
35	TEP	Phak Phån Din Thai	Thai Earth Party*	Mrs. Sunirat Telan	Conservative
36	TEcP	Phak Sethakon	Thai Economist Party*	Mr. Tim Bhuripat	Socialist
37	TFPP	Phak Thai Santiphap	Thai For Peace Party*	Mr. Sukhasan Khwanthonghao	Conservative
38	TNP	Phak Chat Thai	Thai Nation Party*	Mr. Praman Adireksan	Conservative
39	TNRP	Phak Fünfu Chat Thai	Thai National Revival Party*	Mr. Sawat Siripho	Conservative
40	TUP	Phak Thai Ruam Thai	Thai Union Party*	Mr. Sa-ing Marangkun	Conservative
41	USFP	Phak Nån Ruam Sangkhom Niyom	The United Socialist Front Party*	Mr. Klaew Noropat	Socialist
42	WP	Phak Kamakon	Worker's Party	Mr. Thanarong Tangõtmothong	Socialist
43**	NTP	Phak Sayam Mai	New Thai Party*	Mr. Prem Malakun na Ayuthaya	Socialist

Notes:

* Party names marked by an asterisk render the English proper names as formally adopted and used by the political parties themselves. Other party names were translated by the author partly in accordance with the versions used by English language daily newspaper.

** The 43rd political party registered in Thailand since the promulgation of the Constitution in October, 1974 was formed by three Members of Parliament ousted by the Socialist Party of Thailand (cf. 32 SPT).

References:

- CHGE, "List of 42 Political Parties Which Campaign for Election on January 26, 1975." (Ray Chũ Phak Kan Müang 42 Phak Thi Cha Day Rab Kan Khad Lüak Nai Wan Thi 26 Mo. Kho. 2518), pp. 22-23
- Weekly Comprehensive and Analytical News Magazine PRACHACHAT (Nangsü Sarub Lå Vikhro Khao Ray Sapada PRACHACHAT), Vol. 2, No. 63, Jan 10, 1975, pp. 25-26
- "What About Which Party?" (Phak Nai Pen Yangrai)
- VIRS, "Voting for Parties or for Individuals?" (Cha Lüak Phak Rũ Tua Bukkhon), pp. 46-197
- PKHE, "Policies of 42 Political Parties" (Nayobay 42 Phak Kan Müang), pp. 12-106
- STYSCI, "Table Showing Political Parties: What About Which Party?" (Chofom Phak Kan Müang: Phak Nai Pen Yangrai), pp. 34-36 (listing 38 out of the then 42 parties)
- POV, "Political Parties in Thailand 1974." (Phak Kan Müang Thai Pho. So. 2517), pp. 199-259 (covering 28 out of the then 42 parties)

can run as independents but have to be members of an officially approved political party in order to avoid possible chaos in Government formation and administration later-on. Until Election Day a total of 42 political parties was registered (cf. fig. 2) out of which 22 parties resulted from shifts and regroupings among members of former political parties and groups (cf. fig. 1). Apart from the DP¹⁶ which had undergone drastic factional splits, however, had gained a single though most prominent politician the OPSWP was the only other political party which re-appeared under its old name and leadership. Political Parties not shown in fig. 1 have a different history of origin. Partly they had been newly founded by individuals or groups who took their chances after having become full citizens and hence eligible under the new Constitution such as the businessmen of Chinese origin leading the PJP. Partly they have come into existence out of former independent representatives' refusal to join any other party out of fear to deprive themselves of influence and power as it was exemplified by the TEP (cf. fig. 2). However, the oldest and best organized as well as most disciplined party of the country, the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) did not apply for registration nor did it gain official approval since the anti-communist law is still being enforced on the one side, and the political objectives and means of the CPT on the other side do not comply with the newly promulgated Constitution¹⁷.

Moreover, the new legislation changed the mode of election. Initial deliberations of a most adequate mode of election which almost resulted in acceptance of the one employed in the Federal Republic of Germany led to the abolishment of the old constituencies which by and large had been congruent with the administrative division of the country into provinces and district clusters. The revised outline of election constituencies according to an average ratio of one seat in the House of Representatives for some 150,000 inhabitants had the numbers both of constituencies and parliament seats increased. From a comparison of figures presented in tab. 1 and tab. 2 it becomes obvious that the augmentation of parliament seats by 22.8 per cent was caused through regional increases ranging from 13.0 per cent for the North over 13.8 per cent for the South, 23.8 per cent for Bangkok and Thonburi, 24.3 per cent for the Central Plain, and 29.7 per cent for the Northeast to 33.3 per cent for the Southeast. Or else, 44.0 per cent of the additional seats were allocated to the Northeast where socialist politicians both belonging to political parties and having run as independents before had their traditional strongholds amidst a politically comparatively highly conscious population as shown by the differentiation of elected MPs 1969 in tab. 1.

Due to the alterations of the election system it had become indispensable to secure the crucial votes by successfully campaigning for election from the Northeastern constituencies because no party was understood to get into a position of forming or joining the next Government without massive support from their voters (cf. tab. 2).

¹⁶ Abbreviations of political party names introduced by means of fig. 2 will be used throughout.

¹⁷ For detailed informations see Fistié, P., *Communisme et indépendance nationale: Le cas thaïlandais (1928-1968)*, In: *Revue française de science politique*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, 1968, pp. 685-714.

Table 1: Elected Members of Parliament by Region and Political Party, 1969 — Absolute and Relative Frequencies

No.	Political Party	Bangkok-Thonburi						Central		North		Northeast		Southeast		South		THAILAND				
		Party		Region		Party		Party		Region		Party		Region		Party		Region				
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
01	DP	21	36.8	100.0	3	5.3	8.1	14	24.6	30.4	9	15.8	12.1	2	3.5	16.7	8	14.0	27.6	57	100.0	26.0
02	DFP							1	14.3	2.2	5	71.4	6.8				1	14.3	3.4	7	100.0	3.2
03	EUIFP										4	100.0	5.4							4	100.0	1.8
04	FWP				1	100.0	2.7													1	100.0	0.5
05	FDP										2	100.0	2.7							2	100.0	0.9
06	LUIFP				1	50.0	2.7													2	100.0	0.9
07	PP										2	100.0	2.7							2	100.0	0.9
08	UTPP				22	29.7	59.5	16	21.6	34.8	21	28.4	28.4	6	8.1	50.0	9	12.2	31.0	74	100.0	33.8
	Independent Representatives				10	14.3	27.0	15	21.4	32.6	31	44.3	41.9	4	5.7	33.3	10	14.3	34.5	70	100.0	32.0
	TOTAL	21	--	100.0	37	--	100.0	46	--	100.0	74	--	100.0	12	--	100.0	29	--	99.9	219	100.0	100.0

Notes:

- DP — Democrat Party / Phak Prachaihipat
- DFP — Democratic Front Party / Phak Nao Prachathipatai
- EUIFP — Economist's United Front Party / Phak Nao Ruam Sethakon
- FWP — Farmers' Welfare Party / Phak Samamachipchuey Chaona
- FDP — Free Democracy Party / Phak Seri Prachathipatai
- LUIFP — Lowland and Upland Farmers' Party / Phak Chaona Chaorai
- PP — People's Party / Phak Prachachon
- UTPP — United Thai People's Party / Phak Saha Pracha Thai

Data compiled and computed from the list of Members of Parliament published in POV, Name List of People's Representatives 1932-1969 (Raichu Phuthanasadon 2475-2512), 13th Parliament 1969 (Saphachudthi sibsam 2512), pp. 76-86

Table 2:

**Parliament Election Scheme 1975 — Number of Regions, Provinces, Constituencies,
Parliament Seats, and Candidates**

Region	Provinces		Constituencies		Parliament Seats		Candidates		Cand/ Seat	Ratio
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	\bar{x}	Constituency: Seats: Candidates
Bangkok-Thonburi	1	1.4	9	7.9	26	9.7	278	12.6	10.7	1 : 2.9 : 30.9
Central	18	25.4	22	19.3	46	17.1	307	13.9	6.7	1 : 2.1 : 13.9
North	15	21.1	23	20.2	52	19.3	392	17.7	7.5	1 : 2.3 : 17.0
Northeast	16	22.5	35	30.7	96	35.7	892	40.4	9.3	1 : 2.7 : 25.5
Southeast	7	9.9	8	7.0	16	5.9	111	5.0	6.9	1 : 2.0 : 13.9
South	14	19.7	17	14.9	33	12.3	230	10.4	7.0	1 : 1.9 : 13.5
TOTAL	71	100.0	114	100.0	269	100.0	2,210	100.0	8.2	1 : 2.4 : 19.4

Notes: Figures were compiled and computed from data obtained through Weekly Comprehensive and Analytical News Magazine PRACHACHAT (Nangsü Sarub Lã Vikhro Khao Ray Sapada PRACHACHAT), Vol. 2, No. 63, January 10, 1975, pp. 29-31 "Percentages of Legal Voters Based on Overall Population Figures" (Roy La Khong Phu Mi Sith Ok Siang Lüak Tang Thiab Kab Chamnuan Prachakon)

CHGE, "Total Figures of MPs and Population by Provinces" (Chamnuan So. So. Lã Pholamüang Khong Tä La Changwad), p. 21

VIRS, "Division into Election Constituencies" (Bäng Khet Lüak Tang), pp. 29-35

II. Election Campaign: Agitation, Bargaining, Propaganda, and Violence — Fun, Joy, Merit, and Profit

Consequently more parties concentrated their efforts onto Northeastern constituencies besides the incomparable metropolitan area of Bangkok and Thonburi than there were parties campaigning in any other single region of the country. Tab. 3 shows the concentration of political parties campaigning in constituencies by regional differentiation. A comparison with fig. 1 facilitates tracing back the origin of some small political parties of mere local importance to the attempts of popular former independent representatives at regaining a seat in Parliament. Examples are the PeopPP, SMJP, SFDP, and TUP whose low numbers of candidates relate their locally based interests and objectives. This point is further stressed by the relative importance of political party participation both on the regional and national levels with regard to the frequencies of constituencies covered and candidates nominated as shown by the figures in tab. 4.

Hence a differentiation between 'large' political parties conducting a nation wide election campaign, and 'small' political parties focussing on particular constituencies is feasible. On the premise of sharing no less than 2.38 per cent of all nominees — this percentage is equal to a 42nd share per party — in each single region the group of 'large' political parties comprises the DP, NFP, PeacPP, SActP, SAgRP, SJP, SNP, TNP, and TNRP whereas the group of the remaining 'small' political parties includes the DyP, PC, SPT, and USFP which held percentages above 2.38 per cent on the national level only. Against the background of such divergence

which brought about variation in campaign organization, fund allocation, vote canvassing, mass rallying, and reports through mass media¹⁸ a kaleidoscopic spectrum of means and objectives unfolded which in the Northeast e.g. already has developed into a kind of election campaign folklore over the past decades. Since all candidates had to be political party members the encounter of locally based and formerly independent representatives with candidates entered by the big political parties who sometimes were strangers to their assigned constituencies being residents of other places such as Bangkok exacerbated the contest. Indeed, chances remained open with the probable results inestimable as to the success of big powerful parties or of relatively poor local parties taking advantage of individuals' popularity. Thus an elder lady politician dressed in traditional women's wear (*sua khen krabok* and *pha sin*) with a simple hairdo (*klaao muay*) was successfully campaigning in one of the poorest provinces of the poverty-stricken North-east by way of supporting local farmers both materially through distribution of high yielding strains of manioc and verbally through promises of future improvements before returning back to work in her international and at present largest hotel in Bangkok, and continuing her political career as a re-elected member of the House of Representatives (cf. TEP, tab. 3, tab. 4 and tab. 7)¹⁹.

Commonly the election campaign focussed in public places of the one big city and of the towns whereas in the countryside the local temple compounds frequently were the venue for political activities²⁰. Besides the usual means of agitation such as posters, leaflets, and stickers popular movies were shown, and cars and trucks mounted with loudspeakers were patrolling the streets announcing a candidate's capabilities and readiness to work for the benefit of his voters, and denouncing contesting candidates in rude and depreciating ways. Few political parties such as the NFP abstained from such tactics.

Candidates who were considered running on a 'sure-to-win ticket' — many of them former independent representatives — were in high demand, however, they again were in need of support and therefore they gravitated to where the money was thus proving once again that popular politicians were willing to be bought by the party which offered most to their so-called 'development funds'.

Various techniques used by vote canvassers in order to secure their candidates being elected included vote buying, 'vote farming' and several illegal practices such as buying the identity cards of voters known to support rival candidates in order to bar them from casting their ballots. Vote buying was done either by way of down payment before election day, or else through payment right after successful election. Similarly, 'vote farming' — occasionally by way of betting — was profi-

¹⁸ Cf. BP e.g. which published news covering 20 out of 42 political parties only between September 1, 1974 and Election Day thereby reporting on 13 and merely referring to 7 more political parties.

¹⁹ For case studies cf. Wilson, D. A., *Politics in Thailand* (see footnote 7), pp. 217–231 (Members of the Assembly).

²⁰ Cf. Prizzia, R. and Narong Sinsawasdi, *Thailand: Student Activism and Political Change* (see footnote 3), p. 20 for the topographical importance of the Sanam Luang (Sunday Market Place). For the first time in the history of Thailand a monk, Bikkhu Chirapunyo, decided to run as Phra Phong Michai in Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province for the SPT after having been in the monkhood for 28 years (cf. BP, XXVIII, 330, Nov 28, 1974, p. 3).

table only in case that election results proved evidence of canvassers having succeeded in getting entire local groups of population vote for their particular candidates.

Political party propaganda spread at mass rallies attracted up to 20,000 people in one instance when the SPT called for its final election campaign rally held at Sam Nam Luang. However, it remained unknown in how far party policies delivered by speech and printed materials reached the citizens and had their political opinions influenced. Rather the general public indulged in passing on rumours, abuse, defamation, or election result predictions based on nothing but wishful thinking which were aimed at influencing those voters whose decisions were still pending, or alienating firm supporters from contesting candidates. In one instance the leader of the FPP declared that there would be a military coup within six months time in case socialist parties and those with socialist tendencies should altogether gain more than 70 seats in the House of Representatives²¹. In other instances word was given out that candidates had passed away, or evidence was feigned to the effect as if candidates had changed their party affiliation²². Worse even a candidate was libelled as having arranged for the return of exiled Prime Minister Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon²³ simply by taking advantage of the facts that first, individuals in Thai society conventionally are being addressed and referred to by their personal names only, and second that the retired Air Marshal who had arranged for the exiled Prime Minister's arrival bears the same first name.

Such events together with the excitement provided by politicians delivering speeches of culturally highest appreciated rhetoric standards which include the use of parables, allegories, sarcastic criticism, ironical comments, punning (for which there seems to be an inexhaustible reserve due to Thai language being a tonal language), ready wit and acuteness in dialogues with badgers and naggers rendered fun which still was the best way of getting public attention.

Whereas the urban population thus enjoyed the way they were being presented with political party programmes the rural population living in more or less scattered settlements and closer to the grass-roots both metaphorically and in reality earned the benefits of election campaigning in a sheer rational and materialistic way. Knowing well that there would be almost no chance to take the local candidates at their words once they had been elected they were pleased to rally support in exchange for money spent on the spot to get public buildings repaired, a temple or a school built, a feeder road constructed, wells dug, power lines or generators installed, etc. Simple gifts like dried salted fish, or noodles, or else rice no longer secured the voters' support. Again it was proven that during election campaign time the people would benefit the most from the politicians, and that more attention would be paid to their problems than by any government ever. 'Poor candidates are not welcome!' read a sign posted by people waiting virtually with outstretched hands²⁴.

²¹ Cf. BP, XXVIII, 338, Dec 7, 1974, p. 8.

²² The DP leader, M. R. Seni Pramoj e.g. was presented to the electorate of one Bangkok constituency as a SActP candidate.

²³ Cf. news reports by BP, XXVIII, 360-362, Dec 28-30, 1974 on Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon's return to Thailand, arrest, and departure into exile.

²⁴ Cf. BP, XXVIII, 347, Dec 15, 1974, p. 5.

Table 3:

Political Parties and Their Parliament Election Candidates 1975 – Absolute Numbers and Relative Frequencies by Regions (in Percentages)

No.	Political Party	Total Number		Frequency Distribution of Political Party Candidates by Region in Percentages						
		Party Constituencies	Party Candidates	BT	C	N	NE	SE	S	T
01	AP	14	20	50.0	10.0	10.0	20.0	--	10.0	100.0
02	CDP	1	1	--	--	100.0	--	--	--	100.0
03	DyP	53	85	4.7	17.6	22.4	41.2	4.7	9.4	100.0
04	DP	109	228	11.4	16.2	22.4	28.5	7.0	14.5	100.0
05	FP	25	35	17.1	14.3	25.7	37.1	5.7	--	99.9
06	FPP	24	31	38.7	12.9	16.1	32.3	--	--	100.0
07	GPP	16	23	13.0	13.0	47.8	21.7	--	4.3	99.8
08	IP	16	23	26.1	13.0	4.3	34.8	13.0	8.7	99.9
09	LP	23	28	14.3	7.1	28.6	25.0	3.6	21.4	100.0
10	MCP	13	20	15.0	10.0	--	75.0	--	--	100.0
11	NEP	3	3	--	66.6	--	33.3	--	--	99.9
12	NFP	73	109	22.0	14.7	11.9	33.9	4.6	12.8	99.9
13	OPSWP	1	1	100.0	--	--	--	--	--	100.0
14	PC	37	62	30.6	12.9	11.3	35.5	6.5	3.2	100.0
15	PFRP	11	11	45.5	9.1	--	9.1	9.1	27.3	100.1
16	PeacPP	51	76	10.5	14.5	19.7	39.5	7.9	7.9	100.0
17	PMovP	2	3	--	--	--	100.0	--	--	100.0
18	PForcP	19	31	25.8	3.2	--	64.5	6.5	--	100.0
19	PJP	9	20	--	5.0	--	95.0	--	--	100.0
20	PeopPP	1	2	--	--	--	100.0	--	--	100.0
21	PProgP	9	10	30.0	50.0	--	10.0	--	10.0	100.0
22	PMassP	10	12	8.3	16.7	--	75.0	--	--	100.0
23	SP	2	2	--	--	--	--	50.0	50.0	100.0
24	SActP	105	226	11.1	16.4	22.6	32.7	4.4	12.8	100.0
25	SAGrP	76	121	5.8	13.2	23.1	43.0	3.3	11.6	100.0
26	SDP	4	6	66.7	--	--	33.3	--	--	100.0
27	SJP	106	233	8.6	16.7	18.5	38.6	6.4	11.2	100.0
28	SMJP	2	4	--	--	--	100.0	--	--	100.0
29	SNP	79	144	4.9	18.8	20.1	45.1	4.2	6.9	100.0
30	SPP	11	12	8.3	--	8.3	75.0	8.3	--	99.9
31	SFDP	1	1	--	--	--	100.0	--	--	100.0
32	SPT	51	81	4.9	4.9	8.6	63.0	3.7	14.8	99.9
33	SMP	3	3	33.3	33.3	--	--	--	33.3	99.9
34	TP	28	43	--	7.0	25.6	55.8	7.0	4.7	100.1
35	TEP	13	19	--	5.3	15.8	63.2	--	15.8	100.1
36	TEcP	6	8	12.5	--	--	75.0	--	12.5	100.0
37	TFPP	12	15	26.7	6.7	26.7	26.7	6.7	6.7	100.2
38	TNP	103	198	13.1	15.2	16.2	35.9	5.6	14.1	100.1
39	TNRP	57	95	7.4	16.8	14.7	43.2	6.3	11.6	100.0
40	TUP	7	11	9.1	--	--	72.7	--	18.2	100.0
41	USFP	42	70	12.9	5.7	11.4	58.6	4.3	7.1	100.0
42	WFP	7	14	71.4	--	--	21.4	7.1	--	99.9

Notes: Compiled and computed from data obtained through:

CHGE, "Name List of Candidates for Election to the House of Representatives on January 26, 1975" (Raykan Chū Samachik Sapha Phu Thān Rasadon Thi Samakhrab Lūaktang Nai Wanthi 26 Mokharakhom 2518), pp. 35-61

POV, "Name List of Candidates 1975 for the Whole Country" (Ray Chū Phu Samakh 2518 Thua Prathet), pp. 288-560

PHKE, "Assembleymen-to-Be Throughout the Country" (Pen Phu Thān Rasadon Thua Prathet), pp. 107-142

Abbreviations used for regions cf. Table 4

Table 4:

Election Constituencies and Candidates 1975 — Overall Relative Frequencies by Political Parties and by Regions (in Percentages)

No.	Political Party	Constituencies						
		BT	C	N	NE	SE	S	T
01	AP	55.6	4.5	8.7	11.4	--	11.8	12.3
02	CDP	--	--	4.3	--	--	--	0.9
03	DyP	44.4	45.5	4.3	60.0	37.5	29.4	46.5
04	DP	100.0	95.5	95.7	91.4	100.0	100.0	95.6
05	FP	44.4	18.2	21.8	28.6	25.0	--	21.9
06	FPP	77.8	18.2	21.8	22.9	--	--	21.1
07	GPP	22.2	9.1	26.1	14.3	--	5.9	14.0
08	IP	22.2	9.1	4.3	26.1	37.5	11.8	14.0
09	LP	33.3	4.5	34.8	26.1	12.5	23.5	20.2
10	MCP	22.2	9.1	--	25.7	--	--	11.4
11	NEP	--	9.1	--	2.9	--	--	2.6
12	NFP	100.0	63.6	47.8	71.4	50.0	58.8	64.0
13	OPSWP	11.1	--	--	--	--	--	0.9
14	PC	77.8	36.4	21.7	37.1	25.0	11.8	32.5
15	PFRP	55.6	4.5	--	2.9	12.5	17.6	9.6
16	PeacPP	44.4	36.4	47.8	54.3	50.0	29.4	44.7
17	PMovP	--	--	--	5.7	--	--	1.8
18	PForcP	33.3	4.5	--	37.1	25.0	--	16.7
19	PJP	--	4.5	--	22.9	--	--	7.9
20	PeopPP	--	--	--	2.9	--	--	0.9
21	PProgP	22.2	22.7	--	2.9	--	5.9	7.9
22	PMassP	11.1	9.1	--	20.0	--	--	8.8
23	SP	--	--	--	--	12.5	5.9	1.8
24	SActP	100.0	95.5	95.7	88.6	75.0	94.1	92.1
25	SAgrP	77.7	63.6	60.9	77.1	37.5	64.7	66.7
26	SDP	33.3	--	--	2.9	--	--	3.5
27	SJP	88.9	95.5	91.3	97.1	87.5	88.2	93.0
28	SMJP	--	--	--	5.7	--	--	1.8
29	SNP	55.6	72.7	69.6	88.6	50.0	41.2	68.3
30	SPP	11.1	--	4.3	22.9	12.5	--	9.6
31	SFDP	--	--	--	2.9	--	--	0.9
32	SPT	33.3	18.2	26.1	74.3	37.5	52.9	44.7
33	SMP	11.1	4.5	--	--	--	5.9	2.6
34	TP	--	13.6	30.4	37.1	37.5	11.8	24.6
35	TEP	--	4.5	13.0	20.0	--	11.8	11.4
36	TEcP	11.1	--	--	11.4	--	5.9	5.3
37	TFPP	22.2	4.5	13.0	11.4	12.5	5.9	10.5
38	TNP	100.0	81.8	69.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	90.4
39	TNRP	44.4	45.5	39.1	62.9	50.0	47.1	50.0
40	TUP	11.1	--	--	14.3	--	5.9	6.1
41	USFP	44.4	18.2	17.4	65.7	25.0	29.4	36.8
42	WP	44.4	--	--	5.7	12.5	--	6.1

Notes:**Abbreviations used for Regions**

BT — Metropolitan Area of Bangkok and Thonburi
 C — Central Thailand
 N — Northern Thailand

NE — Northeastern Thailand
 SE — Southeastern Thailand
 S — Southern Thailand
 T — Thailand

No.	Political Party	Candidates						
		BT	C	N	NE	SE	S	T
01	AP	3.6	0.7	0.5	0.5	--	0.9	0.9
02	CDP	--	--	0.3	--	--	--	0.05
03	DyP	1.4	4.9	4.8	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.8
04	DP	9.4	12.1	13.0	7.3	14.4	14.3	10.3
05	FP	2.2	1.6	2.3	1.5	1.8	--	1.6
06	FPP	4.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	--	--	1.4
07	GPP	1.1	1.0	2.8	0.6	--	0.4	1.0
08	IP	2.2	1.0	0.3	0.9	2.7	0.9	1.0
09	LP	1.4	0.7	2.0	0.8	0.9	2.6	1.3
10	MCP	1.1	0.7	--	1.7	--	--	0.9
11	NEP	--	0.7	--	0.1	--	--	0.1
12	NFP	8.6	5.2	3.3	4.1	4.5	6.1	4.9
13	OPSWP	0.4	--	--	--	--	--	0.05
14	PC	6.8	2.6	1.8	2.5	3.6	0.9	2.8
15	PFrP	1.8	0.3	--	0.1	0.9	1.3	0.5
16	PeacPP	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.4	5.4	2.6	3.4
17	PMovP	--	--	--	0.3	--	--	0.1
18	PForcP	2.9	0.3	--	2.2	1.8	--	1.4
19	PJP	--	0.3	--	2.1	--	--	0.9
20	PeopPP	--	--	--	0.2	--	--	0.1
21	PProgP	1.1	1.6	--	0.1	--	0.4	0.5
22	PMassP	0.4	0.7	--	1.0	--	--	0.5
23	SP	--	--	--	--	0.9	0.4	0.1
24	SActP	9.0	12.1	13.1	8.3	9.0	12.6	10.2
25	SAgrP	2.5	5.2	7.1	5.8	3.6	6.1	5.5
26	SDP	1.4	--	--	0.2	--	--	0.3
27	SJP	7.2	12.7	11.0	10.1	13.5	11.3	10.5
28	SMJP	--	--	--	0.5	--	--	0.2
29	SNP	2.5	8.8	7.4	7.3	5.4	4.3	6.5
30	SPP	0.4	--	0.3	1.0	0.9	--	0.5
31	SFDP	--	--	--	0.1	--	--	0.05
32	SPT	1.4	1.3	1.8	5.7	2.7	5.2	3.7
33	SMP	0.4	0.3	--	--	--	0.4	0.1
34	TP	--	1.0	2.8	2.7	2.7	0.9	1.9
35	TEP	--	0.3	0.8	1.3	--	1.3	0.9
36	TEcP	0.4	--	--	0.7	--	0.4	0.4
37	TFPP	1.4	0.3	1.0	0.5	0.9	0.4	0.7
38	TNP	9.4	9.8	8.2	8.0	9.9	12.2	9.0
39	TNRP	2.5	5.2	3.6	4.6	5.4	4.8	4.3
40	TUP	0.4	--	--	0.9	--	0.9	0.5
41	USFP	3.2	1.3	2.0	4.6	2.7	2.2	3.2
42	WP	3.6	--	--	0.3	0.9	--	0.6

The above figures were compiled and computed from the following data sources:

CHGE, "Name List of Candidates for Election to the House of Representatives on January 26, 1975" (Raykan Chū Samachik Sapha Phu Thān Rasadon Thi Samakhrab Luāktang Nai Wanthi 26 Mokharakhom 2518), pp. 35-61

POV, "Name List of Candidates 1975 for the Whole Country" (Ray Chū Phu Samakh 2518 Thua Prathet), pp. 288-560

PHKE, "Assemblymen-to-Be Throughout the Country" (Pen Phu Thān Rasadon Thua Prathet), pp. 107-142

Election campaigning also put a death toll on candidates, campaign managers, and canvassers being the ultimate outcome of violent rivalries notably in upcountry areas. The TUP leader died in a mysterious road accident which was understood as premeditated murder; candidates of the NFP and SJP, campaign managers of the SActP, SJP, and TNP as well as vote canvassers of the SJP, SNP, and TNP were shot dead or wounded.

Even though the public administration had the election date fixed on January 26 for auspicious reasons since this was a day of the waxing moon on the eve of full moon it did not at all solely rely on such fortunate constellation. Indeed, the organizational framework as planned and implemented by the Ministry of Interior was very progressive in the modern sense. An instruction campaign which was directed throughout the country using broadcast informations both by radio and by television, posters of excellent layout and didactic quality, signboards, and banderoles served the purpose of reminding the citizens of their voting rights, advising them how to comply with bureaucratic requirements such as registration, and urging them to exercise their voting rights in order to build a democratic society. Insistently the electorate was advised to vote for political parties only instead of electing individual candidates. Indeed, a considerable faction of potential voters had been excluded by the Constitution which decreed the voters' minimum age at 20 instead of at 18 years. This provision which prohibited large groups of students among others from voting had sparked fierce protest especially by the National Student Centre of Thailand. A protest rally organized by the latter had been followed by a dissenting mass demonstration of vocational students in support of the draft Constitution shortly before its promulgation.

III. Election Results: Hands not Paddling — Feet Dangling in the Stream Thus Slackening the Speed²⁵

In brief four essential aspects of the election results are discussed: (1) success or failure of political parties; (2) composition of the newly elected Parliament; (3) continuity or change of constituency representations, and (4) public participation in the polls.

1. A large number of political parties succeeded in getting candidates elected even though 20 small parties lost the elections. When comparing tab. 3 and tab. 4 with tab. 5 it is found that all large parties succeeded to various extents whereas the losers belong to small parties throughout — namely AP, GPP, MCP, NEP, OPSWP, PC, PFrP, PMovP, PForcP, PeopPP, PProgP, SP, SDP, SMJP, SPP, SFDP, SMP, TEPP, TUP, and WP. When considering the fact that the 62 PC candidates had to run for election in close contest with their former party fellowmen mainly of the DP, PForcP, DyP, and IP (cf. fig. 1) it is shown that the loosing parties other than PC had entered between 1 (OPSWP, SFDP) and 31 (PForcP) candidates in between 1 and 19 constituencies (cf. tab. 3); these figures are equal to not more than 16.7 per cent of all constituencies and 1.4 per cent of all candidates (cf. tab. 4).

²⁵ Thai proverb (Mü Mai Phay Au Tin Ra Nam) used to denounce individual lack of responsibility and co-operation (author's translation).

All but two of the defeated parties (SFDP, WP) had campaigned on a conservative policy platform. Among the winners the DP was most successful with 31.6 per cent of its candidates elected whereas its rival DyP finished lowest at mere 2.4 per cent — not taking into account here the 100 per cent success of the one-man CDP (cf. tab. 3, tab. 4, and tab. 5).

Interestingly enough almost all of the loser parties had concentrated their efforts in the Bangkok — Thonburi and Northeastern regions. For the fact that all these parties with the sole exception of OPSWP either had been formed along the shift in alignments (cf. fig. 1 for NEP, PC, PFrP, PMovP, PForcP, SPP, SMP), or had been newly founded partly by former independent representatives (cf. tab. 3 for AP, GPP, MCP, PeopPP, PProgP, SP, SDP, SMJP, SFDP, TFPP, TUP, and WP) might indicate an important change in citizens' political tendencies away from supporting popular individuals towards voting for political party candidates.

2. The composition of the new House of Representatives is shown in tab. 5 by political party and by region. There the group of parties with less than 10 MPs each — CDP, DyP, FP, FPP, IP, LP, PeacPP, PJP, PJP, PMassP, TP, TEP, TEcP, TNRP — gained decisive importance insofar as they altogether count 34 votes scattered over 13 political parties without which neither the socialist parties, nor the DP together with SAgRP, nor the so-called 'Allied Parties' — PeacPP, SJP, SNP, and TNP — together with SActP would ever command the marginal majority of 135 seats in Parliament.

Most parties represented agree upon conservative principles in policy with DP and SAgRP advocating a 'mild socialism' and SPT, TEcP, and USFP as the only parties following socialist goals.

In regional differentiation some remarkable facts are found (cf. tab. 5). First of all, election results for the region of Bangkok and Thonburi are incomparable with those from all other regions. Secondly, no socialist candidate was elected from the urban and industrialized area of Bangkok and Thonburi; indeed, 85 per cent of the socialist representatives were elected in the Northeast among which by now TEcP and USFP are solely based there together with the two small conservative parties PJP and TEP. However, the large conservative parties SActP, SAgRP, SJP, SNP, and TNP succeeded in winning the highest percentage of votes from the poverty-stricken Northeast which also has been the site of guerilla warfare and counter-insurgency over the last decade. Thirdly, through numbers of MPs the election results show where various political parties might be understood to have gained their strongholds: for decades it has been and still is Bangkok and Thonburi for the DP; it is in the Central Plain for the FP; they are in the North for the CDP, FPP, LP, SActP, SAgRP, and TP; they are in the Northeast for the NFP, PJP, SJP, SNP, SPT, TEP, TEcP, TNP, TNRP, and USFP; actually there is a more even distribution of elected MPs from fewer political parties in the Southeast and in the South.

From the point of view of regional representation the largest numbers of MPs according to their party affiliation belong to the DP representing the South (52.9 per cent), the North (27.7 per cent), and Bangkok — Thonburi (88.5 per cent), and to the SJP representing the Southeast (25.0 per cent), the Northeast (21.5 per cent), and the Central Plain (23.9 per cent). As for the covariability of Parliament seats and political party representatives in regional differentiation the strongest cor-

Table 5: Elected Members of Parliament by Region and Political Party 1975 — Absolute and Relative Frequencies

No.	Political Party	Bangkok-Thonburi		Central		North		Northeast		Southeast		South		Thailand			
		N Party	%	N Party	%	N Party	%	N Party	%	N Party	%	N Party	%	N Party	%		
01	CDP					1	100.0	1.8						1	100.0	0.37	
02	DyP			1	50.0	2.1							1	50.0	2.9	0.74	
03	DP	23	31.9	9	12.5	19.5	15	20.8	27.7	5	6.9	5.4	2	2.8	12.5	99.9	
04	FP			1	100.0	2.1										26.77	
05	FPP						1	100.0	1.8							0.37	
06	IP									1	50.0	1.0				0.37	
07	LP						1	100.0	1.8				1	50.0	2.9	0.74	
08	NFP			2	16.7	4.3	3	25.0	5.5	7	58.3	7.5				0.37	
09	PeacPP			2	25.0	4.3	3	37.5	5.5				3	37.5	18.7	4.46	
10	PJP									6	100.0	6.4				2.97	
11	PMassP			1	50.0	2.1				1	50.0	1.0				2.23	
12	SActP	1	5.5	3.8	1	5.5	2.1	7	38.9	13.0	5	27.7	5.4	2	11.1	12.5	
13	SAGrP			4	21.0	8.7	9	47.4	16.7	4	21.0	4.3	1	5.3	6.2	5.9	
14	SJP			11	24.4	23.9	5	11.1	9.2	20	44.4	21.5	4	8.8	25.0	2.9	
15	SNP			5	31.2	10.9	2	12.5	3.7	6	37.5	6.4	2	12.5	12.5	14.7	
16	SPT						2	13.3	3.7	11	73.3	11.8				2.9	
17	TP						2	50.0	3.7	1	25.0	1.0	1	25.0	6.2	5.9	
18	TEP						2	100.0	2.1							1.49	
19	TEcP						1	100.0	1.0							0.74	
20	TNP	2	7.1	7.7	8	28.6	17.4	3	10.7	5.5	11	39.2	11.8	1	3.6	6.2	
21	TNRP			1	33.3	2.1				2	66.6	2.1				3	
22	USFP									10	100.0	10.7				10	
	TOTAL	26	--	100.0	46	--	99.5	54	--	99.6	93	--	99.4	16	--	99.8	34
																	99.8
																	269
																	--
																	99.98
Change of Frequency Distribution after Split Within the Socialist Party and Formation of the New Thai Party (NTP) in March, 1975:																	
16	SPT						1	8.3	1.8	9	75.0	9.7					2
23	NTP						1	33.3	1.8	2	66.6	2.1					3

Notes: Compiled and computed from the election results as published by BP, XXIX, 28, January 29, 1975, p. 5. STVSCI, "Election Results '75" (Phon Kan Luak Tang 19), pp. 4-22 and "Summary Election Results 1975: 11th Parliamentary Elections" (Sarub Phon Kan Luak Tang 2518: Kan Luak Tua Than Khrang Thi 11), pp. 36-37

Table 6: Some Important Characteristics of Elected Members of Parliament 1975 - Absolute Frequencies and Descriptive Statistics by Political Parties

No.	Political Party	Sex		Age	Educational Attainment					Place of Residence			Occupation						
		Female	Male		Primary School	Secondary School	College	University	Other ^a	in Constituency	outside Constituency ^b	Lawyer	Businessman	Farmer	Govt. Official	Journalist	Other ^c	Data not available	
																			Σ
01	CDP	1	53	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
02	DyP	2	35	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
03	DP	71	46	11.5	2	10	5	50	5	63	8	11	4	12	4	1	14	2	
04	FP	1	55	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
05	FPP	1	49	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
06	IP	2	50	6.5	—	2	—	—	2	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
07	LP	1	50	—	—	1	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
08	NFP	12	38	5.0	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	1	—	6	—	—	—	—	
09	PeacPP	8	43	10.0	—	4	2	2	9	8	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	
10	PJP	6	42	3.8	2	4	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
11	PMassP	2	60	5.0	—	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
12	SActP	18	48	12.1	1	6	5	2	3	10	7	5	2	2	—	—	—	—	
13	SAGrP	19	49	8.5	—	9	3	5	2	15	4	2	2	1	—	—	—	—	
14	SJP	45	47	9.6	1	16	7	14	5	30	13	20	1	15	1	2	4	4	
15	SNP	1	15	9.8	1	4	1	3	3	9	6	3	—	3	1	—	9	2	
16	SPT*	—	(15)	(38)	—	(5)	(2)	(4)	(4)	(8)	(7)	(3)	—	(5)	(4)	—	(2)	—	
		12	36	10.8	—	3	1	4	4	6	6	3	—	3	4	—	2	—	
17	TP	4	41	5.6	—	3	—	—	1	4	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
18	TEP	1	58	4.5	—	1	—	—	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
19	TEcP	1	34	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
20	TNP	28	46	9.0	4	14	2	2	3	25	3	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	
21	TNRP	3	46	1.4	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
22	USFP	10	50	7.2	—	3	—	—	3	4	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
23	NTP*	3	43	13.2	—	2	1	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	TOTAL	3	266	46	10.4	12	87	30	97	33	205	54	42	51	9	48	10	12	97

Notes: * Three members of the elected Socialist Party of Thailand representatives formed another socialist party called the New Thai Party after having been ousted by their former party in March, 1975. Figures given in brackets therefore render the total amounts before the party split.
^a Comprising vocational education, military school, railway technical institute, business school, and unspecified educational background
^b For some MP data were unavailable; among those residing outside their constituencies 53 MPs referred to Bangkok (including Nonthaburi and Samut Prakan), and one MP referred to Samut Songkhram, Southwest Thailand
^c Including professionals (medical doctor) and private employees
 Data were compiled from "Know Your MP - A Continuing Series" published by THE BANGKOK POST, Vol. XXIX, Nos. 29-36, 38, 41-43, 45-47, 49-52, 54, 57-58, however discontinued after the presentation of altogether 108 Representatives out of the total number of 269, and from STYSCI, "Pictures and Biographical

Table 7:

**Political Party Affiliations of Re-elected Members of Parliament 1975 –
in Absolute Numbers by Former (Old) and New Parties**

No.	New Parties Political Party	Former (Old) Parties									Total	
		Democrat Party Phak Prachathipat	Free Moral Party Phak Isaratham	United Thai People's Party Phak Saha Pracha Thai	Foundation of Independence Party Phak Seri Manangsilā	Progress Party Phak Kao Na	People's Party Phak Prachachon	Free Democracy Party Phak Seri Prachathipatai	Economists' United Front Party Phak Nao Ruam Sethakon	United Earth Party Phak Saha Phum		Independent Representatives
03	DP	20	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	21	
05	FPP	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	
06	IP	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	
11	PMassP	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	
12	SActP	2	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	3	
13	SAgrP	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	–	2	5	
14	SJP	–	–	17	1	–	–	1	–	1	22	
15	SNP	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	2	
16	SPT	1	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	3	
17	TP	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	
18	TEP	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	
20	TNP	1	–	–	1	–	–	1	–	–	5	
22	USFP	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	2	
	Total	27	1	23	2	1	1	3	2	1	9	70

Notes: Figures were compiled from STYSCI, "Former MPs – Table Showing the Names of Representatives in the Year 1975 Who Were Elected in the Past – Most of Them Belonged to Political Parties When Becoming MPs in 1969 – Altogether the Following 71 Former MPs were Re-elected This Time" (So. So. Kao – Tarang Sadāng Ray Chū Phu Thān Rasadon Pi 2518 Thi Khōy Day Rab Kan Lūak Tang Ma Lāo Nai Adit – Suan Yai Mung Sadāng Thūng Phak Thi So. So. Lao Ni Sang Kat Mūa Pi 2512 – So. So. Kao Thi Day Rab Lūak Nai Khrao Ni Mi Thang Sin 71 Khon Khū), pp. 32–33 (NB: Indeed, only 70 former MPs were re-elected)

relation is obtained for the NFP at $\rho = 0.98$ whereas the weakest correlation is found for the CDP, FPP, and LP at $\rho = 0.04$ each²⁶.

Finally, the composition of the newly elected Parliament according to some basic individual characteristics (cf. tab. 6) points to the following facts: (a) women are grossly under-represented by 3 MPs only which equals 1.13 per cent; (b) the overall average age of all representatives is remarkably low at 46 years ranging between a minimum average of 34 years for the TEcP and a maximum average of 60 years for the PMassP whereas dispersion of all MPs' ages is lowest in the TNRP at $\sigma = 1.4$ and highest in the SActP at $\sigma = 12.1$; (c) the relative frequency distributions of all MPs' educational attainments as well as occupations clearly show that neither the total figures nor the figures for each party correspond to the educational standards and to the occupations of the population; (d) another inter-

²⁶ Coefficients for the large parties were calculated as follows: DP 0.75; SActP 0.60; SAgrP 0.50; SJP 0.14; SNP 0.37; SPT 0.92; TNP 0.89; USFP 0.89.

esting fact refers to the MPs' permanent places of residence among which 21 per cent were located outside their respective constituencies, i.e. out of 54 'absentee' representatives 53 had their permanent residence in the so-called Greater Bangkok area.

3. The above rendered age averages apparently also result from a low return to Parliament of former representatives. Indeed, absolute figure, in tab. 7 indicate that only 26 per cent of all actual MPs were re-elected. Except some small parties (FPP, IP, and PMassP) by far the largest groups of re-elected MPs formerly having been party members as well are found in the DP and in the SJP. In terms of percentages of re-elected and newly elected political party representatives the small parties seemingly were most successful. However, considering first the number of independent representatives in the 1969 Parliament (cf. tab. 1), and then taking into account both the number of candidates entered into election campaign by the numerous small parties (cf. tab. 3) which partly were founded by independent local politicians (cf. fig. 1) and the figures for former independent representatives having been re-elected as party representatives (cf. tab. 7) it is clearly shown that the newly launched political party system most probably has been accepted by the electorate.

Changes stipulated by the new Constitution then not only challenged the success of the traditional local independent politician gone political party candidate but they also increased the risk of failure for a number of small political parties founded after having split from old parties. Comparison of frequency distributions by political party members between the Parliaments of 1969 and 1975 (cf. tab. 1 and tab. 5 as well as fig. 1 and tab. 7) renders the following percentages:

	1969		1975
DP	26.0 per cent	DP	26.8 per cent
UTPP	33.8 per cent	PeacPP SAgr SJP SNP TNP	} 43.1 per cent
DFP EUFP FDP PP	} 6.8 per cent	SPT TEcP USFP	} 9.7 per cent

Hence it might be assumed that the large political parties successfully adjusted themselves to the new political spectrum most probably by means of adequate party and election campaign organization. The parties which were formed by former members of Field Marshall Thanom Kittikhachon's United Thai People's Party (UTPP) – although not exclusively so – even succeeded in gaining a total share of Parliament seats which is almost 10 per cent higher than after the 1969 elections²⁷.

²⁷ For comments on the outcome of the Parliamentary Elections in 1969 see von der Decken, K., *Das politische System Thailands nach den Wahlen des Jahres 1969*, In: *Internationales Asienforum* 1, 2 (1970), 215–222.

Furthermore, the low returns of votes for candidates entered by small parties minimized their chances at least under the present election system of direct and absolute majority frequency vote. Anyhow, many large party candidates as well most certainly lost due both to the almost identical policy platforms, and due to tough competition by numerous small party candidates. The election results therefore are not even representative for the political will of only those citizens who cast their ballots.

4. In any case it should be questioned if the outcome of the general elections on January 26, 1975 really represents the political will of the population. Doubts are justified merely in view of the unexpectedly low polls throughout the country. Wishfully and confidently it had been hoped that the polls would be extremely and unprecedentedly high both against the background of active as well as passive mass participation during the October 1973 uprising, and according to several poll opinion surveys. However, on election day some mere 47.9 per cent of the legally entitled voters in Thailand went to cast their ballots with average percentages ranging from 33.8 per cent in Bangkok and Thonburi over 46.4 per cent in the Central Plain, 49.9 per cent in the Southeast, 51.7 per cent in the North, and 52.4 per cent in the Northeast to 53.5 per cent in the South²⁸.

Indeed, Serendip has remained a legendary land, and so has the democratic society based upon mass solidarity which for the time being was forfeited by the narrow majority of the citizens who did not like to exercise their voting rights. The former Speaker of the National Legislative Assembly and present Prime Minister M. R. Kukrit Pramoj who has formed the 37th Government after his elder brother M. R. Seni Pramoj failed in obtaining the vote of confidence for this attempt at governing the country commented on the poll that he was deeply depressed by the apathy of the 'new generation' and very concerned about the future of democracy in Thailand²⁹.

²⁸ Percentages are based upon figures published by STYSCI, pp. 4-22 "Election Results '75" (Phon Kan Lüak Tang '18).

²⁹ Cf. BP, XXIX, 26, Jan 27, 1975, p. 1.

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