

Political Socialization of the Thai-Islam

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The term "Thai-Islam" is employed by the Thai government to describe those approximately seven hundred thousand Thai citizens who are of basic Malay ethnic stock, speak one or another Malay dialect as a first language, and subscribe to the Islamic faith. It represents an official recognition that these people think of themselves as being distinct from, and sharing few common interests with, the Thai ethnic group, which is Theravada Buddhist. Such thinking causes considerable concern among responsible government officials. This official concern, while natural in a country where the spirit of modern nationalism is still strong, is accentuated by the concentration of the Thai-Islam in a region adjacent to Malaysia. Not only do nearly all of the Thai-Islam live in southern Thailand, but they constitute a sizable minority in provinces such as Songkhla (19 per cent) or Krabai (38 per cent) and a majority in Yala (61 per cent), Narathiwat (78 per cent), Pattani (78 per cent) and Satun (83 per cent).¹ Because of the remoteness and poor transportation facilities of these provinces (which are on or near the Malaysian border), there has not been an appreciable influx of Thai. Thus the ratio of Thai-Islam vis-à-vis the Thai has not changed markedly (in these provinces) during the past few decades.

Not too long ago much of what is now southern Thailand was inhabited primarily by Malays. The first recorded state in this region was the Malay Kingdom of Ch'ih-t'u, covering an area now occupied by the provinces of Songkhla and Pattani. It appears to have been a colony of the Funan Empire, and its life span (middle of the second century A.D. until the middle of the sixth century) roughly corresponded with the rise and fall of Funan. Another Malay Kingdom—that of Ligor (Nakorn Sritamarat)—arose in the

latter part of the eighth century as a bastion of the Srivijaya Empire. And it was through the Srivijayans (who ceased to have any direct control over this area by the latter part of the twelfth century) that the Malays in this region were exposed, albeit superficially, to Hinduism-Buddhism. Indeed many of the local rulers accepted Hinduism and adopted Indianized titles such as raja. Though the Empire of Malayu, based on Sumatra, exercised control over the peninsula for a brief period toward the end of the thirteenth century, it seemingly had little impact on the small kingdoms in the north. There ensued, thereafter, a political vacuum in this region which was soon to be filled by the Thai moving down from the north—though not before their control was contested by two other powers.

The Thai first entered this area in the latter half of the thirteenth century, and by the end of that century had established a loose control as far southward as Pattani (at that time Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani were collectively known as Pattani). At almost the same time the Majapahit Empire based on Java extended its control on the peninsula as far north as Pattani. As Majapahit power and influence waned shortly thereafter, the Thai moved southward into Kedah and even beyond. However, with the rise and expansion of the Kingdom of Malacca during the fifteenth century, the Thai were forced to retreat northward. By 1460 the small Malay kingdoms in Pattani were vassals of Malacca, and through it were converted to Islam. Only after Malacca was captured by the Portuguese in 1511 were the Thai able to resume their drive southward. Eventually their control extended as far as Kedah, Perlis, Trengganu, and Kelantan. This control tended to be loose in these four territories as well as in Pattani. Indeed, Pattani, led by its extremely able sultans, was able to maintain virtual autonomy from Thailand until the beginning of the twentieth century. But in the territories north of Pattani several abortive revolts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provoked the Thai military to react with armed force, and this led to the flight of thousands of Malays southward to Pattani and beyond. These events resulted in the weakening of the local rulers and their replacement by either Malays approved by Thai authorities or by Thai themselves. The Thai assumed control over territories where the Thai population began to equal or outnumber the Malays, who had been decimated by fighting, execution, and flight.²

In 1909 the Thai gave up their claim to Perlis, Kedah, Trengganu, and Kelantan in return for the British relinquishing the right of extraterritoriality in Thailand. This agreement created the present border between Thailand and Malaysia and marked what has become a permanent division between the Thai-Islam and their Malay brothers next door.

Just prior to surrendering the territories in Malaya, the Thai replaced the local rulers in southern Thailand with Thai officials and organized this area into regular Thai provinces. Political and administrative power was now directly in the hands of the Thai, while economic control lay essentially with the small Chinese community which had long been active throughout the region.

Initially the Thai were content to maintain their authority over the Thai-Islam and to collect taxes from them. But the revolution of 1932 ushered in an era of modern nationalism whereby the dominant Thai elites (military officers and civilian bureaucrats) sought to integrate all minorities into the body politic. For a while efforts at integration were essentially confined to subjecting young Thai-Islam to a tour of duty with the military; teaching the history of Thailand, the national anthem, and so forth, to Thai-Islam school children; and, most important of all, teaching the Thai-Islam—particularly the children—to speak and read in the Thai language. No attempt was made to Thai-ize the Thai-Islam culture. In fact, the Thai-Islam were exempted from those provisions of Thailand's marriage and inheritance laws (reflecting Buddhist morals) which would conflict with the Koran.

Tolerance of this alien way of life ceased when Pibul Songkhram became Prime Minister in 1938. Henceforth the Thai-Islam were subjected to pressures aimed at compelling them to adopt Thai dress, language, and customs. Even the aforementioned exemptions with respect to marriage and inheritance were no longer applicable. This policy of forced assimilation, cultural as well as political, continued until the downfall of Pibul's regime in 1944.

Successor governments for the next three years reverted to a policy of striving for political integration of the Thai-Islam without attempting to force cultural assimilation. Accordingly many of the measures taken by Pibul's government were rendered nonoperative. Furthermore an Advisor on Islamic Affairs known as the Chularajamontri, a Central Islamic Committee (the Advisor and Committee

were located in Bangkok), and provincial Islamic subcommittees were established in order to advise the Thailand government on matters peculiar to the Thai-Islam.

Unrest nevertheless mounted among the Thai-Islam during this period of relaxation. In part this was due to the failure of the government to heed much of the advice given by the Chularajmontri and various other representatives of the Thai-Islam. When Bangkok authorities did accept advice, they often were unable to exercise enough direct control to enforce their orders in the distant southern provinces where communication facilities were inadequate. A shortage of rice in Malaya also added to the unrest and inspired a rice-smuggling traffic across the border. This traffic created a shortage of rice in the border provinces and increased the cost of living. It also caused an increase in crime and corruption. An even more significant factor lying behind the rising unrest was the development of a spirit of nationalism among the Malays in Malaya. This nationalism soon showed irredentist tendencies with respect to unifying all Malays on the peninsula. For example, Malay sentiment in Kelantan rallied behind the son of the last raja of Pattani (living in exile in Kelantan) when he urged liberating fellow Malays from Thai control in 1946 and 1947, claiming to have received daily complaints from the Thai-Islam about persecution by Thai officials.

The Thai government evidenced some concern, particularly regarding the possibility that the British might be pressured by Malay nationalists into annexing the Thai-Islam area. But it took only a few ineffective steps to remedy the situation, such as sending an official delegation to the area to investigate local complaints. The government later promised improvements in the status of the Thai-Islam, but little came of this promise. Consequently Thai-Islam resentment of Thai authority continued to grow.

This resentment became tinged with fear of a reimposition of the policy of forced cultural assimilation when the 1947 *coup d'état* in Bangkok brought Pibul back and formally restored him to power in 1948. In order to forestall such a move, one of the local leaders of the Thai-Islam, Haji Sulong, submitted a petition asking for the Thai-Islam a guarantee of complete religious freedom; the use of Malay along with Thai as the official languages in southern Thailand; the transfer of authority over religious affairs, including the power to assess special taxes such as the *zakat* (religious tithe), to

Islamic organizations; the selection of qualified members of the Thai-Islam to fill 80 per cent of the administrative positions in the region; and the appointment of a high commissioner to administer the southern provinces.

Pibul's government reacted swiftly to this petition by jailing Haji Sulong and some of his followers. This, in turn, provoked a revolt in Narathiwat province which was easily quelled. Several lives were lost and an estimated two thousand Thai-Islam fled to Malaya. More extremist elements among Malay nationalists in Malaya seized on these events to intensify their agitation in favor of uniting the Thai-Islam with Malaya. An organization was formed in Singapore toward this end, but it was immediately suppressed by the British police. Meanwhile, inside the Thai-Islam area (especially Satun, Narathiwat, Yala, and Pattani), the population remained restive. In 1948 the Thai-Islam community in Pattani petitioned Great Britain to withhold recognition of the new Pibul government until it had acted favorably on their list of grievances. In that same year a Thai-Islam organization drew up a petition to the United Nations requesting that it oversee the cession of Narathiwat, Yala, and Pattani to the new Federation of Malaya. An estimated 250,000 Thai-Islam endorsed this petition, either by signatures or thumbprints, before the Thai authorities became aware of the movement and placed many of the leaders under arrest.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, and also being concerned about adverse world opinion, Pibul dispatched a commission to the south for another investigation. On the basis of the commission's report, the government in October of 1949 announced several concessions to the Thai-Islam. Included among these were promises that greater care would be used in selecting administrative officials to be assigned to the area, and wherever possible officials who were knowledgeable about Islamic law and culture would be preferred; government offices in the region would be closed on Islamic holidays; Thai-Islam employees of the government could wear their local dress; the government would subsidize the building and maintenance of mosques; a Malay, or Thai-Islam, college would be established in Bangkok; Islamic law would apply with respect to marriage and inheritance. In practice, however, these promises were fulfilled hesitantly and only in part.³

Because the Thai-Islam were dissatisfied with the performance of

the government vis-à-vis its promises, and because they sought wider concessions, unrest in the area continued; at times it belied surface appearance of calm, and at other times it burst out into the open. Even after the Pibul government was followed by those of Sarit Thanarat and Thanom Kittikachorn, Thai-Islam discontent was manifested by the half a dozen serious irredentist movements during the past decade, all of which were suppressed by the police.

The most serious challenge of all to Thai authority and to efforts at political socialization of the Thai-Islam has developed since 1964.⁴ It is posed by approximately five hundred hard-core Malaysian Communist terrorists (CT's, mainly Chinese) who took refuge in the Thai-Islam area near the Malaysian border when the Communist insurgency was finally crushed by the British and Malaysians in the late 1950's. Even prior to that time they had frequently crossed this border in order to escape from pursuing British forces. They had constructed several camps on Thai soil just inside the frontier, using them as supply depots and training centers. At first the Thai government was reluctant to cooperate with the British against these terrorists. Later it agreed to take action against them, but in practice only went through the motions of pressing the CT's. The apparent rationale behind the Thai government's failure to act was basically twofold. First, the CT's had conscientiously avoided attacking Thai police and military units in the area or harming in any way the local Thai citizenry, whatever their ethnic extraction or political leanings. Therefore the Thai authorities had no particular complaint against the CT's—and, indeed, feared that vigorous Thai action might provoke terrorist activities in the region and, at the same time, provide a rallying point for Thai-Islam discontent. Secondly, the government might well have reasoned that as long as the CT's remained just next door to Malaysia, the Malaysians would not dare raise a claim on behalf of the Thai-Islam. In other words, the CT's could have been viewed as hostages against Malaysia's good behavior.⁵

The strategy of the CT's changed in the early 1960's, causing a corresponding revision of Thai government policy. By 1963 the CT's apparently had decided that they were unlikely to triumph in Malaysia in the near future, and that they needed a wider and more secure base together with recruits from among the Thai-Islam population in order to carry on a protracted conflict. At about this

same time, Communist strategy seemed to call for the overthrow of the pro-Western government of Thailand through the use of guerrilla warfare to be waged first in those peripheral areas peopled primarily by minorities and then in central Thailand.⁶

In pursuing these new and complementary goals the CT's de-emphasized their Communist appeal and turned instead to issues which vitally concern the Thai-Islam. The CT's, for example, are mounting a propaganda campaign which aims at proving that the government discriminates against the Thai-Islam by failing to provide adequate services. In line with this tactic, they have been giving free medical supplies (which come through underground channels from supporters among the Chinese communities in Singapore, Malaysia, and southern Thailand) to the Thai-Islam peasantry in order to point out the failure of Thai authorities to provide adequate medical facilities and treatment. The CT's have also seized on the issue of secession. They now openly talk of organizing and leading the Thai-Islam to drive out the Thai from southern Thailand and establish an independent Thai-Islam state.⁷ They make no mention of union with Malaysia, for such a merger would strengthen the position of the Malay community in an expanded Malaysia, which the CT's obviously don't want since they are essentially Chinese and since the Malay community has tended to be too conservative to accept Communism.

Thai authorities received sporadic, though unconfirmed, reports of Thai-Islam youths receiving guerrilla-warfare training at CT camps in the jungle. Rumors began to circulate about a national-front type of movement which was being organized among the Thai-Islam and which was patterned along the lines of the Communist-dominated National Liberation Front in South Vietnam.⁸ From this point on, the Thai began to isolate the CT's from Thai-Islam support by accelerating the effort at political socialization of the latter.

This intensified drive for political socialization has several, though supposedly interacting, facets. One of these is to inundate the area with police and military forces so as to restrict the movement of the CT's and gradually cut them off from food and other supplies which might be obtained either abroad or locally, and generally isolate them from contact with the Thai-Islam. Also it is anticipated that the presence of large numbers of troops and police will intimidate

those Thai-Islam who otherwise are likely to prove susceptible to CT blandishments. The Thai believe these forces will ensure peace and stability for the area, conditions which are prerequisites for political socialization of the Thai-Islam.

The second facet involves the government reaffirming its intention to permit religious freedom to the Thai-Islam and to respect Islamic law and customs in the area. The government has given emphasis to this reaffirmation recently by constructing a large Islamic mosque in Pattani at a cost of two hundred thousand dollars. Moreover, it has stepped up its training of government administrators (who are predominately Thai Buddhists) in Islamic religion, law, and customs.

A third facet is an attempt to improve communications between the Thai and the Thai-Islam—in particular between the government and the Thai-Islam. This has taken two forms: government radio broadcasts in the Malay language beamed at the Thai-Islam, and simplification of the Thai language (it is the language of instruction in the schools). Heretofore the Thai-Islam have preferred to listen to the radio stations in Malaysia because programming is more closely related to the Thai-Islam culture than that of Thai stations. (However, there are indications that they find the music most interesting; the more serious Malay programs appear to be over their heads.)⁹ Recently the Thai Ministry of Education began to sponsor a daily Malay-language digest of the news from the radio station in Yala. This digest, as well as other types of programs, are in both the local dialect and in standard Malay (*Bahasa Melayu*). There is fragmentary evidence that the listening audience from among the Thai-Islam is growing rapidly.¹⁰ Consequently the government anticipates soon setting up a 50-kilowatt station in Yala which will aim most of its programming at the Thai-Islam community.

Though these radio broadcasts will enable the Thai government to express its views to the Thai-Islam, and hopefully keep their listening attention diverted from broadcasts in Malaysia, they do not in themselves contribute very much toward greater social and political communication between the Thai and Thai-Islam. The government is aware that the Thai-Islam must learn to read and speak Thai before such communication is possible. Accordingly, great emphasis is being placed on teaching the Thai-Islam school children to speak, read, and write the Thai language. As a transi-

tional step, the government is engaged in an ambitious effort to translate standard Thai textbooks into the Malay language written in Thai characters. It is hoped that this will make the young Thai-Islam more receptive to learning Thai and will speed up the educational process. Much of this translation is being done at the Regional General Educational Development Center in Yala. Here, also, an effort is being made to develop instructional methods whereby Thai and Thai-Islam teachers can more effectively teach the Thai language in the school system and use it as the language of instruction for other subjects.

Another, and directly related, facet is the extension and upgrading of public education opportunities in southern Thailand. This is designed to make the Thai-Islam alert, politically conscious citizens and also to prepare them for a more active role in a developing economy. Greatest attention is being given to primary and vocational education. The government hopes to open several new primary schools annually in the southern region. And it also hopes, as part of a national plan, to increase the period of compulsory education from four to seven years, and to provide the necessary primary educational facilities. More vocational schools are also to be built and a better effort made to match training of students with present and future job opportunities. Only about three new public secondary schools will be built in the entire region during the next few years, but the government does anticipate increasing the number of secondary schools at a later date to accommodate the increasing number of qualified graduates from primary schools. There have been studies made of the feasibility of establishing a university in southern Thailand similar to the regional universities begun in 1964 in the north and northeast.¹¹ The government is likely torn between two conflicting needs in this respect. On the one hand, it must realize that expanding secondary schools should take priority over the creation of a university. Indeed, these secondary schools are almost a prerequisite for the university in that they must produce enough well-trained students before the university can really function. On the other hand, there undoubtedly will be pressure applied by the Thai-Islam to have a university in the region for prestige purposes, if nothing else. In any event, if and when the university is established, it probably will be located in the Pattani-Yala area.

Still another facet is the expansion and improvement of governmental services provided the Thai-Islam. This partly is intended to counter CT propaganda, and a widespread conviction among the Thai-Islam, that the government doesn't really care about the Thai-Islam and discriminates against them in terms of governmental services. But it also represents part of the effort to build an infrastructure which will permit economic development in the area.

The most dramatic manifestation of this intent is the creation of mobile development units (often called national development units) which move from area to area within or between provinces, building schools, playgrounds, houses, and roads; digging artesian wells; and establishing community and agriculture centers in villages. At the present time there are two of these units operating in the southern region, and one of them covers Yala and Narathiwat. Two additional units are now being trained and will soon begin to operate in Pattani and Satun.

Each unit consists of approximately one hundred members, including doctors, teachers, agricultural experts, engineers, and public relations specialists. It moves into a particular area, chooses three to six villages as models, and begins a three-stage program in each of these villages that lasts one year. During the first stage, which covers from forty-five to sixty days, the unit devotes most of its time to getting the villagers to accept the notion of improving their lot through village cooperation and through the adoption of modern techniques. Then those responsible for this phase move on to another village, while construction personnel remain in the first village to build and then supervise the building of various projects. At this point responsibility for further improvements is handed over to the local authorities. However, the unit returns briefly to the village one year later in order to make sure that development is being continued by the locals. People from nearby villages are encouraged to visit the model villages in the hope that they will be inspired to undertake development on their own initiative.¹²

Less dramatic but of equal significance are current and projected governmental expenditures for transportation and communication, electric power, and public health.¹³ The present Three-Year Plan calls for the expenditure of about forty million dollars on the construction of state and provincial highways in southern Thailand during 1964-1966. Despite the fact that not much more than half

of this amount will likely be utilized effectively during this period, considerable progress is being made in improving the highway system. Emphasis is placed on building state and provincial highways. Though it will not be completed for at least the next five years, a state highway leading from Bangkok to the Malaysian border is planned. In the meantime, work has begun on improving and connecting patches of state highway in the southern region; and provincial highways—at the present time barely passable, even during dry weather—will be improved and extended. By the end of 1966 approximately 500 kilometers of provincial roads alone are to have been built. A decision has been reached to specifically concentrate on these routes which are of special importance in terms of connecting agricultural areas, mines and/or fishing jetties with national highways, railroads, and markets. Approximately 150 Thai technicians either have been or now are being trained to assist in the technical aspects of constructing and maintaining these provincial roads.

There also have been advances in air transportation facilities for the south. A new airport at Yala will soon be completed and put into service. Improvements have been made at the Songkhla Airport, and there is now daily air service by Thai Airways Company to Songkhla as well as three flights per week to Pattani.

In the same vein regular post and telegram service is being extended, bit by bit, to cities and towns in the region. Even telephone services will be expanded and improved during the next few years. (From 1964 through 1966 approximately forty-four new outlets are to have been added in the south—most of which will be utilized by the Thai government, however.)

A new electric power plant is being constructed in Krabai, and is already in partial operation. Transmission lines and a distribution system are being installed to carry this new source of power through eight provinces in the area. Diesel generating units which will provide electric power are in the process of being installed in Narathiwat and Yala.

Striking developments are also taking place in the field of public health. The government plans to establish a new training school for nurses which will be attached to the provincial hospital at Songkhla. A school to train assistant nurses was recently established at Narathiwat, and a medical technicians' training school, located at the

provincial hospital at Songkhla, has recently begun to function. These training facilities are especially significant in light of the fact that in past years qualified nurses have been reluctant to come to the south from other areas, thus necessitating the use of inadequately qualified personnel. Perhaps even more significant is the campaign begun recently by the government to improve and extend provincial health centers throughout the area. While there is at least one provincial hospital in each of the fourteen provinces of the region, distance and poor transportation facilities combine to discourage the people from utilizing the provincial hospital. Provincial health centers, in contrast, are scattered throughout the provinces and are much more accessible to the population. There are about fifty of these centers in the region, and the government plans to convert two or more of these each year into "first-class health centers."¹⁴ Noticeable progress is also being made in the prevention and eradication of diseases. For instance, a malaria-eradication program was begun in 1949 and almost two thousand DDT spray men were employed by the government in the south as part of this campaign.

The final facet involves developing the economy of southern Thailand so as to give the Thai-Islam a higher standard of living and thus a material stake in Thailand. While the region has considerable economic potentiality, and though its economy is better developed than that of northeastern Thailand, this economy still lags behind that of the central plains area of Thailand and, even more so, of Malaysia.¹⁵ The government is now engaged in efforts to increase and diversify agricultural production, exploit more fully existing natural resources, and develop industry in urban parts of the area.

Rubber production in the south, in terms of quantity and quality, has not kept pace with that of Malaysia. Government experimental stations have determined that improved strains of rubber tree can be grown which will, after a period of five to eight years, produce more and better rubber. The government is encouraging rubber planters to take some of their land out of production and replant with this new strain. It has placed a special tax on rubber exports, and part of this tax is given to rubber planters to cover some of the cost of replanting. (For the most part, only the medium and large plantation owners have been able to afford this process; but it is anticipated that in time more of the small holders will follow their example.)

Diversification of agriculture is commanding even more attention. It would permit the growing of secondary crops by the rubber planters, and thus give them some protection from sudden drops in the international market for rubber. It would also permit utilizing lands not suitable for rubber cultivation, thus adding to a general increase in agricultural production in the area. Through demonstrations and related activities, the government is seeking to persuade the Thai-Islam to grow more rice, coconut trees, coffee, and fruits. They are also being urged to raise fish in nearby ponds and paddy fields in order to supplement their food production.

The government has also become increasingly active in encouraging development of fishing, mining, and industrialization. It is adding to its marine fishery stations in the southern provinces to study marine life in the coastal and offshore waters of the peninsula. It is felt that deep sea fishing offers considerable economic prospects in future years. And the government has undertaken an intensive survey of southern Thailand in order to pave the way for an increase in mineral production. It is already known that there are sizable deposits of wolfram, gypsum, lignite, and iron ore, though some are barely exploitable at prevailing prices and under current conditions in the region. Furthermore, in an effort to attract private capital to manufacturing projects in the south, the Thai government offers to subsidize relatively low interest rates for those wishing to establish new industrial enterprises.

All of these economic activities, as well as many of the governmental services aimed at developing the necessary infra-structure for economic development, are part of a general plan developed by a special committee (the Southern Region Development Committee) under the chairmanship of Minister of Foreign Affairs Thanat Khoman. That such a high-level committee was created at all is testimony to the seriousness with which the Thai view the need for carrying out economic development in the south as part of their program for politically socializing the Thai-Islam.

These, then, are the key elements in the government's program for political socialization. But there are several obstacles to the successful realization of this program. For instance, Thailand has had little or no experience at conducting modern counter-guerrilla warfare, so that there may be a continuation, perhaps acceleration, of CT activity. This, in turn, is bound to have some effect on the

Thai-Islam. Many of the Thai-Islam youths might be tempted to cooperate with the CT's if the latter demonstrate an ability to evade the Thai military and police forces—particularly if the CT's should inflict serious damage upon these forces.

The recent split between Singapore and Malaysia and subsequent criticism of the Malays by Lee Kuan Yew could lead to a strengthening of the ultranationalist faction within UMNO. It is not inconceivable that such prominent ultra-Malays as Dato Syed Ja'afar Albar (former secretary-general of UMNO) and Naser bin Ismail (director of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka—the Language and Literary Institute) would lend considerable support to the Thai-Islam, should the latter attempt to secede from Thailand. Malaysia would hardly dare to directly challenge Thailand over such an issue. But Malaysian encouragement could be a decisive factor in encouraging and sustaining unrest among the Thai-Islam. And since the maintenance of peace and order are vital prerequisites for the success of the other ingredients in the government's program of political socialization, this program might fail to ever get off the ground.

Even if stable conditions do obtain in the region, economic development may fail because of the preference of the Thai-Islam for noneconomic pursuits, reluctance to sacrifice now for material rewards later in this life, and the influence of Thai values systems and behavioral patterns on the administrative elite. With respect to this last point, it should be noted that the planning and implementation of much of the economic development program would be in the hands of Thai administrators. The prevailing system of the Thai administrative elites places primacy upon the acquisition of power and prestige earned in government service as measured in terms of the size of the clientele served by the administrator's agency and by the number of subordinates working under him. As a consequence qualified Thai administrators are reluctant to serve in research or staff capacities, instead preferring a position in a line agency. Yet for any administrative apparatus to function effectively, research and staff functions must be performed by competent persons.

It should be expected that the government's efforts to expand and improve the educational system will meet with only limited success at best. In part this is due to the value system of the Thai-Islam, which emphasizes religious education and a pilgrimage to Mecca

as the means of attaining prestige. Furthermore, the more conservative village Imams and religious teachers tend to brand all non-Koranic education as antireligious; and among most other religious leaders in the Thai-Islam community there is little support given for secular education programs run by the Thai government.¹⁴ In addition, the relatively little attention given by the Thai government to the development of secondary schools in the region will eventually frustrate the ambitions of many of the brighter young Thai-Islam, for vertical mobility in the Thai-dominated society of Thailand is conditioned first and foremost by the degree of educational attainment.

Another deterrent to political socialization of the Thai-Islam is their relationship with Thai officials with whom they have dealings. While the government is now making an effort to either select officials who have a knowledge of Islamic religion, law, and customs or train Thai officials in these matters before appointment to the south, there still are many officials functioning in the area who lack this kind of cultural awareness. This leads to popularly held (among the Thai-Islam) images about Thai officials, four of the most important being:¹⁵ Thai officials neither speak the local Thai-Islam language nor understand the basic features of Thai-Islam culture and religion—and accordingly they offend in most of their dealings with the Thai-Islam population; Thai officials tend to equate education with intelligence, so that they treat Thai-Islam leaders with contempt or condescension; the *Nai Amphur* (district officer) and his deputies seldom visit Thai-Islam villages, and when they do, they deliver orders rather than ascertain needs and complaints of villagers; the scope and quality of governmental services provided Thai-Islam villagers depends, in large measure, upon monetary or other special favors given responsible Thai officials by the villagers. There is little doubt that these images have some basis in actual fact, though this was more true in the past than at present. But these instances have been generalized by the Thai-Islam and distorted out of all proper proportion. Nevertheless, these images do influence Thai-Islam interaction with Thai officials.¹⁶

Perhaps the biggest obstacle of all is the often forgotten fact that a greater knowledge by the Thai and Thai-Islam of each other's culture, together with an ability to speak to each other in a common language, will not automatically reduce conflict. One can be much

more easily offended by something he understands, and can give greater offense to another, if the two can communicate. This suggests that, even if the government's program is basically successful, there will be a long period before the Thai-Islam community can live among the Thai Buddhists without cultural contention.

NOTES

1. See *1960 Thailand Population Census* (Bangkok: Central Statistical Office, 1962).
2. A compact treatment of Thai policy and political activities in the Malay states during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is found in Walter F. Vella, *Siam Under Rains III* (Locust Valley, N.Y.: J. J. Augustin, Inc., 1957), pp. 59-77.
3. For an examination of the interaction between government policy and Thai-Islam reaction from 1932 through the early 1950's, see Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *Minority Problems in Southeast Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955), pp. 158-165.
4. The term "political socialization" as here used means the Thai governmental effort to help the Thai-Islam realize a sense of political identification with the nation-state (Thailand), while at the same time allowing them to preserve their unique Malay-Islamic culture.
5. This observation is based on informal conversations between the author and several Thai police officials in Bangkok and southern Thailand during 1958-1960 and the summer of 1963.
6. *New York Times*, December 14, 1964.
7. *New York Times*, January 5, 1964, p. 4.
8. This information was obtained in informal discussions between the author and Border Patrol Police officials in Thailand in the summer of 1963.
9. See unpublished Memorandum of Conversation between Dr. Thomas M. Fraser and USOM officials on August 8, 1964, at Pattani with regard to conditions in southern Thailand as observed by Dr. Fraser.
10. This statement relies on the personal and unrecorded observations of Thai officials and American scholars who have recently visited the area, and who have reported these observations to the author in informal discussions.
11. The most recent of these studies was undertaken by a three-man team of American scholars during February-March of 1966. It made a confidential report to the government of Thailand on the feasibility of building such a university. Members of this team were John Sawyer, President, Williams College; Ashley S. Campbell, Dean, College of Engineering, Tufts University; and Richard T. Gill, Master of Leverill Hall, Harvard University.
12. For an excellent study of the Mobile Development Teams see Lee W. Huff, *Observations on Mobile Development Unit's Operations* (Bangkok: Joint Thai-U.S. Combat Development and Test Center, 1963); also see Huff, "Mobile Development Unit Follow-Up," a report to the OSD/ARPA R & D Field Unit, Military Research and Development Center, Bangkok, November, 1964.

13. See unclassified airmail report from the United States Embassy in Bangkok to the State Department, dated February 19, 1965, on economic conditions and development programs in southern Thailand.

14. "First-class centers" are supposed to have as many as ten beds for accommodating emergency cases and a staff of at least one doctor, one nurse, one sanitarian, and a midwife.

15. Though individual income is much higher in Malaysia, the cost of living is also higher—particularly with respect to food; the cost of food in Thailand is much less, in large measure, because the Thai government subsidizes the production and distribution of rice.

16. A few of the younger religious teachers are the exception to this rule; also a few of the *Pondak*, or religious schools, are beginning to integrate secular subjects into their curriculum—especially the Thai language.

17. That these images are widely held was ascertained by the author (during several field trips to southern Thailand in 1958-1960) in the course of informal interviews with one hundred Thai-Islam selected from various segments of society.

18. One scholar has noted that the Thai-Islam avoid unnecessary contact with Thai officialdom. They also avoid court proceedings, even though there is provision for Thai-Malay interpreters and a Thai-Islam advisor who counsels the Thai judge on matters that bear upon Islamic religious beliefs and Thai-Islam customs. See Thomas M. Fraser, *Rasembilan: A Malay Fishing Village in Southern Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960), pp. 118-119.