

Criticism of the Royally Appointed Prime Minister Professor Sanya Dharmasakti by Thai Leftists

Tanapong Chitsanga*

—サンヤー・タマサック勅選首相に対するタイ左翼の批判—

タナポン・チットサガー*

Abstract

After the violent end of the 14 October 1973 popular uprising, Sanya Dharmasakti was royally appointed to be prime minister of Thailand. Sanya, a jurist, university professor and politician, was elected by King Bhumibol Adulyadej, using his royal prerogative. He was widely accepted by students, intellectuals, and the press who believed that as Rector of Thammasat University, he had the right background to be named prime minister. Sanya had also served as president of the Supreme Court and member of the Privy Council. In addition, those students who had played a significant role in protesting the military government did not object to Sanya's appointment.

This article argues that there were two political groups that did disagree with the appointment: the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) and the Thai National Liberation Movement (TNLM), a Thai student group based in Sweden. Both groups used Marxist theories to criticize the royal appointment of Sanya. However, the TNLM's criticism of Sanya's appointment by the King greatly angered Thai royalists and the press, in its extreme leftist rhetoric, rumor-mongering, and defamatory tactics.

Using data drawn from Sanya Dharmasakti's personal documents at the Thammasat University Archive and newspapers, it has been revealed that Sanya's government was terribly worried about the TNLM and the CPT movements.

Both leftist groups claimed that, following the 14 October 1973 incident, nothing changed in Thai politics because Sanya, as a follower of the King, was named Prime Minister to further maintain feudalism in Thailand's society. Nonetheless, the TNLM vigorously attacked the Thai monarchy. Thai *lèse majesté* law protects the King from any accusations and criticisms with a high cost of punishment, so this movement is totally ignored by Thai scholars.

* Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University, Doctoral Degree Program

1. Introduction

On 14 October 1973, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, using the royal prerogative, appointed as prime minister of Thailand, the Thai jurist, university professor and politician Sanya Dharmasakti. At that time, Sanya was widely accepted by Thai officials, students, and the press. It was widely believed that Sanya, as the rector of Thammasat University, had the right background to be named prime minister. He had also served as president of the Supreme Court and as a member of the Privy Council.¹ In 2007, the Thai government nominated Sanya as one of the world's great personalities of the 20th century as recognized by UNESCO.²

Sanya Dharmasakti was one of the most important figures in the politics of Thailand. After the 14 October 1973 uprising ended with violence, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, his circle and other military factions demanded the exile of the "Three Tyrants": Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn (Prime Minister), Field Marshal Praphas Charusathein (Deputy Prime Minister), and Colonel Narong Kittikachorn (son of Thanom and husband to Praphas's daughter). In an unprecedented move, the King then appointed Sanya as the new prime minister. Sanya had been a close associate of the King and member of his Royal Privy Council. Sanya's task would be to lay down the process for drafting a new constitution and re-establishing an elected parliament.

It is often noted in the literature that a political outcome of the 14 October 1973 uprising was that the fall of military rule elevated the King to an extraordinary position and a supra-constitutional force conciliating the bitter conflict of a nation, (for example David Morell and Chai-Anan Samudavanija, Chris Baker and Phasuk Phongpaichit, Thongchai Winichakul, Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, Paul Henley and Kevin Hewison, Federico Ferrara³) because it was the first time in Thailand's modern history that "the King selected his own man to become prime minister---Sanya Dharmasakti"⁴

When Sanya became the new prime minister, most Thai citizens were satisfied with the appointment. Students, who had played a significant role in protesting against the military government, had no objection to Sanya's appointment. The press also widely supported the new government. It seemed that Thai society as a whole did not question Sanya's appointment by the King.

In the aftermath of 14 October, large scale street protests took place almost daily. Public expression, in fact, had had more freedom under military rule, and the press published all shades of opinion. Writings of leftist authors such as Jit Phumisak, Kulap Saipradit, Ho Chi Minh, Mao, Lenin, Stalin and so on were all available in bookshops.⁵ David Morell and Chai-Anan Samudavanija saw that 1973 to 1976 was a period of open politics in which new groups, such as students, farmers and laborers participated in political life and challenged the traditional elite. ⁶ It is important to ask whether Sanya's Royally-backed government allowed the same freedom of public expression. The answer is absolutely not.

Two political groups did voice disagreement with the appointment of Sanya: the Communist party of Thailand (CPT) and the Thai National Liberation Movement (TNLM), a Thai leftist student group based in Sweden. The CPT's criticism of Sanya was not widely known at the time, but the TNLM received some public notoriety. The TNLM attacked Sanya and King Bhumibol in a bulletin which was published and distributed to Thai students studying abroad. When the *Sayam Rat*, a conservative newspaper, reprinted excerpts of the critical texts, Thai royalists and the population at large showed adamant opposition to them.

Both sources of criticism were significant because of the decisive role that leftist movements played during the Cold War era in Thailand. Concerning Sanya's appointment by the King, Thai historical studies of that time rarely mention the leftist critique, despite the fact that the TNLM was the only publication which frankly and openly criticized Sanya and the King during the former's administration as prime minister. Also, it was extremely critical of the USA working with groups of the ruling elite. Nonetheless, even though both criticisms had a negative impact on the Thai monarchy and Sanya at that time, this story had faded away from Thai public memory and political history.

With the recent release of Sanya Dhrammasakti's personal documents, including the TNLM Bulletins preserved at the Thammasat University Archive, we know that his government kept a close eye on the TNLM's activities because of their attack on the King, the most powerful figure in Thailand. For this reason, leftist dissent, such as that of the TNLM, is valuable as an object of study. The CPT's documentation is also preserved at the Thammasat University Archive.

After surveying Sanya Dhrammasakti's personal documents and the CPT's documentation, my research questions are (1) "how Sanya's government reacted to these criticisms when they were published in the Thai public realm?" and (2) in the aftermath of 14 October 1973 uprising, public expression was free and all shades of opinion published in magazines and newspapers. "How could the royalist masses and *Sayam Rat* express their political standing against the increasingly open political climate?" The approach of this article is primarily empirical and analytical rather than theoretical, so using various sources from the archive and newspapers to answer these questions will be important.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the reaction to the royally appointed Prime Minister Sanya by both the press and activist students. This article explores the criticisms of both leftist groups that were deemed dangerous to national security and the institution of the Thai monarchy. Then, TNLM's use of rumors to discredit the royally-appointed government of Sanya is analyzed. The next section illustrates a hostile reaction against the TNLM by the *Sayam Rat* and the Thai royalist masses. Lastly, the article tries to assess why the TNLM's ideas published after the 14 October incident were not accepted by students and consequently disappeared from the Thailand's political history.

2. Opinions about the Royally Appointed Prime Minister Professor Sanya Dharmasakti as voiced in the Press.

An editorial from the *Prachathiptai* daily newspaper, a progressive publication from the 1970s, presented a positive image of Sanya. The editorial explained that Sanya was the rector of Thammasat University when students were demonstrating at the university. He was able to calm the protests against the ‘three tyrants’. The editorial suggested that Sanya, newly appointed prime minister after the 14 October 1973 uprising, should reduce the role of the Thai army in national politics.⁷

The *Prachathiptai* newspaper also launched a new section to which readers could send their writings, the “Kham Hen” (Opinion) column. Most newspaper readers wanted Sanya to punish the three tyrants. They also believed that soldiers and policemen who used violence against demonstrators must be punished. The majority of readers sought to prohibit military personnel from taking any political position in the Thai cabinet until they had retired from the army.⁸

The *Sayam Rat* daily newspaper and weekly magazine, with a conservative political outlook, enthusiastically supported Sanya. One *Sayam Rat* editorial expressed deep admiration for his integrity and background. He was the rector of Thammasat University, President of the Supreme Court, and a member of the Privy Council, showing his loyalty to the King. The *Sayam Rat*, editorial stated that he was the most suitable candidate as the leader of the royally appointed government, whose main purpose was to draft a new constitution.⁹

Subsequently, the three tyrants fled the country and violence ended on 15 October 1973. *Sayam Rat*'s editorial called for Sanya's government to punish them by applying Article 17 of the constitution of 1972 because they ordered troops to kill citizens.¹⁰ Many articles in the newspaper praised Sanya with an exception being an article by Kukrit Pramojon the front page of the 17 October 1973 edition. Kukrit, a founder of *Sayam Rat*, claimed that Sanya was too cowardly to warn students to stop their political activism.¹¹ On 21 October 1973, Kukrit wrote again to explain that he was not in any personal conflict with Sanya. He understood that Sanya faced many obstacles to running the government just after the bitter conflict. At the end of his article, Kukrit included a note from Sanya thanking Kukrit for his useful advice about Sanya's administration.¹² Generally, the *Sayam Rat* and *Sayam Rat weekly* magazine offered strong support to Sanya

The *Bangkok Post* is one of the major English newspapers in Thailand. The newspaper chose to decisively support Sanya. It praised Sanya as a “man of peace. A man who has and who will make any sacrifice for peace. And this is the kind of man which Thailand needs more than anyone else.”¹³ Sanya was the most suitable candidate for Thai prime minister because “his philosophy...is equally as important as a privy councilor to the His Majesty, as well as his position as Vice President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists and the Buddhist

Association of Thailand, give indication to deep religious and royal leanings---which at the point are vitally important to Thailand.”¹⁴

The *Mahawittayalaai* Newspaper was founded in 1959 by the department of journalism and mass communication of the Faculty of Social Administration at Thammasat University. At present, the newspapers are stored at the Library of the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communications, but not the newspapers published during the events of 14 October. *Mahawittayalaai*, launched on 14 January 1974, referred to Sanya as still involved in the University’s business even though he was now prime minister. In several articles, the newspaper encouraged him to tackle various problems. Sanya was also interviewed in the January 14 issue on his opinions about students’ uniforms at the university. He said that the University policy allowed students to wear clothes of their own choice, but students should dress appropriately. He added that female student wearing uniforms were prettier.¹⁵ The *Mahawittayalaai* newspaper was controlled by the University, so it is not surprising that overall, the newspaper supported Prime Minister Sanya.

A week after the 14 October uprising, few newspapers criticized the recent prime minister appointed by King. They were intensely interested in the fate of the students, especially the National Student Center of Thailand. They reported the number of injured and the condition of the casualties.¹⁶ A number of newspapers wanted the government to arrest the three tyrants for criminal offenses, including corruption.

After Sanya’s government was formed on 16 October, criticism was heard that of the 29 ministers, 13 had worked in the Thanom government which had a highly negative image. In fact, Sanya’s cabinet only retained seven senior soldiers and policemen from the previous administration who did not retire.¹⁷ The press saw these ministers as Thanom’s clique, but Sanya was accepted by journalists who trusted his ability to lead the government through the political crisis. In addition, the interim government promised to draft a new constitution within six months, and dissolve the parliament.¹⁸ The commanders-in-chief of the Thai army, Thai navy, Thai air force and Commissioner-General were not part of the government, nor were named as ministers. This positively affected the cabinet because since the 1950s, senior military officer always occupied important positions in government.¹⁹ Sanya invited General Kris Srivara to serve as the minister of defense, but he refused to do so.²⁰ The Thai army likely had a negative image after the 14 October uprising.

In fact, Kris had a deep conflict with the Thanom-Praphas-Narong clique. When Marshal Thanom and General Praphas were required to retire in 1971 and 1972 respectively, they postponed their own retirements. Kris, who was deputy commander-in-chief at the time, was unable to become the commander-in-chief.²¹ After Kris succeeded Praphas as commander-in-chief, he wanted to show the public that he would not intervene in civilian government as the three tyrants had done.

In conclusion, mainstream daily newspapers of that time fully accepted the government of Sanya who was royally appointed by the King. Sanya was seen as a perfectly suitable prime minister. The press generally believed that his government was working in the short term to transition to democracy, but they never asked how appropriate was King Bhumibol's royal appointment of Sanya as Thai prime minister.

3. The Student Movement and its Reaction to the Royally Appointed Government of Sanya Dharmasakti

The student movement had scant reaction to Prime Minister Sanya's appointment by the King according to the constitution of 1972. The legality of the rise of Prime Minister Sanya was unquestioned by students.²² Most students were satisfied by Sanya's appointment as prime minister. Thanya Chunshadatharn, one of the 13 activists imprisoned by Thanom's government for distributing leaflets calling for a draft constitution, stated: "About 7.p.m., the King announced the appointment of Professor Sanya Dharmmasaki as prime minister. After I heard the news, I felt so peaceful in my mind. He is the most suitable to solve our current problems."²³

On the night of 14 October, the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) issued a statement announcing they fully supported Sanya's appointment by royal prerogative as prime minister because the new government was set up by the King, and was accepted by the Thai people. Furthermore, the government guaranteed the rights and freedoms of Thai citizen based on the principle of democracy.²⁴ A memoir by Charun Ditthaaphichai, a Thammasat University student leader, stated that violence was continuing. On the night of 14 October, as soon as the King announced the appointment of Professor Sanya and the military government resigned, students and the general public hailed the news, cheering with joy.²⁵

Why were students highly supportive of Sanya as prime minister? One reason may be that when Sanya was the rector of Thammasat, he treated students with easy familiarity, inviting members of Sapha Na Dome, an independent student group, to drink coffee and talk. Sapha Na Dome became a leading group during the October uprising.²⁶ When problems arose over university matters, student leaders were able to meet him, even at his home. For example, Phreelaphol Triyakasem, head of the Thammasat University student union, informed Sanya at his home about a protest organized by students who wanted to cancel final examinations in the early morning of 9 October 1973.²⁷ In addition, Sanya presented himself as a humble man and good teacher rather than a top executive. Nevertheless, he was the university rector and a member of the Privy Council advising the King.

Some students had doubts about the rise of Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakti. Jiranand Pritpreecha, a member of the Thai People's Center, had asked questions when she was leading a demonstration at Democracy Monument. She wanted to know why the new

government included ministers who worked for Thanom's cabinet and whether they influenced Sanya in his new administration.²⁸

By contrast, Seksarn Prasertkul, a leader of the student movement, had no doubts about Sanya or his appointment by King Bhumibol. In addition, Seksarn wrote an article publicly named "Guidelines for a Stable Political System", the main arguments of which were to reduce the power of bureaucracy and cancel laws that obstructed the right to demonstrate. At the same time, he argued that people must rely on themselves rather than governmental aid.²⁹ This article can be interpreted as articulating Seksarn's strong hope for the political arena after the end of the military dictatorship. This hope was likely that Sanya and the interim government would transit from military to democratic rule.

In conclusion, student movements had scant suspicion or criticism about the royally appointed Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakti and his legitimacy.

4. The Communist Party of Thailand and the Sanya Dharmasakti Government

In mid – 1965, the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) began to fight with heavy weapons against the military government headed by Thanom.³⁰ The CPT focused on activities in rural regions rather than big cities. Since the early 1950s, the United States and Thailand have developed close relations. The cooperation between the Thai and American armed forces aimed to support U.S. military operations in Indochina. The military dictatorship also allowed U.S. forces to be based in Thailand. The military dictatorship actively opposed the CPT with governmental funds, troops, and weaponry.

The military dictatorship was overthrown on 14 October 1973; the CPT saw the uprising as inevitable as a result of fascist rule. The corruption of the military dictatorship and military cooperation between the Thai and American armies made people dissatisfied. International developments like the Chinese Cultural Revolution, workers' protests organized with student assistance in capitalist countries, and the dissemination of Marxism among intellectuals decreased the political power of the Thai army to some extent.³¹ The CPT also asserted that after the 14 October uprising, students, intellectuals, farmers, and revolutionaries actively supported struggles against the central government and American imperialism in rural areas.³²

The CPT had observed bitter conflicts among the ruling elite in the years preceding the uprising. The elite were split between allegiance to General Kris Srivara and the Thanom-Prapas-Narong clique. On the afternoon of 13 October 1973, the crowd moved to the Chitlada Palace to avoid military persecution, and appealed to the King intervention. The CPT noted that Kris had engaged in violence which started near the Palace on the morning of 14 October 1973. Finally, the King asked Thanom and his cohort to resign from their positions in government.³³

However, one critic who might have belonged to the CPT criticized the party's focus on propaganda aimed at farmers in rural areas, but it was unable to incorporate to students and the middle class love for democracy.³⁴ In fact, the CPT members assigned no importance to the student movement in 1973 because it concentrated on developments in rural areas rather than in Bangkok. While the uprising was being staged in Bangkok, armed forces from the CPT attacked the Thai army in rural districts. On 14 October, a report from the Communist Suppression Operation Command (CSOC) stated that CPT forces shot down a Thai army helicopter in the Pua district of Nan province. In addition, a clash between CPT forces and the Thai army occurred in Ban Bak village in the Don Taln district of the Mukdaharn province. One soldier died in the village while many CPT members were killed and injured.³⁵ A book written by Udom Srisuwan, who served on the CPT politburo and was responsible for working in the Phupannoi area of Nongbualumphu province, stated that CSOC forces, headed by General Saiyud Kertphol operated on 10 October 1973 with heavy weaponry. On October 14, there was a demonstration in Bangkok. In rural areas, the military operation to destroy the CPT forces was decreasing.³⁶

In the early 1970s, the CPT sector based in Bangkok was hardly involved in the student movement. The CPT members only distributed documents and books on leftist theory, party policy, and the history of the Communist movement around the world. The CPT set policy for its members who carefully ran the party's work in Bangkok. Because Bangkok is the national center of bureaucracy and military bases, the CPT saw that a strategy which used weaponry was not suitable for the city, unlike in rural areas.³⁷

A key CPT publication offers the results of a seminar sponsored by the party, focusing on criticisms about 14 October 1973. After the Thammasat massacre on 6 October 1976, many students and activists decided to join the party. In 1977, a seminar was scheduled for the 61st office in Nan province. The CPT wanted students who had newly joined the party to meet senior members to learn about the false strategies of the student movement.³⁸ This publication concludes that the 14 October uprising had been caused by conflict among elites (General Kris Srivara and the monarchy versus the Thanom-Prapas-Narong clique) more than by the power of the masses toppling military rule.³⁹ The seminar analyzed the post-14 October government led by Sanya, deciding that it had not changed significantly from military rule. Citizens were not allowed to express their will to elect members of parliament. Nearly half of the ministers in Sanya's cabinet had also served in Thanom's cabinet.

According to the seminar, the most important outcome of the uprising was that people dared to challenge state officials and showed their hatred for the system of state. This had a positive effect on the party's movement.⁴⁰ However, conflict among the ruling elite raised much criticism. The seminar claimed that King Bhumibol and Sanya as the king's follower attentively followed student activism at Thammasat University. The seminar tried to analyze who was most guilty for the loss of life. It blamed General Kris. If violence occurred,

the three tyrants must be forced to step down from the government. Finally, Kris gained all benefits as commander-in-chief. ⁴¹ Sanya, a follower of the King, was named prime minister to further maintain feudalism in Thailand's society. Certainly, the CPT aligning with Maoism saw Thailand as having been a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country since the mid-19th century and that the only way to change this state was by staging a revolutionary the People's war. Thus, the CPT criticized the impact of the 14 October 1973 uprising as nothing more than the masses daring to defy the ruling elite. By the way, this seminar was set up in 1977 in a remote rural area, so CPT members could criticize the King and other elites frankly.

Besides the seminar, there was another criticism of the CPT to oppose the interim government. As soon as the King appointed Sanya prime minister, the party made a formal statement to respond to the new government. A report from the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sent to Sanya's office. The statement was broadcast from the Voice of the People of Thailand which had been established in Yunan, Southern China, in 1962. The Central Committee of the CPT issued a statement on 16 October 1973 which briefly stated that Thailand was not an independent and democratic country because Thai rulers still cooperated with feudalism, imperialism, and bureaucratic capitalism. So Sanya's government was not the people's government, for it still represented feudalism, imperialism, and bureaucratic capitalism. A true people's government consists of workers, farmers, petit bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie, and lovers of democracy. This type of government's main policy was to get rid of the influence of imperialism. In contrast, the Thai new government could not change anything. Yet the CPT hoped that students, intellectuals, and citizens were aware of the new government's rule. ⁴² Generally, reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were secret documents sent to the cabinet before meetings. Therefore, statements which Thai officials took note of from the CPT's radio must be accurate. The CPT analyzed Sanya's government according to its guidelines, concluding that Thailand was semi-colonial and feudal. The party believed this until it ceased in the early 1990s. However, not only the CPT disagreed with the legitimacy of Sanya. A political movement based in Europe, tracked by the Thai government since 1971, was the Thai National Liberation Movement.

5. The Thai National Liberation Movement Bulletin and its Criticism of the Royally Appointed Government of Sanya Dharmasakti

Apart from the CPT which criticized the status of the royally appointed Sanya government, Thai intellectuals living in Europe also had fierce criticisms of Sanya. Their coalition was the "Thai National Liberation Movement" (TNLM). This movement produced its own publication, *the Thai National Liberation Movement Bulletin (TNLM Bulletin)*⁴³ printed in the Thai language because it served for Thai readers living in Europe. Accusations against the King by the TNLM made the most trouble for Sanya. When the

TNLM accusations against the King were made available to a wider public by the *Sayam Rat* newspaper, this sparked a royalist movement among students.

5.1 The Thai National Liberation Movement before the Royal Appointment of Sanya Dharmasakti

When Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn was prime minister, the Thai government was aware of the TNLM movement based in Sweden since 1971. The TNLM produced its own bi-monthly bulletin of opinions and news, the *TNLM Bulletin*. Thanom began to observe the TNLM movement because its bulletin attacked the Monarchy.⁴⁴ The headquarters of the TNLM was in Stockholm, Sweden. The TNLM mailed bulletins to Thai student clubs in Europe, including Germany, Sweden, Great Britain and France.

Sunthorn Wongnongwa was the editor of the *TNLM Bulletin*. *Sayam Rat* reported that Sunthorn was born in Roi Ed province, northeastern Thailand, and worked as a salesman for a publisher. After hearing a rumor about Sunthorn's corruption by his employer, he resigned from his job. Then he worked for a Swedish company which sold offset printing machines, and he was sent to Sweden for training. He returned to Thailand and worked for this company for three years. Finally he married a Swedish woman and permanently moved to Sweden.⁴⁵

The Thai National Intelligence Agency stated that Sunthorn, the most important member of the TNLM, planned to continue the movement. He referred to himself as a Thai student representative in Europe, and obtained materials for writing articles from Thailand. He was a PhD candidate in the faculty of political science (Chinese Studies) at Stockholm University.⁴⁶ The TNLM had eight members studying in Germany, Denmark, and Sweden and other European countries. Thai Muslim students were also among its members. Marxists and activists, in Sweden also helped the movement.

Intelligence information about the TNLM was reported by the Thai embassy in Stockholm to the Thai National Agency. TNLM produced a bulletin in both Thai and Swedish, called *TNLM Bulletin* and *Thailand Bulletin* respectively. The TNLM organized meetings in Scandinavian countries repeatedly. On 2 November 1973, the TNLM protested to the Thai embassy in Stockholm about the massacre of demonstrators in the 14 October 1973 uprising. The TNLM was associated with the Front National Liberation, a Swedish political association working to liberate colonized countries, or countries dominated by a superpower. This Swedish organization actively supported North Vietnam. The report of the Thai National Intelligence Agency stated that the Front National Liberation aided the TNLM.⁴⁷

The *TNLM Bulletin* expresses the main purposes of the organization.⁴⁸ It called for Thai people who hated Thanom's despotic government and American imperialism to fight them. The movement proposed that anti-Thanom people should form a patriotic front and seize Bangkok by force. The TNLM saw that if Bangkok was under control, it would be possible to

seize all of Thailand. Several coups d'état had occurred in Thai history. When the military staged a coup, they sent tanks and troops to control many parts of Bangkok, and ordered a curfew.⁴⁹

TNLM's ideology was influenced by Marxism and shared some positions with the CPT. The CPT argued that since 1855, Thailand had been a semi-colonial country. After the Thai court signed the Bowring Treaty that year with Great Britain, the Thai economy was under the capitalist system centralized in the West. But the Thai elite could still exploit the Thai common people through a feudalist socio-econ system.⁵⁰ So, the TNLM viewed the Thanom government as fascist and feudalist, exercising its power through the Constitution of 1972, written after the coup.

Ideas against American imperialism were remarkably similar between the CPT and the TNLM. The TNLM believed that the Thanom government, which permitted the U.S. Air Force to establish bases in Thailand, led Thailand to be colonized by the U.S.A. The U.S. Air Force bases were installed to support the fight operating in Indochina against the North Vietnam's forces. The TNLM admired the North Vietnamese who overcame U.S. forces during the Second Indochina War. North Vietnamese forces were held by the CPT as a great example to teach Thailand to fight American imperialism. The *TNLM Bulletin* stated that despite the American army's higher technological weaponry and better funding to wage war in Vietnam, the Vietnamese people successfully collaborated in defeating them. Finally, Vietnam achieved independence from the "neo-colonizer."⁵¹ North Vietnam's example was used by the TNLM to incite the Thai people who hated Thanom's government and American imperialism to fight the U.S. Army and the Thai military dictatorship. Most *TNLM Bulletins* discussed this issue.

However, the TNLM strategy to seize Bangkok as a primary target differed from that of the CPT. The party focused on propagandizing in rural areas because Thai peasants, the largest population in Thailand, were very poor. The CPT recruited new members from peasant society due to their hardships. This strategy was called "the wilderness leads the city"⁵² unlike the TNLM which sought to change the regime by controlling Bangkok first.

The *TNLM Bulletin* was circulated only among Thai student clubs in Europe in the early 1970s. At this time, Thai student activists played an important role in political movements. The movement initiated by students used street protests, seminars, and the publication of magazines, cheap books, and pamphlets to criticize Thanom's government's policies. This student movement acted nonviolently.⁵³ The TNLM disagreed with those movements because they felt that a nonviolent struggle by students was useless. The U.S. government was anxious about fighting with weapons, not nonviolence. The TNLM added that Thanom and his cabinet had their own instruments for suppressing criticism or political activism against the government, Article 17 of the 1972 constitution. The Article permitted the prime minister to execute or imprison anyone seen as a traitor. The TNLM offered the stories of

Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. whom TNLM claimed were unsuccessful in their political lives. India gained independence from an English government headed by progressive politicians, while Martin Luther King Jr., the leader of a civil rights movement using nonviolent civil disobedience, was assassinated.⁵⁴

On 17 September 1973, the Thai embassy in Germany reported that the *TNLM Bulletin* No.7 1973 had contents that defamed King Bhumibol. Thanom was especially troubled by this. Previous editions had criticized Thanom and his cabinet, blaming Thai foreign policy for bowing to the U.S. government and the Thai military cooperation with the U.S.A. to fight against the North Vietnamese forces. However, this latest issue seriously accused the King.⁵⁵

An official statement was published in *TNLM Bulletin*. Its main goal was to reduce the United States' influence in Thailand. On 15 February 1972, the TNLM claimed to form a Thai government-in-exile called "the Interim Government of Thai People", based on five principles:

1. True independence
2. True democracy
3. Neutrality
4. Public safety
5. Improvement of the economy for the well-being of the people⁵⁶

The TNLM discussed a resolution at a meeting held in Helsinki, Finland on 10 December 1971. Most attendees at the meeting were Thais studying in Europe. The TNLM also claimed that this meeting had representatives drawn from farmers, teachers, civil servants, soldiers, policemen, merchants and Buddhist monks.⁵⁷ This claim, however, was a political ploy and did not reflect their actual membership. To form a government-in-exile by the TNLM was also part of its strategy. The TNLM's strategies were similar to other political movements which started from immigrant or international students in Europe or America. They often formed their organizations and launched political activities to gain support from Western political organizations, as the Leftist Union of Vietnam had won from France's Communist Party⁵⁸

The meeting report from Helsinki on February offered a solution. If Thailand had true democracy, people would consciously love liberty and fight against the U.S. Army. Moreover, the TNLM blamed the Thai royal family for obstructing the process of democratization. The TNLM stated that:

The person who ignored despot to cheat the national budget as he wish and invited enemies to the homeland was the present King. While His Majesty and Queen Sirikit are only interested in themselves, The Thai people confront the unhappy condition of their

lives. King put his signature of approval on the dictatorial government to oppress people and to distort the public budget.⁵⁹

The TNLM wanted Thailand to retain the monarchy, but sought to dismiss King Bhumibol on the grounds he was supposedly unable to be a good King because he sided with Prime Minister Thanom. If the King loved his people sincerely, he would halt the military dictatorship, and support government rule by the consent of the people.⁶⁰ This comment was untrue in reality. The comment may be termed mere rhetoric, because the King had no right to dismiss a prime minister according to the Thai constitution.

King Bhumibol was further defamed by the TNLM in his private life, blamed as a pleasure-seeker, who loved to drink strong whiskey every day, spent too much time playing the saxophone, and was involved in sexual scandals. In reality, there was no proof of such accusations, and Thailand's *lèse-majesté* law kept the public from investigating them further. The *TNLM Bulletin* also faulted Queen Sirikit. According to these accusations, she spent most of her time on her physical appearance. As a good queen and wife, she should instead warn her husband to fulfill his duty as a good king, according to the TNLM.⁶¹ The TNLM attacked the King and the Queen's private lives because this could help delegitimize the monarchy.

In summary, the TNLM offered two main proposals. First, it suggested that the Thai people should fight with weaponry against American army operations in Thailand and Indochina. Second, the Thai people should seek a new government based on the will of the Thai people. Third, they should appoint a new king to replace King Bhumibol.

5.2 The Criticism of the Thai National Liberation Movement against the Royal Appointment of Sanya Dharmasakti

The TMLM was tracked by Marshal Thanom's government which saw it as a threat to internal security. Yet the Thai government kept this movement top secret. After the 14 October popular uprising, which ended violently, the TMLM issued a new *TMLM Bulletin* (No. 8, 1973) the theme of which was to commemorate those who had lost their lives in the incident. On 16 November 1973, the office of the civil service commission received the new bulletin sent from the office of the superintendent of Thai students in Germany. The new bulletin defamed the King again and was considered *lèse-majesté*, so the office of the civil service commission reported to Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakti.

The *Sayam Rat* newspaper published on 20 November 1973⁶² printed part of this Bulletin. Nopporn Boonyarit, the editor of *Sayam Rat*, and Kurtrit Pramroj, one of the periodical's founders, decided to publish the excerpt from the *TNLM Bulletin*. They wanted to show that the TNLM which operated in Europe had insulted the King. *Sayam Rat* selected two articles from the bulletin, one written by Suphot Boonnag, a member of the TNLM and a letter

written by Vichit Phokhachai, a Thai student in England. Both articles were published on page 16 of *Sayam Rat*. After this publication, the TMLM became notorious in Thailand.

Suphot's article accused King Bhumibol of being largely responsible for loss of life in the 14 October uprising. Marshal Thanom, Marshal Praphas, and Colonel Narong, who ruled the government during the uprising, worked for the Thai monarchy. King Bhumibol signed his name to endorse Thanom and Praphas as Marshal in the Thai army. King Bhumibol also endorsed the constitution of 1972, written under the Junta, which he should have vetoed. The TMLM insulted the King, asking why he did not warn Prime Minister Thanom to stop troops from attacking the demonstrators during the 14 October uprising. Suphot claimed that the King could have stopped violence, but did not do so. So, according to this logic, the King must accept responsibility for the bloodshed.⁶³ Vichit Phokhachai's letter expressed similar views. Vichit said that he had once respected Thai monarchy. Yet after the 14 October 1973 uprising, King Bhumibol could not keep the police and military from "using the weapons to kill students and citizens". Therefore, the King no longer had the legitimacy to reign.⁶⁴

On 22 November, *Sayam Rat* reported that a female radical student would arrive in Thailand to attack the monarchy and disturb the peace.⁶⁵ A report from the office of the superintendent of Thai student in Germany was sent to the Thai government on 9 November. It stated that the office had received a secret letter from Austria. Israeli intelligence sent a letter to warn the Thai government a terrorist group called "Yellow Lion" planned an attack on the Thai and Japanese royal families. Its leader came to Bangkok to assassinate Queen Sirikit and conduct other forms of sabotage. The letter suggested that members of both royal families should avoid travel in Europe.⁶⁶ Sanya ordered the Royal Thai Police to follow up on this, but there were no further reports, and the claim sounded incredible. So *Sayam Rat* decided to publish the story of Yellow Lion to frighten Thai readers, realizing that a movement was trying to abolish the Thai monarchy.

The TNLM stated that the *Sayam Rat* editorial team was right wing revisionists and undemocratic. It wanted to point out how King Bhumibol had overlooked the Thanom military government which brought in tanks and armed forces to kill students and citizens. The movement claimed that Marshal Thanom, Marshal Praphas, Colonel Narong, and King Bhumibol were absolutely the same clique. Professor Sanya was appointed as prime minister to replace Thanom to maintain the power of the top elite.⁶⁷ The TMLM had never sought to abolish the monarchy, but simply to change the King.⁶⁸

It must be stated that the violence of the 14 October 1973 uprising occurred accidentally. The government and Royal Family did not expect violence to break out because student requests were already accepted by the government. For example, thirteen prisoners were released on the evening of 13 October.⁶⁹ King Bhumibol had the royal secretary of the bureau of Royal Household order the government to release the activists and commanded

Sanya as the rector of Thammasat University to look after students to avoid bloodshed.⁷⁰ Therefore, no one expected the violence that occurred near Chitlada Palace in the early morning of 14th October.

Anti-American imperialism remained the TNLM's main target in its political struggle. There were a series of scandals about American intervention in Thailand within one month. By 6 January 1974, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the U.S. government apologized for Thai government because a CIA agent wrote counterfeit letters sent from Sakolnakorn province. The letters stated that the CPT had asked the Thai government for a ceasefire. Jumras, whose name appeared in the letter, was a pseudonym for Plueng Wannasri while he worked for the party. The letters were sent to five newspaper offices.⁷¹ Students disagreed with the CIA and protested against American intervention in Thailand.⁷² In late January, huts and barns were set on fire in Ban Na Sai Village, Bung Karn province when a special forces of border patrol police fought with the CPT forces. Finally, the Thai government received official permission to build a radar station on the mountain peak of Doi Inthanon.

With regard to American intervention, the TNLM blamed Sanya Dharmmasaki for aiding the U.S. government. President Richard Nixon conducted a secret war, according to the TNLM as a tool of the "great greedy capitalist robber", American investors and politicians. Sanya's government was attacked by the TNLM "The government of the King upsets the people...the Ban Na Sai incident is the best example showing the injustice and brutality of officials in the King's puppet government. They killed Thai people according to Nixon's Theory"⁷³ Sanya was blamed for not saving people's lives.⁷⁴ The Sanya government was blamed for being strongly backed by the King. Additionally, his cabinet had officials who worked secretly for the CIA; especially the communist suppression operations command officials who threatened people's lives and private property.⁷⁵

On 24 January 1974, *Sayam Rat* reported about the TNLM movement again⁷⁶ that many lecturers in Thai universities had received the special issue of the *TNLM Bulletin*, with the cover of the front page of *Sayam Rat* of 20 November 1973. Later, the TNLM used the same strategy when it reproduced the front page of *Sayam Rat* for 24 January 1974 as the cover of the *TNLM Bulletin* published early in April. Surely, the TNLM intended to respond to *Sayam Rat's* actions.

In the special issue of the TNLM was published "a Letter from the Caretaker Government to Mr. Sanya," claiming that members of the National Legislative Council were selected from among people closely related to the monarchy. Therefore, the National Council drafting the new constitution was mainly concerned with maintaining power and the interests of the King. In addition, officials, senior soldiers, members of National Legislative Council and the King cooperated with the CIA to sustain American imperialism.⁷⁷

The CIA's secret war in Thailand and Indochina was a controversial subject of interest. Sanya and his cabinet felt uncomfortable about that issue. Thailand's Border Patrol Police

and Special Forces with heavy weapons entered Ban Na Sai Village in Bung Karn province after receiving news that CPT forces had captured the village. Government troops burnt down houses and barns after ordering villagers out of their houses at night. The sound of gunfire was loud and several villagers were killed, including a six year old boy. Nothing was said about this incident until the People for Democracy group headed by Theerayuth Boonmee made the brutality known to the public. He and his friends introduced four Ban Na Sai villagers at a press conference.⁷⁸

Frequent interventions by the U.S. government offered opportunities to criticize Sanya's government and King Bhumibol. The TNLM claimed that since the late 1950s, King Bhumibol and military governments had collaborated to suppress the Thai people to their rule, and serve the American armed forces air bases in Thailand.⁷⁹ It was believed that these forces went into action in Laos and Vietnam to fight the Viet Cong. Therefore, the King and high ranking military offices valued the U.S. government fight against communism above the welfare of the Thai people. Although military despotism was overthrown by the student movement on 14 October 1973, they repeated that nothing had changed. Thailand was still manipulated by the CIA, and the King still held onto power.⁸⁰

When Sanya returned as prime minister in May 1974, the TMLM published a special issue of the bulletin to criticize Sanya and his cabinet.⁸¹ Its sharp criticism was also directed at the monarchy, with the headline: "reveal the mask of the royally appointed government."

This bulletin's first article named, "King and Constitution" claimed that although the constitution should be a set of fundamental principles which ruled the government, King Bhumibol had persuaded the people to give up their own interests in drafting the constitution of the National Legislative Council. According to the TNLM, the council was named by the King according to the 1972 constitution drafted during the term of Prime Minister Field Marshal Thanom, whom the TNLM noted, belonged to the same clique as the monarchy.

Another fourteen-page article out of a total of sixteen pages in the bulletin was written by Suphot Bunnag. He criticized the Sanya administration's actions between 14 October 1973 and the middle of May 1974 when Sanya was re-elected as prime minister for the second time. He attacked Sanya for not keeping a promise to hold an election within six months since the previous October. The process of constitutional drafting had two stages. The first three months was a process of drafting the constitution and the next months were preparation for a general election. Nevertheless, the process of drafting a constitution was not completed until seven months later. In addition, the people demanded the seizure of property owned by the "three tyrants". Suphot argued that this case was progressing extremely slowly. The government had no intention of doing anything. This showed that Sanya helped the three tyrants avoid punishment.⁸²

Suphot added that Dr. Sakdhi Phasuknirund, who was dismissed as Rector of Ramkhamheng University, for having expelled nine students for attacking Thanom by publishing pamphlets, since he had a private connection to Thanom, was re-appointed as the rector on May 1974. He saw Sanya as a betrayer of those who died in the 14 October uprising.⁸³

Sanya also cooperated with the CIA to cease the CPT's actions. While state officials combated the CPT, the strategy devastated the lives and property of people who lived in areas where CPT armed forces were based. Suphot cited the example of the Ban Na Sai incident which the People for Democracy group brought to public attention. Yet Sanya ignored this case and helped it to be forgotten. He blamed Sanya for allowing the U.S. Army to establish a radar station in Thailand.⁸⁴

Its view that Thailand was a semi-colonial country was similar to that of the CPT. Even if no evidence proves that the TNLM had a close relation with the CPT, some of its accusations against Sanya's government were similar to the CPT. Possibly the TNLM shared leftist theory, rather than serving as a branch of the CPT's. Suphot said that the cabinet consisted of a group of senior officials and powerful capitalists who were members of the national legislative council.⁸⁵ The most powerful clique, the Dusit 99 group, was headed by Kasem Chatikavanijya.⁸⁶ The TNLM stated that this clique entered the National Legislative Council to protect their own interests. They also cleared the way for business people from Japan and the United States to invest in infrastructure, such as dams, power plants and highways. The Dusit 99 group worked as middleman for foreign investors.⁸⁷

According to the TNLM, "the new royally appointed government headed by Sanya consisted of members who adhered to feudal culture and supported despotism."⁸⁸ The King greatly trusted these members.⁸⁹ In addition, Sanya's cabinet had ministers who worked for the C. I. A., such as Police General Prachub Suntrarangkrun, Minister of the Interior⁹⁰.

Finally, the TNLM indicated that the Sanya Dharmasakti's interim government did not change anything, but maintained the status quo of Thai top elites. Additionally, the movement blamed that his government had collaborated with the United States to preserve their own interests from the capitalist world. The next section discusses the royalists who felt furious about the TNLM's strong criticism of the King after Sayam Rat reprinted part of the *TNLM Bulletin* on 20 November 1973.

5.3 The Fury of Royalist Demonstration against Thai National Liberation Movement: Sayam Rat as the Royalist News Agency

Sayam Rat was successful in inspiring a royalist demonstration expressing fury with the TNLM's criticism. On the morning of 21 November 1973, there were demonstrators, most of them vocational school students, at Lumpini Park Bangkok.⁹¹ They felt dissatisfied at the TNLM's accusations as published by *Sayam Rat*. After that, student unions and independent

groups protected themselves by releasing statements which disagreed with the TNLM's criticism.

The official statement of the Student Union of Chulalongkorn University was made public. The statement disagreed with the TMLM's distorted information about the Thai monarchy and the 14 October uprising. The students also accused the TMLM of being a political group fascinated by violence.⁹² By 21 November 1973, The Historian's Club of Prasarnmit College of Education, Bangkok, issued a statement denouncing the TNLM. The club said that the TNLM "intended to destroy the Thai Monarchy"⁹³ Furthermore, *Sayam Rat* claimed that almost ten thousand people demonstrated at Lumpini Park. Most were both high school and vocational school students.⁹⁴

Persons who shared the same name and surnames as members of the TNLM were worried by the news. Pree Bunnag, former member of parliament and father of Chaiwat Bunnag, who was studying in France⁹⁵, gave an interview to *Sayam Rat*, defending his family. He specified that Supoth Bunnag, a member of the TNLM, was not related to his family. Although Chaiwat had the same surname as Supoth, he was not involved in the TNLM. In addition, "Supoth Bunnag" was the name of three different persons who contacted *Sayam Rat's* office to declare that they were not part of the TNLM's movement.⁹⁶ This reaction suggested that some Thai people did not see freedom of speech as a basis for democracy, although the 14 October uprising was seen as a demonstration of the pro-democratic movement. These protests might be seen as early indication of ultra-royalism after 14 October 1973.

Ultra-royalist feelings aroused by *Sayam Rat* pushed progressive students to take action against the TNLM. Saksan Prasertkul, a student leader during the 14 October 1973 uprising and head of the Society of Free Students, released a statement denouncing the TNLM. To support the King, he stated that he and demonstrators fully appreciated King's gracious gesture to open the gate of Chitlada Palace, so that demonstrators were able to flee the armed police who were shooting people. Seksarn's statement ended by saying that the Society of Free Students must protect the King until death.⁹⁷

Nonetheless, on 23 November 1973 Nopporn Boonyarit was investigated by the police. The next day, the Director General of Police, Prachub Suntarangkul, cancelled the license of his printing press.⁹⁸ The Direction of Policy and Planning Bureau sent a report about *Sayam Rat* and the TNLM to the Deputy Minister of Interior Police Lieutenant-General Chumpol Lohachala. According to the report, the TMLM was considered for a charge of lèse-majesté as well as defamation because it accused Princess Srinagarindra, the King's mother.⁹⁹

The question was whether the editor of *Sayam Rat* who decided to publish the TNLM article should also be charged, according to the law. The report concluded that the editor of *Sayam Rat* must also be charged under lèse-majesté because he helped to diffuse the text

which attacked the King's reputation.¹⁰⁰ Kamol Wanprapha, Minister of the Interior, sent a letter to Chumpol, replying that *Sayam Rat* must be investigated by the special police.

On 23 November, the government of Sanya Dharmasakti sent an official letter to the Swedish Embassy for protesting that the Swedish government did not prohibit the TNLM from releasing bulletins. The Thai government demanded that Sweden ban the TNLM.¹⁰¹ However, the Thai Ambassador to Sweden saw that Thailand should not care much about the TNLM because only two people ran the movement.¹⁰²

Air Chief Marshal Thawee Chulasap, the Minister of Defense, declared that "after reading the *TNLM Bulletin*, I feel his (Sunthorn Wongnongwa's) action shows that he is clearly insane."¹⁰³ In an interview, Thawee said that he supported *Sayam Rat* because it revealed that a movement outside Thailand had tried to destroy the monarchy.¹⁰⁴ The Swedish Ambassador to Thailand was called to the House of Government to hear concerns about this problem. Sanya needed the Swedish government to stop the movement, but Sweden was not able to fulfill the request. The Swedish government was obliged to respect freedom of the press.¹⁰⁵ The situation became worse, on 9 December, *Sayam Rat* reported that the Thai government withdrew its Ambassador from Sweden in response to the Sweden's refusal to honor a request that they banned the TNLM.¹⁰⁶

Kukkrit Pramroj wrote an article to explain why the *Sayam Rat* editorial team decided to publish excerpts from the *TMLM bulletin*. He called it "the wicked bulletin", and stated that he and Nopporn were angered by reading it, so they felt they needed to reveal it. Even though they risked being banned and arrested under the lèse-majesté law, they were willing to risk it. Had *Sayam Rat* ignored the *TMLM bulletin*, it would have helped to conceal enemies who were trying to destroy the monarchy.¹⁰⁷

Nopporn Boonyarit said that *Sayam Rat* started to follow student movement news in June 1973, after nine students were expelled from Ramkhamheng University for publishing a satire on the government. The National Student Center of Thailand scheduled rallies to call for the reinstatement of the students, and they were allowed to return to the university. He added that while *Sayam Rat* reported daily news of student activities, especially after the 14 October uprising, the story of the TNLM shattered. Nopporn was proud of exposing the TNLM to protect the Thai monarchy's reputation, even if he might be charged with lèse-majesté.¹⁰⁸ He understood the Sanya government suspending his printing press license to maintain societal order. Although he risked arrest, he could impel students to protest against the TNLM.¹⁰⁹ He accepted that he became renounced as a royalist journalist after exposing these movements, and would be appointed as a member of the National Legislative Council.¹¹⁰

5.4 The Forgotten Movement: The Thai National Liberation Movement

Why was the TNLM ignored by the Thai student movement at that time? And, why has the movement finally disappeared from Thai history? Firstly, considering the 14 October 1973 popular uprising, King Bhumibol, the biggest winner of the incident, played a well-publicized role with his political intervention and gained credit for suggesting the three tyrants to step down and leave the country. The monarchy was elevated to become one of the most important political institutions. The student movement was careful not to aim criticism at the King. Although student activists propagandized to oppose the military government by uses of freedom, equality and fairness doctrine, they never asked critical questions, such as the role of the monarchy in anti-military coups.¹¹¹ In addition, students supported the myth of 'democratic monarchy' by using the "portion of King Prachadhipok's abdication statement that credited the monarchy with transition to constitutional rule."¹¹² Therefore, by not questioning the role of the monarchy, student activists partly helped to support the King's legitimacy in relation to political intervention.

When the TNLM used the tactic of defamation against the Thai monarchy, the students could not express their own will independently. Moreover, the *lèse majesté* law protected the king from any accusations and criticisms. So, no one dared to talk about this case, even though anyone might agree with the TNLM's critics. It is said that both the elevation of the King's status after the 14 October incident, and the *lèse majesté* law were the major reasons this movement was ignored, and the TNLM had since been fading from Thailand's public memory.

In conclusion, the TNLM saw Sanya not as an interim Prime Minister to draft a constitution and hold a general election; he maintained power and order for the elite, composed of senior officials and soldiers, leading businessmen, and the monarchy. Although the TNLM was active among Thai students studying in Europe and as an illegal group threatening the internal security of the Thai state, the TNLM was one of the most significant political groups to attack the government of the royally appointed Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakti. However, the King's popularity and prestige, obtained after the 14 October incident, in addition to the *lèse majesté* law, made Thai people ignore the TNLM.

6. Conclusion

This study has clear illustrated the criticism of the royally appointed Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakti by leftists which is little known in Thai political history. The way that the TNLM disturbed the Thai government and royalists has been almost forgotten in Thailand. The Thai people only recall that Sanya was an admirable educator and statesman.

The CPT and the TNLM played a key role in criticizing the royal appointment of Sanya as Prime Minister. Although precipitating the fall of the military from power and the drafting of a new constitution led by Sanya, this appointment was negatively perceived by the CPT

and the TNLM. They judged that nothing had essentially changed. Sanya's cabinet consisted of the Thai ruling elite who had worked for Thanom Kittikachorn, the former prime minister.

Accusations by the TNLM stunned and angered royalists. The *Sayam Rat* newspaper helped to fuel their fury by disseminating some of the TNLM's statements. This incident shows that an exception to freedom of speech based on democratic principles is made in the case of defamation of royalty. During the 14 October uprising, both royalist, and old and new leftist supporters helped to topple the military government¹¹³. The King gained great advantage from the 14 October 1973 uprising, and has become the most powerful figure in Thai politics ever since.¹¹⁴ Therefore, it is unsurprising that the TNLM was blamed by the royalists.

After the 14 October 1973 uprising ended, Sanya, as a royalist, was trusted by the US government. With the Vietnam War almost over, Sanya was pro-American and supported US policies in Indochina. The ministers in Sanya's cabinet who worked for the former Prime Minister Thanom were well acquainted with the American ambassadors and diplomats.¹¹⁵ Therefore, royalists and the government were very sensitive to any criticism from the leftist groups. This is one reason why the TNLM's criticisms were strongly attacked by the royalists and have disappeared from Thai history.

Comparisons between the TNLM and the CPT movement attacking the royal appointment of the Prime Minister show that the TNLM's main impact on Thai society was in its vigorous criticism of Sanya and the monarchy. As soon as Sanya was appointed, the TNLM produced a bulletin to attack him and the King. Although the CPT strongly disagreed with the royally appointed government, they never published criticism of the royal appointment of Sanya in any comparable way to that of the TNLM.

Finally, the relative importance of the CPT and the TNLM also differs in the context of Thai modern political history. Now, there have been many scholarly studies of Thai communism both for and against the CPT. The party ran their propaganda carefully and focused on fighting against the Thai government in rural areas following the concept of the Maoists' People's War. In contrast, the TNLM was based in Sweden and their publications were mainly distributed among Thai people and students studying in European countries, so they never cared much about the Thai lèse majesté law. In reality, the *TNLM Bulletin* could not possibly be published freely in Thailand and it is no surprise the TNLM's story is ignored by Thai scholars. Since the 2006 Thai coup d'état, the number of lèse majesté charges have sharply increased despite the maximum punishment being imprisonment for 15 years.¹¹⁶ However, the *TNLM Bulletin* shows that not everyone accepted the appointment of Sanya by the King which is a departure from the general perception in Thailand. The bulletin can also indicate the limit of freedom of expression in Thailand. Both leftist criticisms should also be

examined because they played a part in the historically important event of the popular uprising of 14 October 1973.

(Received 29th April, 2015)

(Accepted 25th July, 2015)

Notes

- ¹ For more details, see Suksan Jirajariyavej, *7 Circles of the Years: Ajarn [Professor] Sanya* (Bangkok: Faculty of Law Foundation, 1991); Norani Sethabuttra, *Sanya Kub Prachathipatai [Sanya and Democracy]* (Bangkok: Thammasat University Press, 2005); Nakharin Mektrairat and Chai Chaiyachit, *Sanya Dharmasakti Nai-Yok Thee Boriharn Ban Muang Doi Dhramma [Prime Minister Sanya administered the government by Dharma]* (Bangkok: Thammasat University Press, 2008); Wimolphun Peethatawattchai, *Sanya Dharmasakti Khon Khong Phen Din [Sanya Dharmasakti: a man of the land]* (Bangkok: Sanya Dharmasakti Foundation, 2004)
- ² See Thammasat University, *Sanya Dharmasakti: nominated by the Thai government to UNESCO for outstanding work in social science and culture: celebrating the Sanya Dharmasakti centenary* (Bangkok: Thammasat University Press, 2008)
- ³ David Morell and Chai-Anan Samudavanija, *Political conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution* (Cambridge: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, 1981), p. 69.; Chris Baker and Phasuk Phongpaichit, Third Edition, *A History of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 186.; Thongchai Winichakul, "Toppling Democracy," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 1 (February, 2008): 20-21.; Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, *Kings, Country and Constitutions: Thailand's Political Development 1932-2000* (New York: Routledge, 2003), Pp. 168-171.; Paul Henley, *The King Never Smiles: A Biography of Thai Bhumibol Adulyadej* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), Pp. 212-213.; Kevin Hawison, "A Book, the King and the 2006 Coup" *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 1 (February, 2008): 197-198; Federico Ferrara, *The Political Development of Modern Thailand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 168-169.
- ⁴ See David Morell and Chai-Anan Samudavanija, *Political conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution*, p. 69. And Somsak Jeumthreerasakul saw that the most important aspect of 14 October 1973 was that the Thai Monarchy had been powerful enough to appoint Sanya. However, King Bhumibol balanced himself between the military and the parliament. See *Yumyukruksamai* (in Thai), (Bangkok: 14 Tula Foundation, 2013), pp. 108-109.
- ⁵ Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit, op.cit., pp. 188-189., and David Wyatt, *Thailand: a Short History*, second edition (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2003), pp. 289-290.

-
- ⁶ David Morell and Chai-Anan Samudavanija, *Political conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution*, pp. 3-6.
- ⁷ The editorial *Prachattippatai* (18 October 1973): 4.
- ⁸ *Prachattippatai* (19 October 1973): 5; *Prachattippatai* (20 October 1973): 5.; *Prachattippatai* (21 October 1973): 5
- ⁹ *Sayam Rat* (15 October 1973): 5 and *Sayam Rat Weekly* no.19 (28 October- 4 November 1973): 4-5.
- ¹⁰ Article 17 of the 1959 Constitution that was promulgated again in 1972 permitted the Prime Minister to make any order or take actions if deemed “appropriate to prevent, repress or suppress any acts subverting security of the Kingdom, the Throne and the national economy or affairs of state or act of disturbing or threatening public order or good morals or any acts destroying national resources or deteriorating public health and sanitation.” See the 1972 Thai Constitution in *Thai Royal Gazette book*. 89, no.182, special issue (15 December 1972): 1-12.
- ¹¹ *Sayam Rat* (17 October 1973): 1
- ¹² *Sayam Rat* (21 October 1973): 5
- ¹³ *Bangkok Post* (15 October 1973): 4.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ¹⁵ *Mahawittayalai* (14 January 1974) : 1 and 11.
- ¹⁶ For example, *Thairat*, *ChaoThai* and *Prachatippatai* newspaper etc.
- ¹⁷ Chantana Chainaken, “Politics during the Royally-appointed Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakti, 1973-1975,” p. 71.
- ¹⁸ *Sayam Rat Weekly* no.19 (28 October - 4 November 1973): 4.
- ¹⁹ *Prachatippatai* (18 October 1973): 4.
- ²⁰ Chantana Chainaken, “Politics during the Royally-appointed Prime Minister Sanya Dharmasakti, 1973-1975”, p. 72.
- ²¹ Thamrongsak Petchlert-Anan, the Political Role of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn (in Thai), PhD. thesis in history, Chulalongkorn University, 2007, pp. 555-556.
- ²² The rise of Prime Minister Sanya according to the 1972 constitution should be considered because Article 14 permits the King “to appoint prime minister and ministers based on advice of from the prime minister” However, Article 18 says that the President of the Legislative Council must countersign a Prime Minister’s appointment, but Thawee Rangkhum, the Vice-President of the Legislative Council, countersigned instead because Major General Siri Siriyothin was overseas. In terms of the appointment of Sanya, this aspect was unconstitutional. Somsak Jeumtheerasakul, “Samatcha Heng Chat 1973 or Wi thi Karn Rattapraharn Doy Khon Mai Ru Tua [National Assembly of Thailand, 1973 or

Making the coup While People are Unconscious.],”cited from http://somsakwork.blogspot.com/2006/09/blog-post_5237.html.

- ²³ Thanya Shunshadatharn, *A Record of 1 among 13 Constitutional Rebels: A Narration of Incident Prior to 14 October* (Bangkok: 14 Tula Academy Foundation, 2003), p. 186.
- ²⁴ *ChaoThai* (17 October 1973): 15.
- ²⁵ Charun Ditthaaphichai, *Before 14 October [Korn Cha Tung Sib See Tula]* (Bangkok: Mek Khoa publishing, 2004), p. 203.
- ²⁶ *Professor Sanya Dharmasakti and 14 October* (Cremation Volume of Professor Sanya and Than Phu Ying Panga Dharmmasakit, 21 September 2003), p. 37.
- ²⁷ Thammasat University Archives, personal documentary collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.5/1 “The Short Note of Events in Thammasat University by Professor Sanya” (October 1973).
- ²⁸ Jiranand Pritpreecha, “Soon Puang Chon Chao Thai [Thai People’s Center]” in *Journal of Thammasat University Student Union Special Issue*, third edition, (Bangkok: Sri Panya, 2011), p. 205.
- ²⁹ This article written in November 1973 was reprinted in Serksun Parsertkul, *Eng Kang Prachachon [Bow the People]* (Bangkok: Saeng Prachan Book Club, 1974), pp. 80-88.
- ³⁰ In 1952, the CPT began to focus on organizing peasants in rural areas with Maoism. In 1965, the party started to fight with weapons. This became notorious and concerned the Thai government about the so-called “7 August 1965.”Somsak Jeumthreerasakul, “History of Communist Party of Thailand written under CPT,” *Fa Deuw Kan Journal* no.1 (January-April, 2004), pp. 183-190.
- ³¹ Thammasat University Archives, document of the Communist Party of Thailand, A 1.5/28 “Introduction to a Brief History of the Communist Party’s struggles in Thailand,” (1977).
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Thammasat University Archives, document of the Communist Party of Thailand, A 8.6/8.6 “Seminar Report: Analysis and assessment of 14 October 1973 Incident,” (1977).
- ³⁴ Thammasat University Archives, document of the Communist Party of Thailand, A 1.5/56 “The State of Thai Society,” (February, 1982).
- ³⁵ Thammasat University Archives, document of Communist Party of Thailand, A 1.5/28 “Introduction to A Brief History of the Fighting of Communist Party of Thailand,” (1977).
- ³⁶ Po Mueng Chomphu (Udom Srisuwanna), *Su Somawraphum Phuphan [To the Phuphan Battlefield]*, second edition, (Bangkok: Matichon, 2000), p. 53.
- ³⁷ Charun Ditthaaphichai, op.cit, pp. 218-222.
- ³⁸ Somsak Jeumtheerasakul, *Prawatsart Thee Phueng Sang [A History has just been invented]* (Bangkok: 6 Tula Rum luk, 2001), p. 59.

-
- ³⁹ In fact, the CPT saw “mass power” as important for overthrowing the Thanom-Praphas government, but the debate about strategy after the 14 October uprising was presented by Phin Bua-on in August 1974. He was a former member of the CPT who held important positions in the party. But he resigned from the party and published the strategic study, “Neaw Thang 14 Tula” [Roadmap of 14 October]. His strategies consisted of anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism, anti-bureaucratic capitalism, students, workers, and farmers fighting the ruling elite fearlessly, inventing new culture which loves democracy and the people. Phin’s ideas resembled the CPT publications. Phin was attacked by leftist students and the CPT as a revisionist and yet the CPT changed its view about 14 October. The power of the masses was not the real cause of the 14 October uprising; rather, a conflict among elites made it happen. The CPT changed its explanation of 14 October to create consciousness of the power of the masses to fight the ruling elite. See Somsak Jeumtheerasakul, *Prawatsart Thi Pheung Sang*, pp. 50-59.
- ⁴⁰ Thammasat University Archives, document of the Communist Party of Thailand, A 8.6/53 “Summary report of the seminar: analysis and assessment of the 14 October 1973 uprising,” [in Thai] (1977).
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Thammasat University Archives, personal documentary collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.1/6 “The Minutes of Cabinet Meeting: Agenda Proposed to The Cabinet for Information” (13 November 1973)
- ⁴³ The *TNLM Bulletin* is hard to find in Thailand where its distribution is banned. Only six copies of TNLM bulletins are in Thai archives, but they are very useful for studying this movement.
- ⁴⁴ The Secretary of the Prime Minister reported to Field Marshal Thanom on 10 May 1973 that the *TNLM Bulletin’s* content, September 1973, intended to defame the king explicitly and was dangerous to internal security. According to the report, the secretary referred to *TNLM Bulletin* (No. 2, 1971) as containing defamatory material. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Thai government caught up with the TNLM movement from the middle of 1971.
- ⁴⁵ *Sayam Rat* (23 November 1973): p. 1.
- ⁴⁶ Thammasat University Archives, personal documentary collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.5/52 “File concerning Monarchy affairs” (1973-1974).
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ *TNLM Bulletin* (6, 1973): 1-2.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 3.
- ⁵⁰ Udom Srisuwan (Arun Phromchomphu), *The Way of Thai Society* (Bangkok: Aksorn, 1979)
- ⁵¹ *TNLM Bulletin* (6, 1973), pp. 9-10.

-
- ⁵² Po Mueng Chomphu (Udom Srisuwanna), *Su Somawraphum Phuphan [To the Phuphan Battlefield]* p. 36.
- ⁵³ Thammasat University Student Union Journal, a special issue marking the one-year anniversary of the 14 October uprising, stated that students nonviolently fighting against the military government mistook because the government was able to use heavy weapons to kill protesters indifferently. See, *Thammasat University Student Union Journal*, a special issue third edition, (Bangkok: Sri Panya, 2011), p 15.
- ⁵⁴ *TNLM Bulletin* (6, 1973), p. 4.
- ⁵⁵ Thammasat University Archives, Personal Documentary Collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.5/52 “The File Concerning with Monarchy Affairs” (1973-1974).
- ⁵⁶ *TNLM Bulletin* (7, 1973), p.1.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.1
- ⁵⁸ See Gisele L. Bousquet, *Behind the Bamboo Hedge: The Impact of Homeland Politics in the Parisian Vietnamese Community* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991.)
- ⁵⁹ *TNLM bulletin* (7, 1973), p 2.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ⁶² *Sayam Rat* (20 November 1973): 16.
- ⁶³ *Sayam Rat* (20 November 1973): 16.
- ⁶⁴ *Sayam Rat* (20 November 1973): 16.
- ⁶⁵ *Sayam Rat* (22 November 1973): 1
- ⁶⁶ Thammasat University Archives, Personal Documentary Collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.5/17 “The Movement of Thai People in Foreign Countries” (November 1973).
- ⁶⁷ *TNLM Bulletin* Special Issue, (n.d.), p.2 and p.4.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ⁶⁹ Somsak Jeumthreerasakul, *Prawatsart Thi Pheung Srang [A History has just invented]*, pp. 82-83.
- ⁷⁰ Thammasat University Archives, personal documentary collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.5/6 “A note in Thammasat University by Sanya Dharmasakti” (October 1973)
- ⁷¹ *Prachatippatai* (6 January, 1974): 1 and 12.
- ⁷² *Prachatippatai* (7 January, 1974): 1 and 12.
- ⁷³ Kitcha Dejasawat, “Nixon’s Theory” (in Thai) in *TNLM Bulletin* No. 11, 4 (1974), p. 3.
- ⁷⁴ Chandha Sankewla, “Ban Na Sai Did Not End,” (in Thai) *Ibid.*, p.8.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁷⁶ *Sayam Rat* (24 January 1974): 1 and 12.

-
- 77 “A Letter of Caretaker Government to Mr. Sanya” *TNLM Bulletin* No. 10, 4 (1974), p. 2.
- 78 David Morell and Chai-anan Samudavanija, *Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction and Revolution*, pp. 169-172.
- 79 “Who must take a responsibility for CIA?” *TNLM Bulletin* No. 10, 4 (1974), p. 4.
- 80 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 81 *TNLM Bulletin*, Special Issue “Unmasked Royally Appointed Government,” (1974).
- 82 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 83 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 84 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 85 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 86 Bandit Chanrojanakit, *A Biography of Constitution of Thai Kingdom 1932-1977 [Chewaprawat Thammanoon Karn Pok Krong Lae Rat Thathammanoon Karn Pok Krong Heng Rajaanchak Thai 1932-1977]* (Bangkok: Thai Research Fund, 2007), pp. 151-152.
- 87 *TNLM Bulletin*, Special Issue “Unmasked Royally Appointed Government,” (1974): p. 10.
- 88 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- 89 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- 90 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 91 *Sayam Rat* (22 November 1973):1
- 92 *Sayam Rat* (25 November 1973):16
- 93 *Sayam Rat* (21 November 1973): 1
- 94 *Sayam Rat* (22 November 1973): 16
- 95 *Ibid.*, 16. *Sayam Rat* stated that he was studying in the U.S.A., but he completed his Ph.D. at the University of Paris VII in 1983. In fact, he was unaware of these developments. Chaiwat Bunnag interview (8 August 2014)
- 96 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 97 *Sayam Rat* (27 November 1973):1 and 16.
- 98 *Sayam Rat* (24 November 1973): 1.
- 99 Thammasat University Archives, personal documentary collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.5/52 “File concerning monarchy affairs” (1973-1974).
- 100 *Ibid.*
- 101 *Sayam Ra* 24 November 1973: 16
- 102 Thammasat University Archives, personal documentary collection of Professor Sanya Dharmasakti 9.4.5/52 “File concerning monarchy affairs” (1973-1974).
- 103 *Sayam Ra* (24 November 1973): 12
- 104 *Ibid.*, p.12.
- 105 *Ibid.*, p.12.

-
- ¹⁰⁶ *Sayam Ra* (9 December 1973): 1 However, Thai government reappointed its Ambassador to Stockholm in arch 1974.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Sayam Ra* (25 November, 1973): 5
- ¹⁰⁸ Praheep Komolpi and Nopporn Boonyari, *Say wih Kukri* (Bangkok: P. Vahin Publicaion, 1989), pp. 226-227.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 235-236.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 237-238.
- ¹¹¹ Fedderico Ferrera, *The Poliical Developmen of Modern Thailand*, p. 169.
- ¹¹² Ibid., p. 170.
- ¹¹³ Prachak Kongkirai, *And Then he Movemen Appears: he Poliics and Culure of Sudens and Scholars before 14 Ocober* (in Thai). (Bangkok: Thammasa Universiy Press, 2005), pp. 337-520.
- ¹¹⁴ David Morell and Chai- Anan Samudavanija, *Poliical conflic in Thailand: Reform, Reacion, Revoluion*, p.68, and Paul Henley, *The King Never Smiles: A Biography of Thai Bhumibol Adulyadej*, p. 214.
- ¹¹⁵ Kullada Kesboonchoo Mead, *Karnmuang Yuk Sari Thanom-Prapha Nai Kongsang Amna Loke* [Thai Poliics of Sari, Thanom-Prapha wihin he World Poliical Srucure] (in Thai), unpublished research supported by The 50^h Anniversary of he Bank of Thailand Foundaion, 2007, pp. 393-400.
- ¹¹⁶ David Sreckfuss, "Freedom and Silence uner he Neo-Absoluis Monarchy Regime in Thailand, 2006-2011," in *Good Coup Gone Bad: Thailand's Poliical Developmens since Thaksin's Downfall*, Pavin Chachavalpongpun, ed. (Singapore: ISEAS, 2014), pp. 109-138."

Appendix

A List of Thai Names

Kukrit Pramoj, Mom Rajawongse (April 20, 1911 – October 9, 1995) was a Thai politician. He was born to an aristocratic family. He graduated in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from Queen's College, University of Oxford. Returning to Thailand, his first career was as a bank executive officer. However, in 1950, he founded *Sayam Rat* Daily Newspaper, and worked for this newspaper as an editor, commentator and journalist. In his political life, he was Speaker of the House of Representatives of Thailand, 1973-1974. After this, he established and became a leader of The Social Action Party in 1974 (Phuk-Kit-Sang- Khom). He was 13th prime minister of Thailand 1975-1976.

Sanya Dharmasakti (April, 5 1907 – January, 6 2002) was a Thai Jurist, university professor and politician. He graduated from the law school of the Ministry of Justice of Thailand in 1928. Later, he won a government scholarship to study law at the Middle Temple in England and was called to the English Bar in 1932. He served as the president of the Thai Supreme Court between 1963 and 1967. After his retirement in 1967, he was appointed as a member of Privy Council and Dean of Faculty of Law at Thammasat University. In 1971, he became as Rector of Thammasat University. After the 14th October 1973 uprising, he was royally appointed as the interim prime minister 1973-1975. Finally, he served as President of the Privy Council from 1975 to 1998.

Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal (August 11, 1911 – June 16, 2004) was born in Tak province, western Thailand in 1911. He attended the Army Cadet Academy 1920-1929. He started with Infantry Regiment VII in Chiang Mai and further studied at the Cartography School and the Infantry School. Also, he graduated from the National Defense College in the first class which was the same class as Sanya Dharmasakti. In 1957, he took part in the coup, headed by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat. He was prime minister in charge for 9 months in 1958 and was replaced by Sarit, coming back from having a medical treatment in the United State of America. In 1963, he succeeded to prime minister after Sarit's death. In 1969, he established and led the Saha Prachathai Party and won general elections. As prime minister, he strangely staged a coup against his own government in 1971. However, he ended his political life by resigning from his position and flying to exile in the U.S.A. and Singapore after the three days violence of the 14 October 1973 Uprising.

Praphas Charusathien, Field Marshal (November, 25 1912 – August, 18 1997) was born to a noble family in Udonthani province, northeastern Thailand. Praphas graduated from the Army Cadet Academy and became an infantry officer in 1933. He participated in the coup led by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat in 1957. After Sarit died in 1963, Thanom, whose son married Praphas's daughter, was appointed the new prime minister. Praphas served as deputy prime minister and the Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Army 1963-1973. However, after the bloody crackdown on students and activists, he fled to the United States with Thanom and Narong, and returned to Thailand in 1976.

Narong Kittikachorn, Colonel (October, 21 1973 –) was the son of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn and son-in-law to General Praphas Charusathien. He graduated from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Britain. After his father, Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, staged a coup in 1971, Narong was seen as the heir to the next prime minister. He was the head of a new Committee to Suppress Elements Detrimental to Society and also deputy secretary of the Board of Inspection and Follow-up of Government Operations. In spite of fact that, he got involved in bribery scandals. He went into exile in the United States and returned to Thailand 1976. He was elected as a representative twice in the late 1980s.

Kris Srivara, General. (March 27, 1914 – April 28, 1976) graduated from Chulachomkiao Royal Military Academy in 1936. He was Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Army during the 14 October 1973 uprising. He was later promoted to Commander-in-Chief after the incident. In addition, he was a member of the Thai cabinet, deputy minister of education (1969) and deputy minister of defense (1970) and minister of industry (1971). He died suddenly in 1976 while serving as the minister of defense.

Seksarn Prasertkul (March 28, 1949 –) He was born to a lower class family in Chachoengsao province, located east of Bangkok. He studied Political Science at Thammasat University 1968-1974. He became one of student leaders of the 14 October 1973 uprising. After the 14 October incident, he was the head of the Federation of Independent Students of Thailand. In the middle of 1975, he joined the Communist Party of Thailand, but he surrendered to the Thai government and returned home in 1980. He received a doctorate from Cornell University in 1989 and worked as a lecturer in political science at Thammasat University until his retirement in 2009.

Theerayuth Boonmee (January 10, 1950 –) was born to a poor family in Bangkok. He gained admission to the Faculty of Engineering at Chulalongkorn University with the highest score of the national entrance exams in 1968. He became secretary of the National Student Center of Thailand in 1972. On 6 October 1973, he and 12 activists were arrested by Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn's government, after they distributed pamphlets to demand a new constitution and general election. On 13 October, he was released while the demonstrations reached their peak. He became a head of the People for Democracy Group to focus on democratization and social issues. He was also a member of the Communist Party of Thailand in 1976. He earned a master degree of Sociology at Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, the Netherlands. He is now a lecturer in the Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology at Thammasat University.

Nopporn Boonyarit (April 8, 1926 –) was born in Thornburi District, Bangkok. He graduated from Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University in 1945. He worked as a journalist for *Chao Krung* Magazine and *Sayam Rat*. Kukrit Pramoj asked him to work for *Sayam Rat* Daily Newspaper from its first day (1950). He was the editor of *Sayam Rat* from 1971 to 1979. He was a member of the National Legislative Assembly 1973-1975 and a senator 1975-1976.

Sonthorn Wongnowa was the most important member of the Thai National Liberation Movement. He was born in Roi Ed province in the northeastern Thailand, but there is no source to note his birthday. His biography is very mysterious and only rare sources provide his story. According to the Thai National Intelligence Agency, he was studying Political Science at Stockholm University while he was working for the TNLM. He was known in Thai society after the *Sayam Rat* newspaper reported the TNLM movement.