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The Working Monarch



The emblem designed for use in celebration of His Majesty the King's 60th Birthday Anniversary, December 5, 1987.

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Introduction

In Buddhist tradition the term kingship represents rulership, leadership, governmenthood, and sponsorship of righteous order in a kingdom or on earth.

In Thailand, a kind person and a Buddhist are almost synonymous. He is at the same time the patron of all religions in his kingdom. One of the most obligatory virtues of the Thai king, as the Buddhist scripture suggests, is that he is trained in practising generosity and religious tolerance.

The king is the great elect, the protector of the kingdom, the source of pleasure and delight to the people, the esteemer and promoter of the righteous order, through which he sets a righteous watch and ward and serves the people.

According to the ideals of Buddhist kingship, a king is more than a leader of his people. He is the personification of all their aspirations, using his influence and providing guidance to strengthen his subjects thereby making his nation strong.

The creed of serving his people has been the bedrock of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's concept of kingship since his coronation on May 5, 1950.



He has succeeded in presenting himself to his people not just as a disembodied entity known as "His Majesty the King of Thailand", but as a sincere, hard-working head of State who serves them: all.

The path of kindness, patience and generosity which His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand has chosen to follow is the mark of greatness that is an illustrious example of kingship today.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej, His Character and Influence



H.R.H.Prince Bhumibol Adulyadej was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the United States of America on December 5, 1927, where his father H.R.H. Prince Mahidol of Songkhla was studying medicine at Harvard University.

When in 1946 H.M.King Ananda Mahidol, his Royal brother, died H.R.H.Prince Bhumibol Adulyadej, then nineteen, became the ninth Chakri King.

When he was young, living with his mother and his brother and sister in Switzerland, he was a happy child. Science was the subject he chose to study. As he grew up, he developed a good memory and a careful, disciplined and conscientious mind. And it

is this ordered, perceptive and imaginative mind, plus a deeply-rooted sense of dedication, combined with a care for detail and capacity for hard work which has stood him in such good stead as a king.

His Majesty has wholeheartedly set for himself, from the beginning of his reign, the duty of analysing and understanding the task at hand so that the best approach can be devised and the task be accomplished in the best possible manner. His sense of involvement, be it in small or significant duties, is always so great that he would never feel relieved until each duty is carried out to his complete satisfaction.

The title king implies an exercise of power. But in reality a Thai monarch has virtually no executive power. The declaration of the Constitution by King Prajadhipok or King Rama VII, his uncle, in 1935 limited its authority by overthrowing once and for all the doctrine of absolute power of the king. The absolute monarchy was replaced by the doctrine of responsibility which by making members of the Government responsible to Parliament for the sovereign's acts, meant that all the sovereign's executive powers were handed over to Parliament.

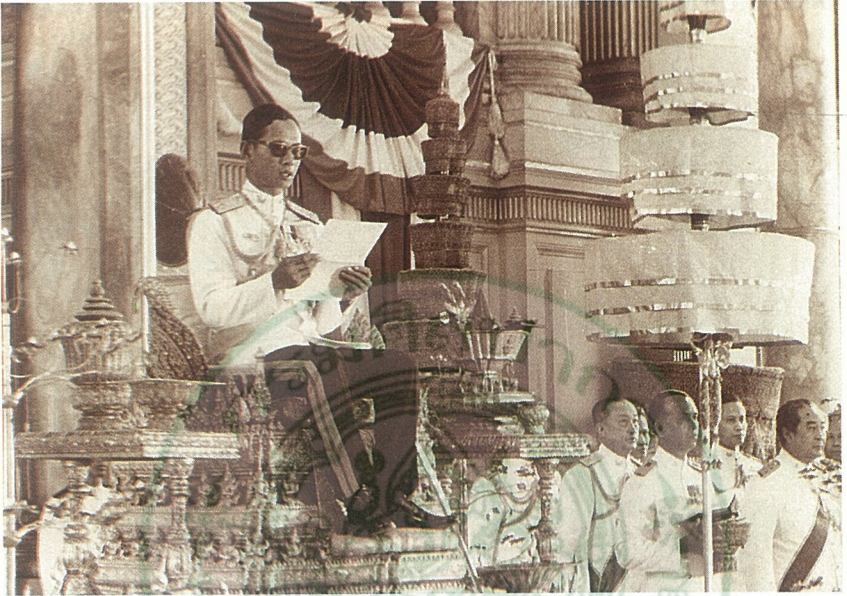
It is true that the Crown retains certain "discretionary powers" Yet, he performs only those acts that are stipulated in the Constitution. Thus, for example, he appoints the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, The Prime Minister, however, is first designated by the Parliament, and the Chief Justice by the Cabinet. The King also performs such acts on behalf of the people as promulgating laws and treaties convoking the Parliament and awarding honours with the advice and approval of the Cabinet.

Yet while the monarch reigns without ruling, there are nevertheless ways in which his influence can be exercised. His choice of the Prime Minister is now in effect limited to the elected leader

of the House of Representatives. But his contacts with the Prime Minister is close throughout his term of office. The Prime Minister regularly has audience with him. During such a meeting he has not only the right to be consulted on all affairs of State, but to give his own views, encouragement or warning. He also sees other ministers with whom he is entitled to discuss the business of their departments; and although he does not attend meetings of the Cabinet, he is also sent all its papers to study.

The King has therefore the opportunity of accumulating over the years an immense store of knowledge, of obtaining an unrivalled and unique experience which cannot fail to be of use to future administrations. Deeply involved in the inner workings of the government, yet weaned from party politics, closely associated with the ministers in power, yet immune to forces which can drive them from office plus the sincere concern and deep involvement and constant service rendered to his people, the king and his successors will continue to provide a real service, not merely to exist as a useful constitutional device.

The king serves as a link between his country's present and its long past. Despite the rapid inflow of western civilization, the



Thai people are still very much attached to tradition and ceremonial. Such events as the Ploughing Ceremony, the changing seasonal costumes of the Emerald Buddha, the State Opening of Parliament, Trooping the Colours and the Royal Barge Procession are but some of the ceremonies for which the Bangkok scene is renowned and with which the king is closely associated.

A unique role which the reigning monarch has actively played which has made him internationally known as "the hardest-working king" is building the basis of national development and an equitable distribution of national resources for the wellbeing

of his subjects and his nation's security.

Last but not least in importance, is his traditional image as the symbol of the national unity. The Thai people regard him as a symbol which helps bind them together in their common ideals and aspirations.

The Royal Family



Supporting the king or representing him on ceremonial occasions, and on those visits to various parts of the country, which form a very large part of Royal life, are the members of his family.

His mother, Somdej Phra Srinakarindara Boromrajchonnani fondly and respectfully named "H.R.H. the Princess Mother", is highly esteemed and appreciated for her devotion and services rendered, uninterruptedly for over two decades, to the people in remote areas of the kingdom.

Her eldest child, H.R.H. Princess Galyaniwattana, the King's sister, accompanied her on most of the trips when she visited the people and the officers in various parts of the country.

H.R.H. Princess Galyaniwattana is now a university lecturer. She teaches French, the modern language which she masters as well as English. Like her Royal mother, Princess Galyaniwattana is dedicated to her country and its people.

The King and Queen Sirikit have four children. The Royal children had their primary and secondary education at Chitralada school which the King set up to educate his Royal children as well as other children of their age. The first child, H.R.H. Princess Ubolrattana chose to take her graduate study at M.I.T., in Boston, Massachusetts, where she read nuclear physics.

Their second child, H.R.H. Prince Vajiralongkorn took military training at the Royal Australian

Military College of Duntroon, in Australia.

In 1972, when he was twenty years old, H.M.the King invested him as His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn. The Crown Prince serves in the Royal Thai Army. He is in charge of the Royal Guard Battalion. He married Princess Soamsawalee, a young lady of the Royal blood, and is now a father of a cute, bright girl H.R.H.Princess Bajrakitiyabha.

The third and the fourth children, Their Royal Highnesses Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and Princess Chulabhorn chose to pursue their higher education in Thailand. H.R.H.Princess Maha Chakri took her B.A.with honours (in 1976) from Chulalongkorn University. She also took a Master Degree of the University of Fine Arts and Chulalongkorn University, in the Oriental Languages and Oriental Etymology in 1979 and 1981 respectively. Always in quest of knowledge, she also took a Doctorate in Development Education from Srinakharinviroj University. Everyone is astonished at and admires the young princess's ability and application. She has never failed to accompany her Royal father in his trips to meet the people in the country. The Princess is very much involved in various official and social functions. Besides, she is known for her literary talent. She is very good with a Thai musical instrument,

the sor-sam-sai (three-stringed violin), she has composed poems and written memoirs of her many overseas trips.

Her senses of humour and artistic bent are clearly shown in her drawings. Her literary works and drawings have been published and sold with the proceeds giving to the Sai-Chai-Thai foundation of which she is the President. This foundation gives financial assistance to families of officers who lost their lives or suffered on duty at the Thai frontiers.

H.R.H.Princess Chulabhorn, the youngest Royal child, graduated with a B.Sc. in Organic Chemistry in 1979 from Kasetsart University. She took a doctorate in the same subject from Mahidol University in Bangkok. In 1982, the Princess married Flight Lt. Virayuth Ditsayasarin, they have two daughters : H.R.H.Princess Siribha Chudabhorn and H.R.H.Princess Atitthyadhorn Kittikhun.

Her Majesty Queen Sirikit serves alongside her husband. She is the innovator of many projects designed to review and improve Thai art and handicrafts. She stresses respect for traditional methods along with top quality workmanship. In this way Her Majesty has fostered a renewed interest in her people's unique talents.

Following the Royal parents' footsteps, the son and daughters of Their Majesties the King and Queen share great concern for



the welfare of the people of Thailand. The Crown Prince emphasizes the theme often stressed by Their Majesties that of enabling the disadvantaged to help themselves, thus gaining confidence, self respect and hope. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, accompanying the King on most trips in the country, has become highly knowledgeable about His Majesty's projects for his people. H.R.H. Princess Chulabhorn mainly assists Her Majesty the Queen in her activities relating to the SUPPORT programmes aimed at raising the meagre income of farmers through training the people in indigenous arts and crafts and finding the market for them.



On May 5th, BE 2493 (AD 1950) seated on the Bhadrabith throne beneath the Nine-tiered White umbrella of State in the Baisal Daksin Hall of the Grand Palace during the Coronation Ceremony, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej said "I will reign with righteousness for the benefit and happiness of the Siamese people".

Some 37 years later the Thais have learned that their king keeps his promise. He has done so much for the betterment of the country and the people.

When the country celebrated the auspicious occasion of the Rattanakosin Bicentennial in BE. 2525 (AD 1982) His Majesty who by then had reigned for some 32 years, had initiated and implemented over 800 development projects throughout the country. Most of the projects aim to improve the living condition of his subjects, particularly in the remote rural areas.

His Majesty's projects are known as Royal Projects. They are launched to help the people in many aspects ranging from health care to rainmaking and irrigation.

The Royal Projects were not initiated immediately after he became king. It took a few years for the young king to learn about the living condition of his people. The first project of all,

a Royal Aquaculture Project instigated in the grounds of Chitralada Villa, Dusit Palace, materialised in 1952, some two years after His Majesty's coronation. The second project came seven years later in the form of a school in a remote rural area in the Northern Province of Chiang Mai. By 1962, 12 years after he became king, only 6 projects had been launched.

During those years, however, His Majesty travelled extensively throughout the country. Frequent Royal visits, both official and private, to all regions of the Kingdom have made the Royal Family deeply aware of the people's problems and conditions.

By 1965 His Majesty had learned more about Thailand and its people than most people. He knew their problems and had begun to find ways to help them. It was in this year that he graciously granted permission for the Royal Medical Unit, which had developed during earlier reigns as an extension of the Bureau of the Royal Household in order to take care of the health of the members of the Royal Family and the Royal entourage, to treat the general population. Royal permission was also granted from that year onwards for the Royal Medical Unit and the Royal Mobile Medical Teams to accompany His Majesty the King

and the Royal Family on all provincial visits. Royal Mobile Medical Teams were temporarily set up in remote villages and hamlets on the days of the Royal visits.

In order to provide emergency funds to civilians, military and police officers as well as volunteers who were maimed or wounded in action while conducting internal security operations, the Sai Jai Thai Foundation under Royal patronage was set up in 1975. It has received continuous generous support from all members of the public.

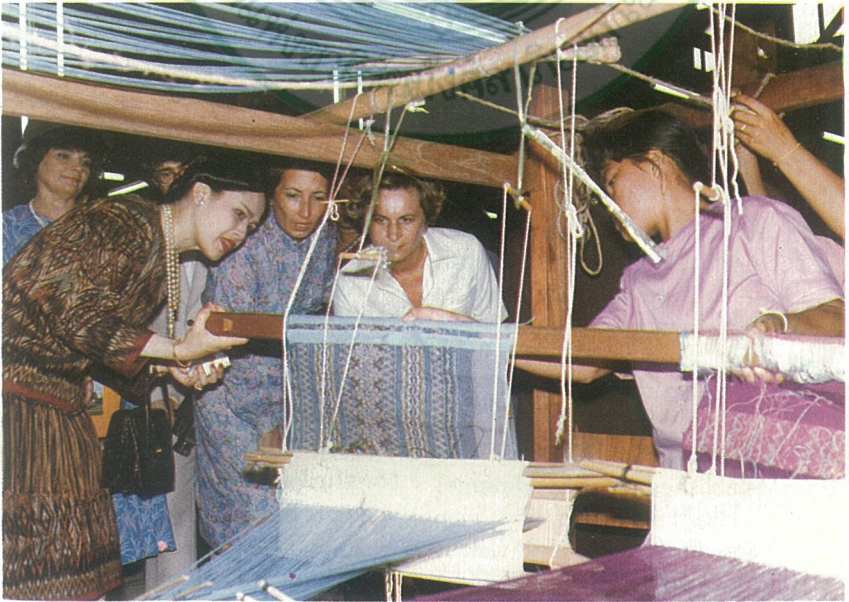
Today the Royal Mobile Medical Teams regularly visit people in rural areas throughout the country. And from 1970 the Royal Mobile Dental Unit began its work visiting villages and looking after the dental care of students and people who live in remote areas.

His Majesty the King understands full well the importance of education as the basis for the making of a successful livelihood, which, in the final analysis, contributes to the development of the country in all fields of activities. For this reason he has always carried out his duties diligently in the promotion of education. His Majesty presides over the ceremony of conferring degrees several times a year to all the graduates of state universities, which can sometimes extend over a period of nine consecutive days.

In 1963 the Raja Prajanugroh Foundation Under Royal Patronage was established with the initial fund of three million baht from His Majesty the King's Privy Purse. Its goal is to help the victims of such natural catastrophes and disasters as fires, floods and disastrous effects of monsoons and famines by providing immediate relief in the form of necessities of life. In addition, the Foundation also provides educational funds and materials to needy students as well as arranges for the construction of schools in the remote areas.

In order to help support the Government's policy of the promotion of primary education in all regions of the Kingdom, His Majesty the King often grants funds from the Privy Purse for the construction of schools in remote areas. Many schools have been built by His Majesty. But the most significant thing is that he had set an example for the well-to-do. During the past ten years many people in the cities throughout the country donated money or helped collect money to build a large number of schools in the rural areas throughout the country. One Bangkok businessman has donated as many as 58 schools.

By travelling extensively throughout the country His Majesty knows that there is a need to raise the standard of living of the Thai people, the majority of whom



are farmers. In 1961 he initiated the Chitralada Farm Rice Cultivation Project in the grounds of Chitralada Villa, Dusit Palace, to conduct experiments in rice cultivation and crop rotation whereby data could be collected to be analysed by His Majesty before devising ways and means to help raise the standard of living of the people.

A few years later Dusit Palace almost became an agricultural research centre. There are a rice mill, a dairy farm, a powdered-milk plant and many fishponds where he experimented with 'Pla Nil' (*Tilapia nilotica*) and found that they were easy to breed and grew in size unusually fast. This kind of fish was later widely bred by fish farmers throughout the country and became a low-priced food for the general public. Fishfry has been distributed to the people in remote villages who now have a steady source of protein in their diet. His Majesty continues with his experiments in fisheries particularly in the South. Both brackish and sea-water fish culture and fish farming techniques have been duplicated by many of the villagers with great success.

In 1965 His Majesty the King established an experimental farm at Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province so that various means of raising livestock and poultry and the growing of cash-

crops on arid and sandy soil could be tried out. During the earlier years of operations the Hat Sai Yai Farm cultivated many varieties of tamarind and cashew-nut trees in order to study the relationship between moisture of the soil and the required amount of fertilizers. Later on, kitchen-garden crops and field plants such as pineapples, corn and mulberry bushes were grown in demonstration plots as examples to farmers for cultivation in similar arid and sandy soil.

His Majesty strongly believes in advocacy of animal husbandry as livestock and poultry are an important source of protein in the people's diet, whether in the form of milk, egg or meat. Furthermore larger animals can also be used to supplement the manual labour on the farm. With this belief, His Majesty in the year B.E. 2522 (A.D. 1979) set up the Khao Hin Son Agricultural Research and Development Centre at Phanom Sarakham District, Chachoengsao Province. The centre was established as an experimental project where various governmental agencies concerned with agricultural problems are allotted a piece of land in order to study issues ranging from water resources development and reafforestation programmes to animal husbandry. Instructions and training for farmers and agricultural

extension workers are given many times a year at the centre. Upon the completion of the courses those in attendance are allotted seeds and saplings as well as offspring of livestock to take back to their villages in order to improve the strains of their plants and herds.

Whenever it was brought to His Majesty the King's villages that people in remote villages wish to raise livestock and poultry but could not afford to find a good breed, His Majesty would graciously donate some pedigree animals so that, through breeding, the people in the area would obtain livestock of good strain.

His Majesty initiated the Royal Cattle and Buffaloes Bank in the year B.E. 2522. It operates under the jurisdiction of the Department of Livestock Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives. His Majesty believes that government agencies concerned with livestock development should play a larger role in helping farmers find domestic animals to increase their herds. The bank receives donations from the public and loans cattle and buffaloes free of charge to the farmers. The first offspring of the loaned livestock belongs to the bank. A year after dropping a second calf, which the farmers may keep, the original cattle or buffalo must be returned for further use by other needy farmers.

His Majesty has initiated many land development projects throughout the country. These projects help villagers to master the art of growing crops and improve their living condition. Normally land development projects which were established at the Royal instigation of His Majesty the King would be taken care of by two ministries. The Ministry of Interior is responsible for the socioeconomic aspects of the cooperative members while the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives is responsible for the construction of infra-structural facilities such as roads, farmponds and artesian wells.

His Majesty's idea to make full use of land in the country has led to successful development of land thought to be unsuitable for agricultural purposes. In certain areas he managed to help farmers grow crops which were never grown in Thailand before. The area around Cha-am District, Phetchaburi Province for instance, has become a major one in supplying asparagus to the country. The demand for the crop far exceeds the supply. The relatively dry area at Tha Yang District, also in Phetchaburi Province, has been apportioned as pasture for livestock grazing.

In order to further improve the living condition of the villagers, many co-operative communities

have been set up. Needy farmers are admitted into these communities by lotdrawing. Co-operative communities are popular among farmers. Limited budget, however, is a major problem here and an average community could take in only about 45 families.

The best known projects initiated by His Majesty is probably the Royal Hilltribes Development Programme, at present called the Royal Project. It was inaugurated in the year B.E. 2512 (A.D. 1969), following His Majesty the King's expressed desire to initiate the benefits of sedentary agricultural practice to the Hilltribes community with introduction of substituted cash crops that, in some cases, may fetch higher market prices than opium.

Many friendly foreign governments have been most generous in their support of the Royal Projects with presentations of equipments, seeds, saplings and monetary donations.

His Majesty has set up various Highland Agricultural Research stations. Apart from the cultivation of temperate climate fruits. There are also farmland for experimental cultivation of field crops at high elevations.

His Majesty the King is affectionately known among the hilltribe people as "Chao Pho Luang" or "Royal Father." Each time he visits a hilltribes village,

they will express gratitude to His Majesty, sometimes, with native dances.

A significant project initiated by His Majesty the King is the Reafforestation Programme for Watershed Development, which began in the year B.E. 2508 (A.D. 1965). Its goal is to find suitable species of trees for cultivation in areas where the forests have already been destroyed by illegal log-cutting and the swidden farming practices of the hilltribe people.

His Majesty understands full well the importance of irrigation schemes for people living in extremely remote and poverty stricken areas. Having visited all parts of the country. His Majesty began to learn about irrigation. Today he is an expert in this field. He pays relentless attention to all problems relating to irrigation, particularly the judicious use of natural water resources in order to obtain the greatest benefits from a given amount of resources. Whenever possible he will visit all kinds of irrigation projects whether it be large dams, small weirs or irrigation canals. He very often grants sums of money from the Privy Purse for the construction of small weirs and dams so the people would have enough water for agricultural purposes. These irrigation projects are under the jurisdiction of the Royal Irrigation Department, Ministry

of Agriculture and Cooperatives. His Majesty's gracious assistance in this field truly complements and supports the government's rural development programmes in a unique way.

Today His Majesty is not just the Head of State; he has also become a key factor in the development of the country. He travels a lot more than he did when he was younger and he initiated more and more projects every year. From B.E. 2495 to B.E. 2502 (1952-1959), he initiated only two projects. In 1982 alone 173 projects were launched at the instigation of His Majesty. By the time he turns 60 in December, 1987, he will have initiated over 1,000 projects for the well-being of his people throughout the country, a remarkable achievement for the man who is known as one of the hardest working monarchs in the world.



'Soul of A Nation'

In His Majesty's own words

Today is His Majesty the King's 54th birthday, the whole nation joins in congratulating him and in celebrating this very auspicious and happy occasion. As always, we convey our deep respect and love to His Majesty and we wish him a very happy birthday.

This selfless man devotes all his energies to the welfare of his people. What kind of man is His Majesty? One reads about his official activities, and about his many visits to the poorer and less fortunate of his people in rural areas all over the country; but it is seldom that one obtains such an insight into his views as is revealed in the BBC film "Soul of a Nation" Below we print some excerpts from His Majesty's remarks taken from the sound track of this film.

Here His Majesty talks to the BBC interviewer about his job as King.

...I do things that I think is useful and that's all....

I don't know what can be defined as King, that is the trouble because in my position, I am called a King. But my duty is--you have noticed not the duty of a King. It is something that is quite different or difficult to define. I do things I think that will be useful and that is all. If you asked me what I had in mind, what plan I had, I had no plan. Just like I am today, we are going to have something and we are going to do it. We don't know what the something is, but we are going to do something that is good. That is the plan or the spirit.

Anywhere we go we are looked at and people are interested

in us. They look at us, they don't want to bother us. They want to know more how they eat, how they sit, how they walk, they don't look with curiosity or hostility because they are very happy. You must know that they are well wishing and they are on intimate terms with us. It's like a big family. These people are looking at us because they like us and we like them. We love them, they love us so it is no pressure.

The first thing is security, that is the security of the people, the Thai people have to fight for their freedom, for their independence, so the main thing is to be a good general, and then after that, when the country is more settled is to have law

and order, law and administration, and at the same time we must have enough food to eat, enough facility to have a good home to have shelter. These are essential things. And then we must have the social order and more things of the heart that means that we must be good people, so that there won't be disorder because people who are good don't create trouble so much. So we must have religion. But the King is the leader of the religion also.

Kingship, if we have to use this word, has changed all the time since the old times and then since the event of founding of Bangkok, our capital. It has always changed. My great-grandfather was the philosopher-king. He was the King that you know under the name of King Mongkut.

About his Royal grandfather, King Chulalongkorn.

He did not have easy life, he began at the age of fifteen. And he had to create a place for himself, that means he had to define his own duties by taking up the basis that my great-grandfather had laid and he had to fight also for keeping the country free from encroachment from other countries.

About the film "The King and I"

And then, if you look at the criteria of a musical comedy, or musical film, on that criteria it is very entertaining, very well done and very lavish. Good musical

comedy. Deserved the success, but on another criteria that if we look at it as a character, the character of King Mongkut. In that movie, he is a sympathetic character, he is a wonderful fellow. Intelligent, strong and perhaps nearer the truth than the book, the original book even because that character in the film was a very strong character which my great-grandfather had a very strong character. He did not dance up and down the scene, but he did have a very strong character. He did have a very strong sense of duty to the country.

Asked if the people in an upcountry village had any particular problem :

No, no particular problem, they were very happy. And I ask them what temple they were going and they said the name from looking at the map. There is an old temple here and they did not remember the name...

They are very happy when somebody comes and he knows about their village.

I try to have a map so that I know where I am going and they are happy when they know that the official map is--their village is on the map....

There is a village that has no name and I put a name on it.

On planning a new irrigation project :

....And helped by this water here. So this water we take here and we must put a small dam here, so that they'll have water



here. The most important thing is that they should have rice in this area which doesn't have to be marketed. They eat it, it is their subsistence : We'll be able to have self-sufficiency in rice here, which they don't have

now because last year, two years before, dry, no water.

Interviewer: What do you think the communist insurgents are telling people about schemes like this that you're involved in?



His Majesty : It depends on the one, sometimes they will say that they are the initiators of this scheme, sometimes they will say, this scheme is the devil's scheme. Depends on the man.

INTERVIEWER : But in a sense there's a bit of truth in that because they might be claiming that were it not for all their action you and the Government wouldn't be doing these things here.

HIS MAJESTY : You like to pose this question. This is a half-truth. If they were not there, we would have built this dam a long time ago. But because they are there we must take the trouble to come here because the people who built this want to have some encouragement.

INTERVIEWER : You're saying that this is evidence that you are winning?

HIS MAJESTY : Winning against what?

INTERVIEWER : Communist insurgency.

HIS MAJESTY : Oh I don't know, but we are winning against hunger, this is what we are doing, we are not fighting against people, we are fighting against hunger. We want to have them have a better life, if we make this and they have a better life the people who you call communist insurgents will have a better life also. So everybody is happy.

In His Majesty's study :

INTERVIEWER : Could you explain what you're doing with these

maps, please?

HIS MAJESTY : If I see something-you see circles there, places that can be developed and you can see a place there with a red thing there; it's for a kind of reservoir. We are damming and making a small reservoir and then when there are engineers, irrigation engineers, I can ask them if it is practicable to do that and sometimes they go and inspect the place and we have a survey on the spot.

Talking about the radio equipment in his study :

Something it is very, very useful. Sometimes when you know about the news of some disaster hitting somewhere you can help them very quickly and speed is the most important factor. So I get the news from the telex or on the radio. Most of what you hear here doesn't concern me. Sometimes there's a murder somewhere. Sometimes I can have some news of-they have caught a caravan of heroin or something like that. It is better than to listen to the broadcast of other things.

Asked why he sits alone in his study for several hours every evening, looking at his maps and listening to his radios :

That is a question that can be answered in many ways. I'm not lonely and I have work to do, so I have to do the work. The way of doing work is to have some concentration and some peace and then one can think more clearly. It is a way

of preparing myself to be able to do whatever circumstances will have me to do. I gather information by listening. I gather information by looking at the maps, or reading, or thinking and then when the time comes I have the material in my head.

Asked how he keeps himself above and apart from people who might want to try and gain his influence :

We keep in the middle, neutral and in peaceful co-existence with everybody. That is the way of doing it. We are in the middle.

We could be crushed by both sides, but we are impartial. One day it would be very handy to have somebody impartial because if you have in a country only groups or political parties which will have their own interest at heart, what about those who don't have the power, who don't, who are just ordinary people, who cannot make their view known? They must look up to somebody who is impartial. And if one wants to destroy somebody who is impartial, well, one destroys one's self. That is why one must keep this impartiality and perhaps it is difficult but it can be done.

Among the hilltribes in the North :

The first thing was not the project, it was just trying to do something to improve a little their situation. We gave them some piglets and some fodder for the piglets and some sorghum and

other things to plant so that they can buy rice and buy some other commodities. At the same time we try to help the people to have a better living, better cultivation, better food, better way of life. We can at the same time help in the fighting against the narcotics.

All the project can do, not to stop, but to improve the situation, is that, so that the people here many of them. are the hill-tribes, they have friends, they have relatives all over the route from Unang to Tibet and down to our country here.

It's long way and they walk. They have communication, very good communication. Apart from what you can see in the mountains, there is something you cannot see. It is the spirit of these people. They come and go and they say that there is the King's project. They spread the information. They are better than the information service of Bangkok.

If we postulate that the opium is grown outside of this country and the heroin factories are outside of this country, only that trade comes through, why should we go on helping these people to grow lettuces, if you want, or strawberries? Well, we have the opium or the narcotics problem - It is only one, as I told you at the beginning, it's only one aspect of the problem, or say the task we have. The other

task is to give these people a better way of life. So this will continue even if, and I don't think it is very near future, if the opium is eradicated like small-pox has been. We have to continue this programme for a long time, so that we give these people a better life and also so that everyone will get the benefit of it.

On Buddhism and its importance for His Majesty in his daily life :

Buddhist thought is rather complex and has many grades. There is the grade of Buddhism--now--the highest level is to attain absolute purity, which you call selfish, a selfish motive. And that is true--it is selfish, purely selfish, but to attain this purity you must do everything that is not selfish, which for you perhaps is a paradox. One must sacrifice, one must discard everything that one thinks that is one's own. Charity is one way to discard.

Meditation is a process that is very important because first you must have concentration. You must concentrate your mind so that you have a peace that is perhaps not lasting but a peace in which you can, you can see many things. To have the peace, the real peace and then with this peace you will be able to see very clearly.

If you think of Buddhism, one doesn't want to be on the

top because there is no top, there is no bottom, it's just pure purity.

There is no sin. There is no sin because as I told you there is the original purity which has been spoiled by, or covered by what we call sin. It's just the opposite. It is the original purity, the original thing that is light, that is beautiful.

We are indebted to the British Broadcasting Corporation for permission to reproduce these excerpts from their film.

Thailand's Working Royals

Written by Denis D. Gray



King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the ninth monarch of the Chakri dynasty, acceded to the throne in 1946 at the age of 18. Almost from the beginning of his reign, His Majesty was known as a "working royal" and he has made innumerable exhaustive trips around the country to aid his people. In addition to his expertise on dams, irrigation systems and rice cultivation, His Majesty is known to be a talented musician, artist, composer and award-winning sailor. On 5th December this year, the entire nation celebrates His Majesty's completion of the fifth cycle--his 60th birthday, and the continued success of Thailand's constitutional monarchical tradition.

It began that day, as it does on most, with the distant clatter of helicopter blades, a sound which drove the squatting crowds on the hillside to their feet. At other times the waiting people might be rice farmers from the central plains or Moslem villagers in the southern peninsula. But that day at Ang Khang, high up astride the Burmese border, they were the rugged hill people of northern Thailand : wild-looking Lahu Shehle with the fronts of their heads shaved bald; Yao women in embroidered gowns and tall turbans, and the Yunnanese Haw, energetic traders in jade and opium. And as a flight of helicopters cut the horizon their eyes looked onto one painted

blue, white and orange, nursing it to a landing.

The swirls of thick dust thrown up by the rotors were still settling when a lean, bespectacled, intense man strode out of the machine, clutching a red grease pencil and an acetate-covered 1 : 50,000-scale map. A two-way radio was strapped to his belt and the tops of his camouflaged jungle boots protruded from the bottoms of his utilitarian slacks. The crowd parted to make way for the man they called Chao Por Luang"--"Royal Father"

If what followed smacked of the military, it was because this man--King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand--had come with members of his family to wage a kind of war, a war probably more crucial to the future of his country than the blood-and-bullets one fought against Communist rebels or against periodic intruders from a hostile country.

The tactics of this royal combat in the countryside--home of some 80 percent of Thailand's people--are distinctly nitty-gritty : scooping out more irrigation ditches, coaxing more rice from the paddies, building schools and clinics in remote areas. The strategy, however, is broad indeed : uplift the haye-nots to ward off social turmoil and in the process insure continued integrity of a nation deeply entwined with a monarchical tradition which has also managed to remain free for over 700 years.

“Preventive medicine”, is the way the King described it to us. Preservation.

The second half of the 20th century has not been especially kind to monarchs in general and those around Thailand in particular. In the three neighboring countries of communist Indochina, the era of royalty is over.

But as these crowns toppled, King Bhumibol thrived. This despite the fact that his own country has suffered through several government changes since he acceded to the throne in 1946 at the age of eighteen. The King, who has reigned as a constitutional monarch under ten different constitutions, has avoided being sucked into the political vortex although he has intervened in times of crisis, most notably to defuse a 1973 student-led uprising in the streets of Bangkok.

“When foreign royalty come to Thailand they are quite amazed and envious,” says Mrs. Busaya Krairiksh, an American-educated lady-in-waiting. European bluebloods may have to scramble to find useful niches in modern society, but the least of King Bhumibol Adulyadej’s problems is keeping busy, or being loved.

“They say that a kingdom is like a pyramid : the King on top and the people below. But in this country it’s upsidedown,” His Majesty told us. “That’s why I sometimes have this pain around here.” He pointed to his neck

and shoulders and his normally scholar-serious face broke into a broad smile.

The trip to Ang Khang took us into the heart of the so-called “Golden Triangle,” a tri-border region of opium warlords, insurgent armies and a welter of hilltribe groups. Government officials rarely ventured into these hills until the early 1970s, after the King pioneered a network of projects to wean the tribespeople from growing their deadly opium and induce them to settle permanently on productive land rather than denude watershed forests with shifting, slash-and-burn agriculture.

No sooner had the King landed than a delegation of ten men of the Lahu Shehleh stopped him: as he hiked a dirt road with his advisors and security personnel.

“We just don’t have enough to eat these days,” village headman Tshe Che somberly reported to the King.

“But I remember having given you some land,” the King responded, recalling minute details of an earlier visit.

“Yes, but another tribe has been encroaching on us,” the headman shot back.

The King sank to his knees. The circle of courtiers and officials likewise dropped quickly to the ground, trying as best as possible to keep their heads tucked below the level of the monarch’s.



Such court protocol did not seem to register on the hill-tribesmen and it doesn't on most of the country people who regard their relationship with the King, Queen and Royal family as something of a domestic affair. Tshe Che picked his teeth with a spring of straw and another old man made a ritual of chewing his betel nut while the king directed a barrage of questions and annotated a map spread out before him on the earth. --whom people using court language do not address directly but rather pose their questions to the "dust" under his feet--was being pounded by a merciless sun. Rivulets of sweat mingled with the reddish dust of the highlands on his skin.

But his face was fixed in concentration (the byproduct, some say, of his frequent practice of Buddhist meditation).

A few exchanges with his aides and the King told Tshe Che and his men: "We will come and help you." The ten men beamed. Preventive medicine.

"When we go to see the people we seem to follow an unwritten plan. We separate and move out in four groups," the King explained. Youngest daughter Princess Chulabhorn, a biochemist by education, goes along with the Royal medical team. Multi-talented, popular Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and Queen Sirikit, whose stunning beauty contrasts vividly with the rural

rough-and-tumble, normally focus on their special home industries projects, vital supplements to low rural incomes. Peasant women--"sisters," the Queen calls them--press close to unburden themselves on everything from menstrual aches to how a relative still loves the monarchs but had to flee into the jungles with the communists because of bullying local officials. Whenever he had time the Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, a werving officer of the Royal Body-Guards, checks around on security details with which he is familiar, but mostly follows closely behind his Royal father in order to learn the ropes.

The King himself deals with problems of infrastructure : water, communications, farming techniques. "Take action," the King says. The experts can always do their time-consuming studies later and plug in the holes. Be practical. "Don't think that spades and pick-axes are obsolete, because not everyone can have tractors except capitalists who have no regard for common villagers anyway," the King once told Ministry of Agriculture experts. Keep lean. Serve as a catalyst, a prodder, an ideas man but let the bureaucracy--despite its weaknesses--carry out the work.

After one of these energy-draining trips we had an opportunity to view what we thought would be another aspect of Royal life. After a hurried shower and change of clothes, a car picked

us up at our hotel and snaked its way up Doi Suthep, the 1,300-meter hill which dominates the lovely, northern resort city of Chiang Mai. Near its breeze-combed crest is Bhubhing, a fairy tale union of forest lodge and Siamese palace.

The helicopters had deposited the royal party a top the hill at 8.30 p.m., and an hour later the first of some 100 guests began to arrive. The King wore a crisply tailored dark blue suit. The Queen, who had barely put up the jogging sneakers she had worn in the countryside, was draped in thick Thai silk, cut into chic modern pants and a perfectly matching vest in a Thai style first fashionable seven centuries ago. The Queen moved with an elegant lilt through richly carpeted rooms decorated with Chinese Ming vases, gilt statues of angels holding lanterns and oil paintings depicting scenes from the romantic Thai tale "Monorah." The atmosphere was mellow and enchanting, the ideal time to unwind with small talk.

But as the King and Queen made their way down the line of guests we overheard snatches of conversation : dams and weirs... soil content...fertilizer....

When the head table was cleared for coffee and fruit, the Queen plunked down three ladies' handbags woven with a tough fern-vine, "yan lipao," and a silver water pitcher fashioned by a hilltribesman with only a four-



year education. Then she proceeded with a sales pitch to the senior Government officials around her about the need to revive Thailand's dying folk arts and how this would benefit rural unemployment.

"I think the Queen may have told you: we don't have a private life," the King said later, in our interview.

The Royal Family certainly have the wealth, the style and the cosmopolitan educations to enjoy the finest and move with the best of any society.

The contents of the royal coffers have never been made public but it is generally acknowledged that the vast land holdings along--most of them acquired by King Bhumibol's predecessors--make the monarch one of the

wealthiest men in the kingdom. The Government also contributes to the working of the monarchy, providing funds to the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary and the Bureau of the Royal Household. These two agencies, employing about 2,700 people, include lawyers and doctors, pages and cooks. An elite army battalion forms the King's own Bodyguards.

The Bangkok residence is Chitralada, a moated, kilometer-square estate with a 45-room palace. The days of pomp and ceremony are spent within the crenellated walls of the Grand Palace, a bygone world of soaring spires and gilded temples, audience rooms and garden pavilions, the royal residential quarters. In short, the monarchs could with ease



live their lives in a catered, cod-dled dream-world.

The Royal couple also have not become workaholics out of a lack of interests or talents. The King, who was educated in Switzerland, speaks five languages, is a painter of vibrant, symbolic oils and first-rate photographer (the Queen is a favorite subject). He is an inventor, a boatbuilder and an international-class sailor.

Some of these pursuits are things of a less harried past but the King continues to indulge his passion for music, particularly jazz. If he can manage, there will be a twice weekly jam session with old colleagues and on many a night, long after the maids and clerks have gone to sleep, mellifluous sounds will float out of Chitralada Villa. "Falling Rain," "Hungry Man's Blues" and "Blue Day" all among the King's 44 compositions, might be included in the repertoire and if at times the group finds itself shorthanded the King proves a good sub since he plays eight different instruments.

The Queen, educated in Europe for a musical career, regrets that her Beethoven and Mozart are getting rusty. She just can't find time to sit behind the piano.

Our interview with His Majesty took place in an elegant, subdued reception room at Chitralada. In the course of our talk, we popped the standard journalistic question: "What, Your Ma-

gesty, do you consider the happiest day of your life?"

The response was a rather unstandard one: "Bacho."

Swamp-ridden Bacho in southern Thailand where farmers eked out a living buffeted almost yearly by monsoon floods which ravaged their crops. The King explored the bandit-prone dunes and marshes in the early fall of 1973 and strongly suggested--the King as constitutional monarch does not order--that a canal be built to the sea to regulate water levels in the swamp and mitigate flooding. Government officials--who take the King's suggestions very seriously--completed a 5.6-kilometer-long canal by December of that year.

"We were in Chiang Mai in January (1974) and heard there had been flooding all over the south. We were very concerned," the King recalled. "One day the director-general of the Royal Irrigation Department who had been with me in the south came running up. He was drenched with rain and he had tears in his eyes and he was shouting "It works, it works," and I asked "What works?" and he said, "Bacho."

What drives the King of Thailand? Genes and history? Perhaps.

Members of the nine-ruler-long Chakri line variously repelled invading armies, kept western colonial powers at bay by deft



diplomacy, wrote epic poems, translated Shakespeare and built-up Bangkok, the capital they founded, from a sleepy riverside village to a city of temples, canals and palaces.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej's own father, Prince Mahidol of Songkhla, is known as "The father of modern Thai medicine." He was studying at Harvard University in the United States when the current monarch was born.

Is it the future which drives the King? Almost certainly.

"The danger," the King said. "The publicized danger is communism. But the greed of our own people is more dangerous. If we clash too much among ourselves it will destroy us and we will become the slaves of what I call the new imperialism, be it communist or dictatorship

or whatever."

The King, say the politically volatile, individualistic Thais, gives us unity. This deceptively simple statement is heard so frequently as to take on the status of a national cliché.

"I love the King because when he comes so did the water," says 40-year-old farmer Ja Phu whose fields, and 11-member household, suffered from frequent droughts until last year when the King designed a 75,000-cubic-meter dam in his northern village.

"The King gave me sight," says Sao Kaewprasert, a 63-year-old Buddhist monk in northeastern Thailand, barely out of the operating room. A team of surgeons who travel with the Royal Family had restored his eyesight with a cataract operation, performed free of charge.



One hilltribesman is still probably thanking the King for getting him out of a matrimonial jam, something he has been called upon to do quite frequently. "The man complained to me that he had given two pigs and I don't know how much money for his wife and now she was going off with another man," the King recounted. "He had his sisters and brothers and the woman had her relatives facing each other... a full case dispute."

The King resolved the crisis by deciding that the husband should get some compensation which would allow his wife to go free. Everyone was happy. "The only trouble was I gave the money," the King laughed. "So the woman belonged to me."

Less risky but numbingly exhausting has been the King's insistence for years that he per-

sonally hand out diplomas to every graduate of every government university. At one institution alone Ramkhamhaeng University--this involved seven days, or 28-solid hours of degree-giving. But in the process the King has personally connected--however fleetingly--with the future leadership of Thailand.

The King in recent years has passed on a part of his burden, including some of the degree presentations, to his now fully mature offspring :

Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, was educated in Britain and at Australia's Duntroon Military College from where he graduated in 1976. Handsome, ruggedly built, a jet fighter pilot, parachutist, military officer. But in recent years he has spent more time on non-military duties and in getting to know the people.



Princess Ubol Rattana, the eldest daughter, a brilliant and independent-minded woman who married a fellow student, American Peter Jensen, while studying nuclear physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1972. She resides in the United States but returns to Thailand periodically.

Princess Chulabhorn, married to an air force officer and commander. She appears to savor a quieter, domestic life but is likewise deeply involved in royal work and without much ado will appear in public to croon a few songs for charity.

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, energetic and charismatic, perhaps of all the children most like her father. Her disarming manner and soft, luminous

features make her a magnet for crowds. The princess has thrown herself into a brutal work schedule and like her father has developed Renaissance interests ranging from photogrammetry to writing poetry in French to researching how agricultural subjects can be included in the curricula of primary schools in rural Thailand.

The King stressed that he has not consciously groomed his children for future roles but that he and the queen imparted certain guidelines.

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn reminisced:

"When we were children we had to water the lawn to earn pocket money....The parents always took us to see the wretchedly poor, to show us how



we had to help them...I hated to study English so my father told me : "If a foreigner came to a poor village and wanted to give aid and you were in charge how could you help your people if you could not communicate with him?"

The royal couple appears to have regarded such education as essential, because His Majesty indicated that in the third quarter of the 20th century royal success will depend a great deal on the person who sits on the throne rather than the throne itself.

Many young Thais and foreigners, impressed by the present splendor of the monarchy, would be puzzled by this anecdote because they have forgotten their history. The King has not.

"When I was young we had nothing," the King recalled, "The carpets and upholstery in the palace were full of holes. The floor creaked. Everything was so old. Yes, we had a piano, an upright given to us by the Fine Arts Department. But it was out of tune."

"There was none of this," he said, motioning towards finely brocaded upholstery, rich silks of earthen colors and a mantel-piece crowded with photographs of world leaders the King has known and hosted.

A few feet from where we sat was also a magnificent, immaculately polished grand piano. The King's aides assured us that the instrument is always in perfect tune.



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