

Thailand: The coup continues

by an EIR Investigative Team

The process initiated by U.S. government and intelligence agencies to destroy the institutions of sovereignty in Thailand, which provoked a bloody crisis and the collapse of the government in May (see *EIR*, June 12, "U.S. AID Runs Overthrow of Thailand's Government"), took another dramatic leap forward in mid-June, when constitutional law was virtually overthrown in the appointment of a new prime minister following the resignation of Gen. Suchinda Kra-prayoon.

Suchinda, who had been selected as prime minister by a duly elected coalition of five parties in a general election, resigned after violent demonstrators provoked ill-trained troops (and profiled commanders) to open fire. The tragedy has created precisely the conditions desired by the "Project Democracy" controllers in Washington, who are committed to the destruction of the Thai military as a viable institution capable of defending the nation's sovereignty.

On June 10, the president of the Parliament, Arthit Urairat, a member of the elected five-party coalition allied with the military, betrayed his party and defied the electoral process defined in the Constitution by refusing to propose to the king the candidate for prime minister selected by the elected coalition, retired Air Chief Marshal Somboon Rahong. He proposed instead the darling of the U.S. and World Bank interests, Anand Panyarachun. Sources within Thailand report that the U.S. embassy was active in armtwisting party leaders to override the constitutional order and appoint Anand.

Anand not a member of Parliament

One irony of the Anand appointment is that he is not an elected member of the Parliament. The hue and cry of the various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which ran the demonstrations, all financed from abroad by the Project Democracy networks run by U.S. intelligence, was that Suchinda should not be allowed to serve as prime minister because he, too, was not an elected member of Parliament. One of the concessions made by the military-linked parties after the bloody events of May was an immediate amendment to the Constitution to include such a requirement. This was done, and passed by the Parliament on June 10, followed only a few hours later by the appointment of Anand, thus breaching the new law! It is revealing, although not surprising, that the pro-

testers are no longer concerned with this issue.

The intent of this virtual coup was expressed in the British and American press in the following days. The British Reuters wire service gloated over the destruction of the military in a June 11 release: "Many of the generals-turned-politicians and their allies who formed a narrow parliamentary majority after March general elections said they were considering retiring from the fray after the reappointment of Anand. . . . With the Sammakhi Tham (the leading military-linked party) breaking up and with the junta-appointed Senate stripped of its legislative powers by a constitutional amendment, political analysts said the traditional grip of the military on Thai public affairs could be finally loosened."

The crisis is not over. Anand has announced that he will call elections for September or October. The danger is that an alliance between retired generals Chavalit Yongchaiyuth and Chamlong Srimuang, with extensive support from the Anglo-Americans, could emerge the victors. Chamlong, the mayor of Bangkok who led the demonstrations, including the call for his student followers to physically breach police barricades protecting the palace and the Parliament buildings, is a raving anti-growth ascetic, wrapped in a cloak of "Mr. Clean," and a member of a fundamentalist Buddhist sect which has directly confronted the ruling council of Buddhism in Thailand.

Chamlong has aligned himself with General Chavalit, who is generally regarded by Asians as the candidate of the CIA. Chavalit is also reported to be backed by the Chinese and British-linked Bangkok Bank, which has been widely reported as a key link in the drug money-laundering from the Golden Triangle. High-level sources in Thailand report that Chavalit has created around him a circle of "gangsters, tycoons, and local bosses" who have brought Thailand to a level of lawlessness that threatens not only its continued economic development, but its very existence as a nation. This is precisely the operation being encouraged by the so-called "democratizers" in Washington.

One potential danger sign resulting from the destabilization and weakening of Thailand is the current renewal of hostilities by the genocidal Khmer Rouge in neighboring Cambodia. Thailand has played a key role, with Japan, in bringing about a peace settlement in Cambodia, and was in the process of negotiations with Japan to work jointly in the economic development of that war-torn nation. This depended on the disarming of the Khmer Rouge, which had agreed to the disarmament process, obviously under pressure from their Chinese sponsors. In mid-June, the Khmer Rouge bolted from the peace agreement and launched new military operations, which could only have happened with approval from Beijing. With the U.S. destabilization of Thailand threatening to undermine the (largely Japanese sponsored) economic development of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), George Bush's "old friends" in China may well be preparing to move into the region.