

NGO-Based Tacit Understanding and Co-operation between the U.S. and Thai Societies, Struggle and Confrontation

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ABSTRACT: The beneficiaries of U.S.-Thai co-operation are by no means the U.S. side, which means that U.S. infiltration in Thailand is actually supported by some high-level members of Thai society and the general public, and Thailand here is by no means a passive party of choice, but a party of active pandering, which is a form of pulling in for the U.S., and a form of protection of its own vested interests or far-reaching interests for some of the Thai people. By analysing several basic factual cases such as the legalisation of recreational marijuana, medical marijuana, and gambling in Thailand, the lobbying of the US issue through foreign agents, and the NGO PETA's crackdown on the export of Thai businesses by allegedly forcing monkeys to harvest coconuts, this study explains and illustrates that the US-Thailand relationship through the NGOs is an interactive one, or even a transactional one, where the US uses the NGOs or the USAID to establish a strong community based on interests with high-level officials of the Thai government, and even with people who represent the various sectors of the community, or have already established such a strong community based on interests.

KEYWORDS: U.S.-Thai co-operation, NGO, Political gaming

I. INTRODUCTION

The beneficiaries of U.S.-Thai co-operation are by no means the U.S. side, which means that the U.S. penetration of Thailand is actually supported by some of the higher echelons of Thai society and the general public, and that Thailand is not a passive party, but an active party, which is pulling in the U.S., and protecting its own vested interests or long-term interests for some of the Thai people, which is a common saying in China: "Solicit foreign support". However, we

should not think that this model is a sellout or a traitor to the Thai people, because Thailand has historically relied on this "great power balancing strategy" of manoeuvring and meandering among the great powers, as well as the "wisdom" of the Thai style of being flexible, versatile, acting in accordance with the situation and preserving its interests, and making good use of the contradictions among the great powers in order to seek a way of survival and development, which is a general feature of the Thai nation. In short, the interests of the Thai military and the interests of Thailand's central authority are themselves full of harmony and contradiction, with the military relying on the central authority in order to maximise its own interests, and the central authority pulling the generals along with it. The relationship between the central authority and the military and the elected government is one of mutual checks and balance. For example, a coup becomes inevitable when the Thai Prime Minister can only control the police, not the army. Only during the years of Prayuth's rule did the military take full control of the government, becoming a veritable military junta, with military power forming an overwhelming force in the country. This paradigm was a conversion of the "Romance of the Three Kingdoms" into the "War of Chu and Han", in which the power of the military actually posed a degree of threat to the power of the central authority. The political system and economic forces of Thai society would find it difficult to achieve elected coordination and release pressure under this model. If the military government remains in control for a long period of time, there will be stability in society, but the deeper crisis will continue to intensify. This intensification is reflected in the opening up of "drugs" and "gambling," and the military has already begun the

process of de facto selling out the country, as the legalisation of recreational marijuana and the installation of marijuana vending machines will make a relatively harmonious Thai society begin to be filled with uncertainty and tremors. In other words, the Thai government has started to earn "blood money" after the Philippine government, and the destruction of the society and the country will be the beginning of an "opium war". Since then, the Pandora's Box is bound to open and social conflicts will gradually be planned, which will be directed at the military government. The scandal of the military's involvement in the drug trade and human trafficking has always existed, and this reform of government policy proves that the background power of the current government has been brought to the forefront to the extent that it is able to manipulate government policy, which would be a disaster for the country. The forces of elected change that society has signed on to will be building up in parallel, a "democratic" force that is partly manipulated and influenced by the United States, and partly by the long-cultivated royalists, whose co-operation with the central authority reinforces the legitimacy of the central authority's existence. This often comes in part from the royal-trained system of Thai state-owned enterprises and a significant portion of the intelligentsia to whom the Crown confers titles and honours. The fact that degrees for students at Thai public universities are awarded with royal participation and that titles of associate professor or higher at public universities are awarded with royal participation ensures systemic loyalty to the central authority's granting interests. In the power game resides an important role. The U.S.-controlled system, on the other hand, has demanded that Thailand subtract any real power from the central authority, an approach that is also supported by a significant portion of the reformists. The deep gaming of these complex relationships and systems has resulted in the diversity and checks and balances of Thailand's complex politics, economy, and interests. It is quite difficult for the U.S. to try to change the Thai political situation in the short term through the colour revolution model. However, it is not without opportunities and breakthroughs. It is not that there is no possibility of success. It depends on the intensity of the domestic struggle and changes in the international situation. If there is a special radical change in the country, an unexpected political event, there is also a kind of inevitability that the balance will be broken.

II. BACKGROUND TO THE INCIDENT AND THE REACTION OF THE THAI BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Business leaders expect the Constitutional Court's decision to suspend Prime Minister Prayuth on Wednesday, 24 August 2022, to have little impact on the government's administration and its ongoing efforts to stimulate the country's fragile economy. The court suspended Gen Prayuth while considering whether he had violated the eight-year term limit for prime ministers set out in the 2017 constitution. General Prayuth became prime minister in August 2014. The court gave General Prayuth 15 days to respond to his suspension. [1] According to government spokesperson Anucha Burapachaisri, Deputy Prime Minister Prayuth is Thailand's interim leader while General Prayuth is suspended. General Prayuth's suspension is expected to last about a month while the court considers its final verdict.

[2] Sanan Angubolkul, president of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, said the Cabinet meeting and the current government were unaffected despite the Prime Minister's suspension pending the judgement in the case. "Confidence in the stability of the government may be affected during the prime minister's suspension," Mr Sanan said. "However, the government's continued efforts to revive the country's economy and the APEC meeting that Thailand is scheduled to host are likely to move forward as planned." He acknowledged that the ruling may prompt some investors to reconsider their investment decisions. "For the business sector, the most important thing is to boost confidence in Thailand and rebuild the country's economy this year and next, while tourism is recovering and the export sector remains strong," Mr Sanam said. "Regardless of what happens with the Prime Minister, the business sector remains optimistic that the Thai economy can achieve 2.75-3.5% growth as expected.

III. CHAIN REACTION OF THE PRAYUTH GOVERNMENT

[3] On Friday, 26 August 2022, Thailand's Deputy Minister of Education Kanokwan Vilawan was suspended from her post in the corruption case court received from the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) and temporarily banned from politics for 10 years or until the court makes a decision. The Deputy Minister of Education is an outstanding graduate of XXX University, a QS 5-star university (a university with only two buildings and a car park) that is the subject of hype in China.

XXX University is one of those private universities in Thailand that is not mainstream and tends to offer degrees to singers, film stars, and government officials. In China, they work with the Mingzhong Education Group to promote a wide range of falsehoods, including buying QS 5-star ratings and Times Higher Education awards, and then confusing students with what is right and what is wrong. It has the typical characteristics of selling master's and doctoral degrees, and it has become a trend to buy and sell dissertations, with a special dissertation writing agency focusing on the dissertation writing and defending operations of Kuala Lumpur University in Thailand. China has a large number of college teachers enrolled in XXX University's PhD programme. The suspension of the Vice Minister of Education has been cheered by a group of righteous practitioners in the Chinese education sector.

IV. FINDINGS

The United States and Thailand, through NGOs, have formed an interactive relationship or even a transactional relationship. The U.S. has used NGOs or USAID to establish a strong interest-based community with top Thai government officials and even representatives of various sectors of society or has done so. This judgement is based on the following basic facts, and we will clearly give the basis of the judgement based on the basic facts in the following analysis.

Legalisation of recreational cannabis, medical cannabis, gambling

Thailand's Ministry of Health, which started the campaign to legalise medical marijuana in the late stages of the epidemic, did not strictly regulate the control of medical marijuana, even when there were children in the campaign who had serious drug reactions to the indiscriminate use of marijuana. This control was only lip service. With medical marijuana legal, marijuana products have appeared in large numbers in Lotus supermarkets and marijuana drinks in 7-11 convenience stores. Even the sale of marijuana in pickup trucks along the streets has appeared in Thailand. It has become increasingly common for people to grow a few cannabis plants at home.

[4] Thailand's Minister of Health, Anuthin Chanwirakun, ignored a joint petition by many doctors and resolutely promoted the cannabis industry, and there are even cannabis majors set up by Thai universities (for example, Thailand's Rangsit University has been rumoured to be offering such a major) to conduct lectures, which have been ridiculed in the education sector as a

major in drug production and drug trafficking in the university, and there have also been discussions on whether students enrolled in similar majors in the future would be included in the drug-trafficking system after graduation, and how to certify the professions of the students when they return to their home countries in the future.

Following the legalisation of medical marijuana, Thailand's Minister of Health, Anuthin, is pushing for the legalisation of recreational marijuana, while planning to launch marijuana vending machines and lay out a network of marijuana in Thailand. All of these visible facts point to the fact that the Prayuth government has in fact been driven by the drug interests behind it. Such groups may come from North America as well as from within his junta and its associated external drug interests. There were parties during the tenure of former Prime Minister Yingluck, when it was the military group that proposed to legalise drug use by putting drugs on sale in pharmacies, which Yingluck rejected. Then there were interest groups that proposed the opening of casinos in Thailand, which was also rejected by Yingluck's government. Many in the Thai Chinese community believe that Yingluck failed to meet the demands of the Thai military and drug cartels and suffered a coup d'état. Thaksin also suffered a coup d'état because he was pushing the war on drugs with an iron fist. It is clear that the drug cartels have a strong hold on the government in Thailand, in addition to Guinea-Bissau in Africa.

Thailand's lobbying of the United States through foreign agents

According to the Attorney General's report to the United States Congress on the administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, for the six-month period ending 31 December 2020. It can be retrieved that Thailand, through US agents, obtains organisations that are registered as foreign agents to lobby on issues to achieve its objectives. Although this is not recent data, we can see the Thai government's initiatives in lobbying the U.S. and globally. Even Thailand's national tourism rankings and so on could be manipulated. For example, many of Thailand's tourism awards may be manipulated and shadowed.[5] Thai Headline News Agency, 30 April 2022, "Ratchda Dhanadirek, Deputy Spokesperson of the Prime Minister's Office, mentioned that Thailand was recently ranked eighth in the world and first in ASEAN in the "Safest Places to Visit" ranking in the "Travel Safety Situation Report" published by Berkshire Hathaway Travel Insurance Co. " ranking. Thailand

was ranked third among Asian countries after Japan and South Korea. In addition, the report also showed that Thailand is also the second safest place to travel in the world according to young people. Dai Suri said that recently, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports has also continued to introduce measures to ensure the safety of tourists travelling to Thailand, upholding the principle that tourist safety is closely related to the perception of Thailand's tourism and the intention of tourists to travel to Thailand, which further affects the number of tourists and the tourism industry's revenue. Therefore, in order to restore the confidence of domestic and foreign tourists in Thailand's tourism industry, the government has also put in place measures to protect the lives and properties of tourists by ensuring safety on waterways and roads, as well as preventing fraudulent abductions," continued Ratchda Dhanadirek, adding that the Prime Minister believes that the above list will have a positive impact on Thailand's tourism industry as a whole, especially during the time when the government has announced that it will open up the country to all tourists on 1 May. This will further rejuvenate the Thai travel atmosphere and the development of the Thai tourism industry. There will also be a significant increase in tourism revenue as a result compared to previous years."

Instead of making a subjective judgement on whether Thailand is really the safest place, let's take a concrete example.[6] "The body of a Swiss female tourist was recently found in the Thai resort island of Phuket. Thai police announced on 8 August 2021 that a Thai man had been arrested on suspicion of murder. The case is said to be of great concern to the community because of the identity of the murdered woman as a Swiss diplomat." It's not often you hear reports of diplomats all dying in tourist meccas in other countries, is it? The seriousness of this issue is that Thailand's Ministry of Tourism also has an office in Chengdu, China, and they certainly allocate lobbying funds in China, but such funds could be used directly for bribes in the absence of a foreign agent registration in China. Thai Headlines (a media enterprise formed by Guo Rui, a director of the Thai Chinese and Unified Association) has published these people to crack down on whenever they come across media reports that say don't come to Thailand, including the self-published Jitterbug videos. This attitude and stance can be clearly seen that the media has been manipulated, and even the association that the manipulated people have taken certain benefits becomes a real feeling. The WeChat public number of Thai headlines has so far been registered in China so far under personal names, while in

Thailand it belongs to Thai-registered media, which means that the Thai media has landed and publicised China through the personal numbers of Chinese WeChat public numbers.



U.S. Department of Justice
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**Report of the Attorney General
to the Congress
of the United States
on the Administration of the
Foreign Agents
Registration Act of 1938,
as amended,
for the six months ending
December 31, 2020**

Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents

NGO PETA hits Thai firms for exporting with allegedly forcing monkeys to pick coconuts

[7] The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) recently revealed that a number of U.S. businesses have announced that they have stopped sourcing coconut products from Thai suppliers, including Costco, the largest membership warehouse chain in the U.S. PETA has been tracking incidents of animal cruelty around the country since 2019, according to USA Today, and is urging retailers to remove merchandise made by "animal exploiters" in an effort to stop such harm to animals from continuing. According to the report, PETA's investigations revealed that some farms in Thailand train "monkey slaves" to pick coconuts. The chained monkeys are allowed to pick about 400 coconuts a day and are then stuffed into cages to wait for their next shift. "No good person wants monkeys to be chained up and treated like coconut picking machines," PETA president Ingrid Newkirk said in a statement. One of the organisation's directors also mentioned that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) also actively promotes a "monkey centre" where adult tourists can watch monkeys picking coconuts for 300 baht (about \$10) and children for 150 baht (about \$5). Today, the monkey centre has become a new type of tourism, popular with locals and foreigners alike. There, monkeys are confined and trained to collect coconuts, with each training session taking about four months. PETA said that in their investigations, they found abuse of monkeys in training

programmes and coconut-picking shows at several farms. Following the revelation, US drugstore chain Walgreens, British supermarket chain Waitrose, and major US food chain Food Lion announced that they would stop importing all types of coconut products, including coconut milk, from Thailand. The latest to do so was Costco, the largest membership warehouse chain in the United States, which took off the shelves of Chaikoh, a brand owned by the world's No. 1 coconut maker, ppadungporn. However, Chaikoh denied the allegations in a statement. In a 14-page investigation report shared with the media, the company said that none of the 64 farms they randomly selected from 817 farms used monkeys as labourers to harvest coconuts. Chaikoh insisted: As one of the world's leaders in the production of coconut milk products, they guarantee that they do not use monkey labourers on their coconut farms. The animal-friendly organisation PETA is notorious for having been active in China a few years ago, and for having volunteer recruitment campaigns in both the Philippines and Thailand for Chinese people.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The complexity of Thailand's politics, economy, diversity of interests and checks and balances have been achieved through the deep gaming of complex relationships and systems. It is quite difficult for the U.S. to change Thailand's political situation in the short term through the colour revolution model. However, it is not without opportunities and breakthroughs. It is not that there is no possibility of success. It depends on the intensity of the domestic struggle and changes in the international situation. If there is a special radical change in the country, an unexpected political event, there is also a kind of inevitability that the balance will be broken.

The U.S.-Thai relationship through the NGO is an interactive one, or even a transactional one, where the U.S. uses the NGO or USAID to establish a strong community based on interests with top Thai government officials, or even representative figures from various sectors of society or have already done so. This judgement is based on several basic facts analysed in the thesis.

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