

กรมราชเลขาธิการ
วันที่ ๒๕ กรกฎาคม ๒๔๖๘

Copy.

Sukhodaya Palace.

July 23rd. 1926.

Dear Dr. Sayre.

I am sending you with this letter a Memorandum on some of the Problems of Siam with a Questionnaire for your consideration. I am afraid I have written it in rather a hurry, so that I could send it to you before our conversation tomorrow. We will have a preliminary talk tomorrow when we can discuss those questions more fully. I should like to have your answer in writing when you have considered them fully.

This Memorandum by no means exhausts all the problems of the country. I have only treated of those that I think important. If you have any other opinions beside the question touched upon, they will be very welcome.

I hope that they are making you comfortable at the Phya Thai Hotel.

Yours sincerely,

(M.R.) Prajadhipok. R.

Problems of Siam.

1. The Constitution.

a) The position of the King.

The Kings of Siam are supposed to be elected by the people. In former days a Ceremony of election was Performed. At the death of the King, a Council consisting of Royal Princes, Ministers of State and High Dignitaries of the Church was held. The Senior Prince or Minister then proposes that such and such a Prince should be elevated to the Throne and asks if anybody has any objection. There is generally no answer to this question, but

sometimes an answer in the affirmative is given by saluting with the hands or an inclination of the head. The King is then formally proclaimed, and the words "elected by the people" are added to his titles.

This custom was continued to the Fifth Reign. King Chulalongkorn then made an innovation by creating a Crown Prince, who succeeded to the Throne without question, the formality at the death of the King being a sort of proclamation only.

King Rama 6th, not having any son, it was resolved (desided) in a Cabinet Council that he should be succeeded by his full brothers. Later he made a Law of Succession

This Law of Succession contains 2 distinct principles i.e. the Principle of election and the Principle of Hereditary succession. In this law it starts by saying that the King reserves the absolute right of appointing any member of the Royal Family as his Successor. But should the King die without having appointed a Successor, the Succession will go to his sons. This sounds straight-forward enough, but a complication arises here owing to the habit of polygamy. The Law specifies that the sons of Somdetch Phra Rajini should have the precedence over the others. Then the preference goes to the sons of the mother next in rank to the Queen (there are 4 different ranks)and descending the scale finally to the sons of concubines Again this sounds all right in principle, if it were not for the fact that a concubine may be raised in rank at any time, AND the Queen herself may have her rank lowered according to the whims of the King. This, to my mind, creates very great possibilities of complications. I would suggest that priority of the sons be regulated by the birth ranks of the mothers. I mean priority be given to the sons born of a Princess, such as daughters of a King, then nieces of a King and so on. If there are more than one son **of mothers or the same rank**, the succession would then go by the seniority in age of those Princes. When there are no sons the succession would go to the King's brothers. According to the Law as it is, the priority is still regulated by the created rank of the mothers. I would suggest the same modification as above. The next question is that the Law does not make it quite clear, when there being no brothers left or when the one who should have succeeded has died. Whether all the sons of that Prince would be eligible to the

Throne or whether it is only the sons of the Principal wife only who could succeed. The case has really occurred which shows that in the late King's mind ALL the sons could succeed. In my case the son of the Prince of Petchabun was passed over by the expressed wishes of the late King. Now, many people find that the idea that All the sons could succeed was objectionable owing to the fact that some Princes have the most disreputable minor wives who are really not fitted to be the mothers of Kings. They also say that the Siamese follows the Indian custom and wants their Kings to be born of a Princess of the Royal family. Such Princes are known as "being born in a pure womb". They are the Chow Fa's.

The questions of principles involved, of which I would like to ask your opinions are :

1st Question

Should the King have the right to choose any Prince as his Heir? If the King has this right, ought not this right to be extended to a Council of High Princes and Ministers of State, in the case when the King dies without having chosen an Heir. At present the King alone has the right to nominate an Heir. It would be perhaps more logical to allow a Council of some sort to exercise that right when the King has not done so. This would be more consistent with the idea of an Elected King.

2nd. Question

Should the principle of choice be admitted at all or ought the succession to be by birth alone, and ought there to be some amend ments to the present law or not?

b) The Power of the King.

As you well know, the King has absolute power in everything. This principle is very good and very suitable for the country, **as long as we have a good King.** If the King is really an Elected King it is probable that he would be a fairly good King. But this idea of election is really a very theoretical one, and in reality the King of Siam are really hereditary, with a very limited possibility of choice. Such being the case, it is not at all certain that we shall always have a good King. Then the absolute power may become a positive danger to the country. Besides this, things have very much changed. In olden days the actions of the King were hardly ever questioned. It would not have been safe to do so. The King was really respected and his words were really laws. But things began to change with the new order of things. In the days of King Chulalongkorn, the King was still very much feared and respected. Even then towards to the end

of the Reign, there was a young party who began to criticize the King in many ways, but not openly. In the Reign which has just ended, things got much worse, for many reasons which I have no need to tell you, as you know them well enough. The King has become a person liable to be influenced by anybody who could gain the ears of a favourite. Every official is more or less suspected embezzlement or nepotism. Fortunately the Princes were still respected as being on the whole honest folks. What was very regrettable was that the Court was heartily detested and in later years was on the verge of being ridiculed. The birth of FREE PRESS aggravated matters still more. The position of the King has become one of great difficulty. The movements of opinion in this country give a sure sign that the days of Autocratic Rulership are numbered. The position of the King must be made more secure if this Dynasty is going to last. Some sort of GUARANTEE must be found against an unwise King.

What form then should the Government of Siam take?

Must this country have a Parliamentary system one day, and is really the Anglo-Saxon type of Parliamentary Government suitable to an Eastern people?

4st Question

Is this country ready to have some sort of representative Government?

I personally have my doubts as to the 3rd question, As to the 4th question, my personal opinion is an emphatic No.

What then should be done in the meanwhile? My first attempts to find some sort of guarantee for the person of the King is the creation of the Supreme Council.

c) The Supreme

The Genesis of the Supreme Council is worth telling with some detail.

Council.

I have discussed the idea of such a Council among my friends for some time, before I had any idea that I should have the opportunity of creating it myself. The idea found a firm supporter in Prince Damrong. Just one day before the late King's death, I consulted the Princes Bhanurangsi and Paribatra about this idea. The former was not very keen on it, as he thought that it would lessen the prestige of the King, but the latter was enthusiastic. When the King died, it was decided that the Supreme Council should be created at once. We had 2 days only to prepare a proclamation, and 3 days after the death of the late King, the

Supreme Council was proclaimed by the means of a speech to the Privy Councillors.

I will now explain the reasons for creating this Council in such a hurry. As you know, the late King was beginning to loose the confidence of the people towards the end of the Reign and the question of Succession caused great anxieties. The only High Prince with any reputation was Prince Paribatra and many people would have liked the succession to go to him, while it was well known that the King was expecting to have a child, and should he not have a boy the succession would go to his brothers whom, I am sorry to say, the majority of people did not think much of. For myself, I was a dark horse and in any case inexperienced in affairs of state. Very fortunately for me, on the death of my brother Asdang, I had several occasions to act for the King during his absence from the Capital and during his illness. I was fortunate enough to have been able to gain the confidence of the Ministers and High Princes, so that my candidature to the Throne had the approval of those persons. I also had the best support from Prince Paribatra. On my succession to Throne it was thought absolutely necessary to do something at once to gain the confidence of the people, hence the creation of the Supreme Council. This had its immediate effect and I really gained the confidence of the people in one day. The reason why this action had such an immediate result was that it promised many desirable things.

Firstly, that the Royal Family is getting together and will work in harmony.

Secondly, that the King was willing to seek the advice of highly respected Princes who have had experience of State affairs and who have the confidence of the people, none of the HATED official class being included in this Council.

Thirdly, that the King's power to take arbitrary actions would be lessened by this Council (remember that in the present state of opinions in the country, the King is thought to be more liable to do more harm than good).

Therefore the immediate result of the creation of the Supreme Council had been very good, and I think that it has served its purpose very well and that my action was well justified. Since then, people have had time to reflect a little and the Supreme

Council has come to be criticized a great deal. I will enumerate some of the criticisms and questioning about it.

1. People ask whether the Supreme Council is an advisory body or an executive body. Some think that the Council has too much power. I would answer that the Council is entirely advisory since it cannot carry out any executive actions at all. Its opinions have executive effect through the King alone. The way that the Council work at present is that it meets in the presence of the King and NEVER meets without the presence of the King except by special order. Questions submitted to the Council are: all questions of policy, questions of national finance, appointments of High officials such as Ministers of State, questions of high and special rewards such as ranks of Chow Phya and Grand Crosses (there has been abuse and backstairs influence in the past) and questions concerning tradition and important ceremonials. The King may also seek advice in personal or Royal Family affairs.

In any question that concerns any Ministry, the Minister responsible may be invited to attend the meeting.

The Supreme Councillors sit in the Cabiner Council and give their opinions. Final decision on important matters such as the promulgation of a New Law or the signing of a treaty is always given in the Cabinet Council. Both in the Cabinet Council and in the Supreme Council the decision of the King alone prevails, although in the ordinary course of events, the King always adopts the opinion of the majority, but being still absolute he need not necessarily do so.

2. It is criticised that the Supreme Council being an advisory body should not sit in the Cabinet Council which is an executive body. I admit that this is quite true. This system is only adopted for the sake of convenience. It would make business much slower if the Supreme Council were not to sit in the Cabinet as any question decided on in the Cabinet will have to be deliberated on again in the Supreme Council. And since the King alone decides all questions, it dose not seem necessary to introduce any complications at the present stage. If there is a Prime Minister to preside the Cabinet Council and who will submit the decisions of the Cabinet to the King, then it would be well to have the Supreme Council as a seperate body which the

King could consult and then give his final decision. We will talk more of this later.

3. That there should be some law to indicate and regulate the duties of the Supreme Councillors. This is certainly needed, and a draft law has been drawn up, but owing to the conflicting opinions as to WHAT SHOULD BE THE DUTIES of the Supreme Councillors, I have shelved that draft for the present until a clearer idea of what is the best form to give to such a Council is forthcoming.

4. That the Supreme Council is approved of at this moment owing to the personalities of the Councillors, and that in the cases when these Councillors are replaced by others, the Council would not have the confidence of the people. I think such ideas are rather pessimistic. If there are no more good men in the future, we can have no hope for Siam.

5. That the existence of the Supreme Council lessens the prestige of the King. I admit that this is true, but I consider that the prestige of Kingship in this country can hardly be lower than at this moment. I have already explained the causes I doubt very much whether the old prestige could ever be regained. I think that the evolution of the public opinion in Bangkok and educated class has already gone too far, and that it would be a wild goose chase to try and get back any of the old glory. The King should be content to do all the good he can, even though the credit were given to somebody else. I believe that at the present time and with the sentiment of the people as it is at this moment, all credit will always go to somebody else to some Minister or some Prince, if there is no Supreme Council. If any thing goes wrong, it would be attributed to influence of some wicked person and the foolishness of the King in being influenced by that person. People seem to have the idea that the King is a sort nonentity who is easily influenced by anybody, and that he has no opinion of his own whatever. This statement may sound exaggerated; but it is really very near to the truth.

6. That the Power of the King is lessened. This is, of course, what is intended. As I have already said, the days of absolute power are numbered The S.C. certainly lessens the King's power to do harm by the arbitrary actions, but surely, it does not lessen his power to do good as he ought to be supported very wholeheartedly by the S.C. in that case.

I believe that some of the reasons why the S.C. is so much : criticized and feared now is some sort of sentiment of envy. Anybody who has the ears of the king is always hated. It also makes backstairs influence rather difficult, because the people will now have to go to 5 or more backstairs instead of one or two.

Having stated some the criticisms against the present form of the Supreme Council, I would put the...

5 th Question

What is the best form to give to the Supreme Council? Is it worthwhile to make it a permanent institution of the country, or should it be allowed to die a natural death?

d) The Cabinet

You have said in your article in the Atlantic Monthly that the Governmental system of Siam is in water-tight compartments. This is perfectly true, but I think that it is inherent to the system of having Ministers each responsible to the King alone. Each works for the benefit of his Ministry alone and not to the benefit of the whole. An attempt has been made to improve matters by having weekly meeting, At least the Ministers meet once a week to discuss matters together, and I think that there has been a real improvement. But it would be better still if we were to have a Prime Minister to preside over the Cabinet. He should be allowed a fairly free choice of his colleagues, so that the Cabinet will work well as an homogenous body. The Ministers will be nominated by the King after having conferred with the Premier. I believe that this would be a real gain to the country. The Supreme Council will then act as a controlling body. I have already indicated the line in which work would be done under this system. The thing to decide is, whether this system should be used now or later.

6 th Question.

Should we have a Prime Minister? Should this system be inaugurated now?

e) The Legislative Council.

The question of having some sort of Legislative Council has been discussed many times. A sort of Legislative Council was created early in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn. This Council consisted of Ministers of State and 12 nominated members. The Council remained in existence for about 5 years and since then has become a dead letter although some of the Councillors of those days are still living. I think that it was given up because it was felt that there was no real need for such a Council and that it only delayed the work of the Ministers.

When the late King came to Throne, the Prince of Pitsanuloke recommended the formation of a Council of State similar to what existed in Russia at that time (not the Douma). I believe the matter was discussed in a Cabinet meeting, but the scheme was not adopted, owing to the opinion of Mr. Jens Westengaard who thought that any makeshift form of Parliamentary system would serve no good purpose.

Prince Damrong has now submitted a new idea of a Legislative Council, composed of officials nominated from every Ministry. This Council will really work as a sort of Law drafting Commission. We have already got a Department for drafting laws, and I am not sure that the proposed Council would be able to do the work better. Rather the contrary I am afraid, and it will delay work too. Besides that, it may attempt to criticize the policy of the Ministers, and as the Councillors are officials in the Ministries appointed for a time only, the system may not be very good for discipline. The difficulty about such a nominated Council has always been the question of recruiting the members. At the present moment we cannot afford to pay the members, and we cannot get unpaid members.

Should we have a Legislative Council? What should be the constitution of such a Council. (I have received many petitions to form some sort of Council).

7 th Question.

Financial Affairs.

I will not say much about financial affairs as I do feel that I am not competent in the matter. I think that we have a very capable advisor in Sir Edward Cook .

The one important question is the proper division of the resources available among the Ministries. I know that, in your opinion, we spend too much on the Defence forces. I am inclined to agree with you in this respect, yet the cutting down of expenditures on Defence is a very serious responsibility. Very few people dare advocate such a thing, as we have too many experiences of the swashbuckling policy of our neighbours.

I am getting the whole of our financial policy overhauled, but I am somewhat at a disadvantage in not really competent in the matter.

8 th Question.

Have you any opinion as to our financial policy?

Internal Affairs.

The one change of importance that I am contemplating at this moment, is the organizations of Municipal Councils. I think that, at first, these Councils should be nominated. Later on we might try Municipal elections. This would give some idea as to the possibility of inaugurating some form of representative government. It will satisfy the advanced opinions of the country, and will be a good demonstration as to whether the people are really ready to have an effective voice in the affairs of the country.

Another question which I consider important is the Chinese question. The Chinese are very useful in Siam. In former days they marry Siamese women and became very good Siamese citizens. But since the Chinese revolution, there has been quite a change. Now the Chinese bring their wives from China, and are determined to remain Chinese. They organize schools in which they teach practically only the Chinese language. There is a rather disturbing state of affairs, as we lose a source of good and laborious citizens, and with the new ideas in China filtering through, it becomes a latent danger.

9 th Question.

Can something be done to make the Chinese become Siamese as in the old days? (In the Straits Settlements they are willing to become British subjects).

These are all the problems which we have not yet found satisfactory solutions or which are doubtful as to the proper way to attack. Others are being solved or on the point of being solved.

กรมราชเลขาธิการ
วันที่ ๒๗ กรกฎาคม ๒๔๖๘

Saranromya Palace.

July 27 th 1926.

May it please Your Majesty,

In the memorandum which Your Majesty was gracious enough to send me on July 23 Your Majesty asked me to reply to the following nine Questions :

1 st Question. Should the King have the right to choose any prince as his heir? If the King has this right, ought not this right to be extended to a Council of High Princes and Ministers of State in the case when the King dies without having chosen an heir? At present the King alone has the right to nominate an heir. It would be perhaps more logical to allow a Council of some sort to exercise that right when the King has not done so. This would be more consistent with the idea of an elected King.

2 nd Question. Should the principle of choices be admitted at all, or ought the succession to be by birth alone, and ought there to be some amendments to the present law or not?

3rd Question. Must this country have a parliamentary system one day, and is really the Anglo-Saxon type of parliamentary government suitable to an eastern people?

4 th Question. Is this country ready to have some sort of representative government?

5 th Question. What is the best form to give to the Supreme Council? Is it worthwhile to make it a permanent institution of the country, or should it be allowed to die a natural death?

6 th Question. Should we have a Prime Minister? Should this system be inaugurated new?

7 th Question. Should we have a Legislative Council? What should be the constitution of such a Council?

8 th Question. Have you any opinion as to our financial policy?

9 th Question. Can something be done to make the Chinese become Siamese as in the old days?

In attempting to answer these questions. I cannot but feel very humble. The solutions of the problems underlying the questions depend upon such an intimate knowledge of the internal affairs of Siam and of the personalities of her leaders that I

cannot but recognize that there are others whose opinions must be worth far more than mine. Indeed my only excuse for venturing these opinions must be that Your Majesty has asked me to do so and that perhaps value can be found in the ideas of an impartial and detached observer whose only object is to promote the welfare of a country he loves.

The answers to the above nine questions deal with a variety of subjects and perhaps can best be answered by dealing with each subject separately.

I. SUCCESSION OF THE THRONE

PRINCIPLE OF SUCCESSION.

In viewing these problems one must realize at the very outset that the situation in Siam is totally different from that existing in Great Britain and other similar limited Monarchies. What works well in Great Britain might work disastrously in Siam. Siam should not slavishly copy the system of any Western nation, but should evolve out of her own experience what seems best adapted to her own genius and conditions.

In Great Britain the power of the King is so much limited and attenuated and he wields so little power that if an incompetent or corrupt King should come to the throne he could not do vital injury to the country. In Siam, on the other hand, the Monarch wields all power. In Siam if a King lacking in ability, in strength of character, or in integrity of purpose, should ascend the throne, he might easily make shipwreck of the country. At the least, he would be almost sure to do it tragic injury. It is therefore infinitely more important for Siam to have a competent and strong King than for any country like England.

It would seem to follow that although a country like England can afford to fix the line of succession to the throne by an absolute principle sure as primogeniture, Siam, even were such a principle practicable, cannot afford to do so. Since it is absolutely vital that Siam should have a competent and able Monarch, since the welfare of Siam so directly depends upon the degree of competency and ability of her Monarch, it seems clear that Siam's welfare vitally and directly depends upon her being able freely to select as the Monarch the ablest, the most competent and the strongest of the Royal Princes. Any law which prevents such a freedom of choice and which therefore might necessitate the crowning of an incompetent or weak Monarch because he happens to be the next in line of succession, must make against the ultimate national welfare. In England, where the Premier wields the actual power of government, no one would tolerate the idea of following a fixed line of succession for Premiers, or of adopting any system which would rob the country of its complete freedom of choice. If the King is to continue in absolute power, Siam's future welfare would seem to depend upon her being free to choose for her Monarch the best man available among the Royal Princes, regardless of rank or age; unless Siam has this freedom she must expect to have from time to time Monarchs who are incompetent or weak, and the national interests will consequently suffer tragically. For these reasons I feel that there should be, no hard and fast law of succession based upon

rank, seniority, or any other absolute principle, but rather that the choice should be left free and unhindered so long as it falls upon a Prince of Royal Blood. In order to prevent undue pretensions from those scheming for personal self advancement, it would seem wise that the choice of the heir apparent should be limited to a son of some King and of a Queen of any rank or to persons of Royal Blood; presumable the choice should not be open to some of concubines.

TIME OF CHOICE.

It would seem to me that the choice of the heir apparent should be made before the death of the King. If the choice is left until after the death of the King, there is great danger that various factions will arise each backing its own candidate, and there is always danger that this might lead to civil war. It is manifestly of the greatest importance that upon the death of the King, all the Royal Princes should be united and stand together in the choice of a successor. This could hardly be assure unless the heir apparent is chosen during the lifetime of the King.

BY WHOM THE CHOICE SHOULD BE MADE.

I feel quite strongly that the choice of the heir apparent should not be left solely to the King, but that the choice should be made by the King with the advice and consent of the Privy Council. If the choice is made solely by the King, it seems to me that there will be a very real danger that a group of Royal Princes or Ministers may not believe in the wisdom of the King's choice, of may not concur in it. If this should be the case it would result in a lack of loyalty on the part of such Princes or Ministers to the person chosen by the King; and the result upon the death of the King might be disastrous. To give a concrete illustration of what I mean, the King might designate as his successor his newly born infant son. The most patriotic and ablest of the High Princes and Ministers might feel that Siam was at the time in such a critical position that a long period of regency would spell disaster for the country, and might therefore conclude that the only patriotic thing for them to do would be to put aside the infant child and instead place upon the throne a strong and able ruler. Should a considerable faction support the infant child, civil war might result.

In other words, my feeling is that the unquestioning loyalty of the Princes and Ministers to the heir apparent upon the death of the King is absolutely vital for Siam's welfare and that the only way to insure such loyalty is to give to the Privy Council a voice in choosing the heir apparent. I therefore feel that the action of His late Majesty in claiming the right to choose his successor alone and unaided, was exceedingly unwise and should not be followed.

It would seem that this choice should be made by means of a secret ballot. If there is to be an actual freedom of choice on the part to the Privy Councillors they must be freed from the embarrassment of having to give an open and nonsecret vote possibly

not in accordance with the wishes and desires of the King. The only way to ensure real freedom of choice is by secret balloting. Presumably it should require more than a bare majority to choose the heir apparent. The concurrence of three quarters of those present within the Kingdom might well be required so as to guard against the possibility of a substantial proportion being disloyal to the heir apparent.

A further question arises as to whether the choice of heir apparent should be made by the Privy Council or by the Council of High Princes and Ministers of State. If the foregoing ideas are sound, it would seem clear that the choice should be made by the body which is most truly representative of the various and diversified interests of the Kingdom and which most nearly reflects the opinion of the controlling people. This would seem to be the Privy Council. Also, if the Premier form of Government as suggested below is adopted, the choice clearly should be made by the Privy Council, for, since the Council of High Princes and Ministers of State is so small that the Ministers form a majority of the group, a scheming Premier could absolutely control the choice of the heir apparent by compelling the Ministers to vote for his own choice. This would not be possible in a body as large as the Privy Council.

PROVISIONAL NATURE OF CHOICE.

Conditions are continually changing. Children are born, boys come to age, certain individuals die, some, through the course of time prove weak or incompetent, and others gain strength and prove their worth. It therefore seems important to me that the choice of the heir apparent should not be irrevocable. I should like to see the choice made a provisional one which could be freely changed as conditions change. I should suggest that the King and Privy Council consider the question of choosing the successor to the King afresh at intervals of every five or ten years; that at the end of every such period the new conditions should be given consideration, and the best man as viewed in the light of that time should then be chosen. This choice should be regarded in the light of a purely provisional choice rather than of an appointment. Clearly there should be no actual appointment and no official announcement should be made. Neither should additional rank be given to the person chosen. Otherwise his position should a different man later be chosen, would be too hard. The suggestion of making the choice purely a provisional one would have the additional advantage that no one could feel secure that he would ascend the throne upon the death of the existing King. The position of the heir apparent is a very difficult one. He becomes surrounded with men seeking to flatter him in order to gain his good opinion and thus to acquire power when he comes to the throne. Conditions all seem to tend in the direction of warping his character and thereby rendering him less fit later to perform his duties as King. If no one could feel secure in the position of heir apparent and if the choice were recognized as an entirely provisional one, it seems to me that it would be advantageous from the view-point of shaping the character of the person provisionally chosen as the heir apparent.

If the newly elected King should die before his successor has been chosen, then it would seem best to follow out the same principles, i.e. the Privy Council should meet and choose from the Royal Princes freely and without restriction whoever seems to them best fitted and most competent to carry out the duties of the King.

The foregoing suggestions, it would seem to me, are those best calculated to secure the most competent and ablest man for the Kingship. It would probably also lessen the likelihood of regencies which are apt to be exceedingly dangerous in a country like Siam, where absolute power is vested in the King.

Therefore, for all these reasons, my answer to the 1st. and 2nd. questions which Your Majesty proposed are as follows :

The King should have the right to choose any Royal Princes whatever as his heir, but not without the advice and consent of the Privy Council. This suggestion, as Your Majesty intimated, would be more consistent with the idea of an elected King; and it would very greatly strengthen the position and influence of the new King.

If these ideas are sound, the present law of succession should be dropped and a new fundamental law in accordance with these ideas should be framed and promulgated.

II. FRAMEWORK OF GOVERNMENT

I do not think that it is practicable to consider at this time the organization of a popular representative parliament in Siam. A workable parliament is absolutely dependent upon an intelligent electorate. Without intelligent control by the people such a body would be sure to degenerate into a corrupt and tyrannical body. Until the rank and file of people in Siam have generally received a higher degree of education than at present it would seem therefore to be exceedingly dangerous to try to set up a popularly controlled parliamentary body. It therefore seems inescapable that at least for the present absolute power must continue to rest in the King.

Absolute Monarchy can never be free from the great and vital danger of an incompetent or weak King. In the hands of an enlightened Monarch, such as King Chulalongkorn, rapid progress can be made and national interests can be greatly advanced; but if an incompetent or weak Monarch comes to the throne all the progress of a former reign may be lost and the country may be faced with the dire alternative of disaster or revolution. Anything which will help to prevent such disastrous abuse of power will tend to promote the ultimate welfare of the Monarchy.

Viewed from this light the system of government by a Premier would seem to have distinct advantages. In the first place, if the actual work of government is committed to a Premier, if corruption creeps into the government or if intriguers or self-interested cliques manage to obtain the reins of power, as long as the King remains sincere and is accessible to others. The premier can always be removed and the group of intriguers upset, whereas a King cannot be removed. In other words, in every country there should always be held in reserve some power other than revolution, to remove one who proves

himself in actual practice until for the carrying on of the government, and in a country like Siam this reserve power logically should be exercised by the King. By the transfer of the detailed work of government from the shoulders of the King to these of an appointed Premier, Siam would achieve a reserve power which would make possible through peaceful means the removal of whoever proves unfit to do the work of government; and in this way, the country would gain a guarantee against incapacity and possible tyranny on the part of the one carrying on the actual operations of government.

In the second place, the system of government by a Premier has the advantage of allowing a complete freedom in the selection of the one responsible for the carrying on of the government. The person thus selected need not be confined necessarily to Royal Blood, nor to Kingly rank, but can be selected with absolute freedom with a view solely to ability for the work of government. The work of carrying on the government may be placed upon the shoulders of whoever of all the men in the Kingdom is best fitted for the task by reason of his integrity, his strength of character, his executive capacity, and his ability to translate desired policies into practical achievement.

A third advantage of the system of Government by a Premier is that under a Premier the work of the separate Ministers can be more easily unified and coordinated. During the last reign one could not but feel that much was lost by a lack of co-ordination among the separate Ministers, and in those fields of work which spread beyond the sphere of any single Ministry progress was often hampered or entirely blocked. It is the duty of a Premier to formulate the general policies to be followed by the Government and to unify the work of all the separate Ministries so as to attain those desired policies. To do so the Premier must be constantly accessible to everyone engaged in the work of carrying out these policies. A Premier can be thus accessible in a way which is not open to a King, many of the difficulties of the late reign were due to the fact that His late Majesty was not freely accessible to those actually carrying on the work of the government, and he therefore often made decisions based upon opinions gained from a single self-interested clique which did not make for the welfare of Siam. Because those who care most for Siam and who exercised wise judgment frequently could not reach him, he frequently failed to know the truth underlying the situations with which he dealt, and therefore acted in ignorance sometimes with regrettable results.

A fourth advantage of the system of Premier Government is that it allows a division of work. Upon the King falls the inescapable duty of performing innumerable ceremonials, all of which require time and strength. Upon the King also must fall the decision of all questions of large national policy, -- a task exacting the best of any man's time and strength. Problems involving the family affairs of the Royal Family also fall upon the King's shoulders, as well as innumerable other duties which no King can escape. These responsibilities are more than sufficient to consume the full time and strength of anyone man. If to all of these is added the weighty burden of carrying on the actual work of Government and deciding the multitudinous and endless minor questions which the

conduct of government unforgivingly requires, the burden becomes too great for any single man to bear. The work of actual government is strenuous and exhausting, far more so than most people realize. If all this work is thrown upon the King in addition to his other grave responsibilities and burdens, either he will break under the strain during a course of years, or else he will be compelled to neglect, through sheer physical incapacity, reading many State papers which the one responsible for the government ought to read and seeing many people which such a man ought to see. It is almost inevitable that he will, become tired and discouraged and in time fall into the hands and under the power of an intriguing, clever group scheming for their own self-advancement instead of for the welfare of Siam. This was not true in the early days when the task of government had not assumed such large proportions as it does today, and when the work of government was simple & comparatively easy. As the work of government becomes more and more complex, however, the time will soon come, if it has not already done so, when no single man can possibly perform all the Ceremonials which the King must perform, properly decide large issues of national policy, settle questions arising in the Royal Family, and in addition at the same time carry on the arduous and strenuous work of detailed government.

For all these reasons it would seem manifest that the King should be relieved from the hard work of government and that this should be instead upon the shoulders of a Premier appointed by the King. Such an arrangement does not mean that the King would be shorn of his power. The ultimate power would still rest with the King. It would mean that the King would place upon the Premier the responsibilities for carrying on the government and that the Premier would always be responsible to the King. The King would be relieved of much of the detailed burden of government; but questions of large policy would still be referred for decision to the King.

Under such a scheme it would be vital and essential that all responsibility should be concentrated in the Premier. He therefore should alone have the power of appointing the Ministers of State, who would be responsible for the conduct of the work in their Ministries directly and immediately to the Premier. All questions should go from the ministries directly to the Premier. Under such a scheme it would seem vital that the King should not himself select or choose any of the Ministers. If he did so the Premier could not be made responsible for the work of the Ministers thus chosen. Responsibility in such a case would rest rather with the King; whereas the whole underlying conception of government by a Premier is rather to concentrate responsibility in the Premier so that for any and all mistakes or errors in the work of the Ministers the King can blame and hold entirely responsible the Premier under whose control and direction the work is carried on.

There is one danger which must be faced under such a system. It is possible that the Premier might seek to absorb so much power that he would become a rival or even overshadow the King, as was the case, for example, with the Shoguns in Japan. Although this is a possible danger, I do not feel it is a very real one under the conditions existing in Siam, unless indeed the King should be so manifestly incompetent or unfit for his duties

that he ought to be stripped of power. If the Premier seemed to be scheming for personal power the King could of course always remove him. If, nevertheless, such a danger were felt to be real it might be guarded against by various possible methods. For instance, the Ministry of War or of National Defence might be placed directly under the King and therefore made entirely independent of the Premier. In this way the King could keep direct control of the Army and see that only officers loyal to him were appointed. Under such a scheme the Ministry of War would have to be separately budgeted for and entirely separated from the other work of government. In my opinion, however, such a precaution as keeping the Army out of the control of the Premier would under the conditions now prevailing in Siam be unnecessary.

I quite realize that there are many difficulties which must be faced in creating a form of Government by a Premier. Both the conception of making the various Ministers responsible to the Premier instead of to the King and the idea of the Premier or a Minister resigning because he personally disagrees with the policy advocated by his superior although he is well qualified for his post and entirely acceptable to his superior, are quite foreign to the ideas at present generally prevailing in Siam, and would have to be developed cautiously and with care. Nevertheless, both of these ideas must be thoroughly learned before Parliamentary Government can be achieved; and if, as I hope, Siam will one day achieve some form of Parliamentary Government, these prerequisite ideas must first be mastered and generally understood by the people. If these first steps to Parliamentary Government must be mastered some day, I see no reason why they should not be mastered now.

Very much, of course, depends on personalities. Is it possible at this time to secure some one competent and willing to undertake the infinitely important task of accomplishing this transformation and carrying on the Government as Premier? The programme to be followed vitally depends upon the answer to this question.

In answer to the 3rd. and 4th. questions proposed by Your Majesty, my answer is that Siam I hope some day may have a parliamentary form of government, but that the country is not yet prepared for representative government. I believe that those who are shaping the destinies of Siam should not lose sight of a representative form of government at some future time when the spread of education makes this possible; for I believe that some such form of Government is inevitable and desirable with the growth of education and widespread intelligence among the population. Whether or not the form of government should be the Anglo-Saxon type of parliamentary government is a question which need not be decided at this time. My own hope is that Siam will never become completely Westernized but will retain in her development her own individuality. Her institution, governmental and otherwise, should not be blindly copied from Western nations, but should be the result and out growth of her own genius and experience.

THE SUPREME COUNCIL

The creation of the Supreme Council at the beginning of Your Majesty's reign was to my mind a masterstroke. By creating a Supreme Council endowed with high power and by placing upon this the five ablest and strongest men of the Kingdom, every one of them of unquestionable integrity and patriotism, Your Majesty struck at the very root of the intrigue and underground scheming which had been going on before Your Majesty came to the throne. The result was the gain of immediate confidence on the part of the people of Siam and a great strengthening of the position of the Monarch. In my own opinion the functioning of the Supreme Council has amply justified its creation, and personally I do not feel that as long as it keeps free of intrigue it should be allowed to die a natural death. It seems to me that there are very distinct functions which the Supreme Council can fulfil under the Premier scheme of government which I have been suggesting.

Although the Premier should carry on the entire work of the government, large questions of national policy can not fail to keep constantly arising, and these will have to be referred for decision to Your Majesty. Many of these must be questions which from their very nature should not be decided single-handed and without help by anyone. Your Majesty will doubtless wish to secure the advice of a few of the wisest men of the realm. Such questions might well be referred by Your Majesty to the Supreme Council for their advice and suggestion, always reserving the power of final decision to Yourself. In other words, my conception of the functions of the Supreme Council under such a scheme of government would be that it should form a purely advisory body to which the King might turn for advice on question of large policy. It should have nothing whatsoever to do with the executive work of government. Presumably the Premier should be a member of the Supreme Council, so that the person charged with the actual conduct of the government could have the benefit of the advice and views of the members of the Supreme Council. On the other hand, no member of the Cabinet other than the Premier should sit in the Supreme Council. It should be kept sharply distinct from the Cabinet and should be confined purely to the giving of advice direct to the King on questions of policy.

I realize that criticisms have been made concerning the functioning of the Supreme Council, many of them unjust, yet some of them perhaps not without foundation. To my mind the advantages of the Supreme Council outweigh the objections to it. It serves as an effective preventative of backstairs influence which must always be an everpresent danger in absolute Monarchy. It provides for an effective avenue by which outside opinion may reach the ears of the King, and thus enable him the better to understand and appreciate the truth underlying any given situation. It gives to the King the benefit of the wisdom and experience of the ablest men of the Kingdom.

On the other hand, it has its dangers if its powers are not strictly confined to the giving of advice and if its advice is not strictly confined to question of policy. There will always be the danger that the very eagerness of its members to correct abuses will lead it to interfere with the work of the various Ministries and thereby to detract from the

concentration of responsibility which should centre in each of the Ministers. If the Supreme Council once begins to encroach upon the executive fields of government by interfering with the conduct of work in the separate Ministries, by advising as to appointments to be made under the rank of Minister of State, or in any other way taking part in the executive functions of government, it will thereby at once lessen the efficiency and increase the difficulties of every Minister. This must be an everpresent danger unless the powers of the Supreme Council are strictly confined and limited solely to the giving of advice and to the giving of advice on questions only of policy. Questions of appointments should presumably be left to the free discretion of the Ministers.

Again, as long as the member of the Supreme Council sit in the Cabinet, there is the danger of their forming a clique within the Cabinet. The Cabinet members will be ignorant of whether or not any issue under discussion in the Cabinet has already been discussed in the Supreme Council, and the members of the Cabinet will consequently be likely to feel that they are often acting in the dark. May there not be a danger that many of the Cabinet members will simply watch which way the members of the Supreme Council vote, and will cast their vote accordingly, instead of exercising an independent judgment and feeling a real sense of responsibility? It seems open to considerable question whether the Supreme Council, if it is to perform its most useful functions, should not be kept entirely separate from the Cabinet and the members there of except the Premier refrain from sitting in the Cabinet meetings.

In answer to the 5th. question put by Your Majesty my answer is that in my judgment the Supreme Council should be continued as a permanent institution of the country, but that its power should be carefully defined by law and should be limited to the giving of advice and to giving such advice only on questions of underlying policy. I believe it should be separated from the Cabinet and should act entirely independently of that body. It should keep rigorously free of interfering in executive matters.

In the 6th. Question, Your Majesty asks whether we should have a Prime Minister and whether such a system should be inaugurated now. I have already given the reasons why I believe that Siam should have a Prime Minister. I also believe that the system should be inaugurated now. If such a fundamental change is to be made, it would seem far easier to make it at the beginning of a reign when new policies are being formed and new paths are being blazed than later on when the conduct of government has become settled in fixed channels and when restricting obligations have grown out of troublesome situations or troublesome personalities. If a change such as this is to be put into force, it would seem best to do so at the beginning of a reign so that the King can devote fresh energy and many years to the gradual moulding of the system into the most efficient form of government which can be evolved to meet the distinctive conditions and need of the country.

It may be argued that there is at present no need for such a change, since under Your Majesty's wise guidance with the assistance of the Supreme Council the government

in Siam at the present time is entirely satisfactory. I can not feel the force of such an argument. While it is quite true that the present government of Siam is functioning well, when one takes a far look into the future one must reckon with a popular demand for some parliamentary or more popular form of government. This necessitates the making at some time of fundamental changes; and if progress demands these changes, surely the time to make them is when a competent and wise Monarch is on the throne, assisted by able and patriotic leaders.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The question has been asked whether or not Siam should have a Legislative Council. I hope that some day it will be possible to form a popular and representative legislative body charged with the framing of the laws; this seems to me highly desirable and ultimately inevitable. As already suggested, however, I do not feel that the rank and file of people in Siam are at present sufficiently educated and interested in public affairs to make the formation of such a body possible at this time.

Furthermore, I see very little advantage in the formation of a legislative body or council composed of representatives from each of the Government ministries. It seems questionable whether any useful purpose would be served by such a body other than that which is already being performed by the Cabinet and by the Department of Legislative Redaction, and such a council might add infinitely to the delay in securing the passage of new laws. Until the time when a law making body can be elected by the rank and file of people and be thus directly representative of the population as a whole, in my opinion the formation of a legislative council would probably serve no useful purpose.

On the other hand, I can see a decided advantage in finding some method for making possible the interpolation of government Ministers. If the policy of any Ministry is misunderstood by the people generally, as long as it is an honest policy the Minister ought to welcome the opportunity of explaining and defending the policy so as to disarm and silence criticism. If on the other hand, the policy is due to intrigue or adopted for selfish reasons the method interpolation is often the best way to bring the matter to the attention of those at the head of the government. If it is possible therefore to secure a representative body which will represent popular opinion. I would like to see such a body given the power to put questions to the ministers of Government. Such an outlet for popular opinion would form a kind of safety valve and do much to prevent such popular opinion from becoming by reason of its suppression dangerous. If the system of Municipal Councils in the various cities proves practicable, it might later become possible to create a body containing one or more representatives from each important city with the power thus publicly to interpolate the Ministers. This is a matter, however, which should probably be left as to details until a later time when the success of the Municipal Councils has become assured. In the meantime it might prove advantageous to allow the members of the Supreme Council to interpolate the Ministers at a meeting presided over by the King.

Under the Premier system of Government if the members of the Supreme Council could thus call the Ministers to account, it would serve as an effective check against the corrupt use of power by Ministers appointed by an unscrupulous Premier. It would also serve to reduce to a minimum misunderstanding between the Cabinet and the Supreme Council; for the quickest way to prevent misunderstandings is frank and full discussion.

In reply therefore to the 7th. question proposed by Your Majesty, I am not in favour of creating a Legislative Council, but I should suggest the giving of serious consideration to the later formation of some body representing popular opinion which should have the power to interpolate Cabinet Ministers, and until such time the giving of this power to the Supreme Council.

III. FINANCIAL AFFAIRS.

In the 8th. question Your Majesty asks whether I have any opinion as to Siam's financial policy. Since I am not a financial expert, I think I should leave such question for the advice of a man like Sir Edward Cook, who is far better equipped than I to advise on the financial policy of Siam. Nevertheless, therefore one or two matters concerning which I feel rather strongly, but upon which because they are quite unrelated to the other subjects of this Memorandum. I shall speak very briefly.

the King have the right to choose any Prince as his Heir? If the King has this right, ought not this right to be extended

Siam, in my opinion, should not be so largely dependent upon a single crop. In the case of unfavourable weather conditions and a consequent shortage or failure to the rice crop, it means that Siam suffers unduly, and is sometimes placed in a temporarily precarious financial situation. It does not seem wise to place on one's eggs in a single basket. I therefore sometimes wonder whether Siam ought not to take steps to engage in the cultivation of some secondary crop, such as tobacco. I have been informed that there is no reason, so far as climatic conditions are concerned, why tobacco should not be produced in Siam and that it could be produced in the off seasons between the rice crops. Why should Siam not profit, as Java has done from large tobacco crops? Not only would this diversify Siam's crops, but it would of course considerably increased the national production and the consequent revenues of the government. Similarly, there seems reasons why Siam should not grow hemp and other similar products.

Might not more assistance also be given to efforts to obtain the sowing of a more standard and better rice seed, and thus to standardize the rice produced in Siam and to improve the quality of the crop? Again, might not the fisheries be protected and the production of fish thus increased? I believe that certain kinds of fisheries are now being injured through lack of protection, with proper fish protection and an efficient Fishery Department not only could this injury be stopped but the amount of fish available for food actually increased.

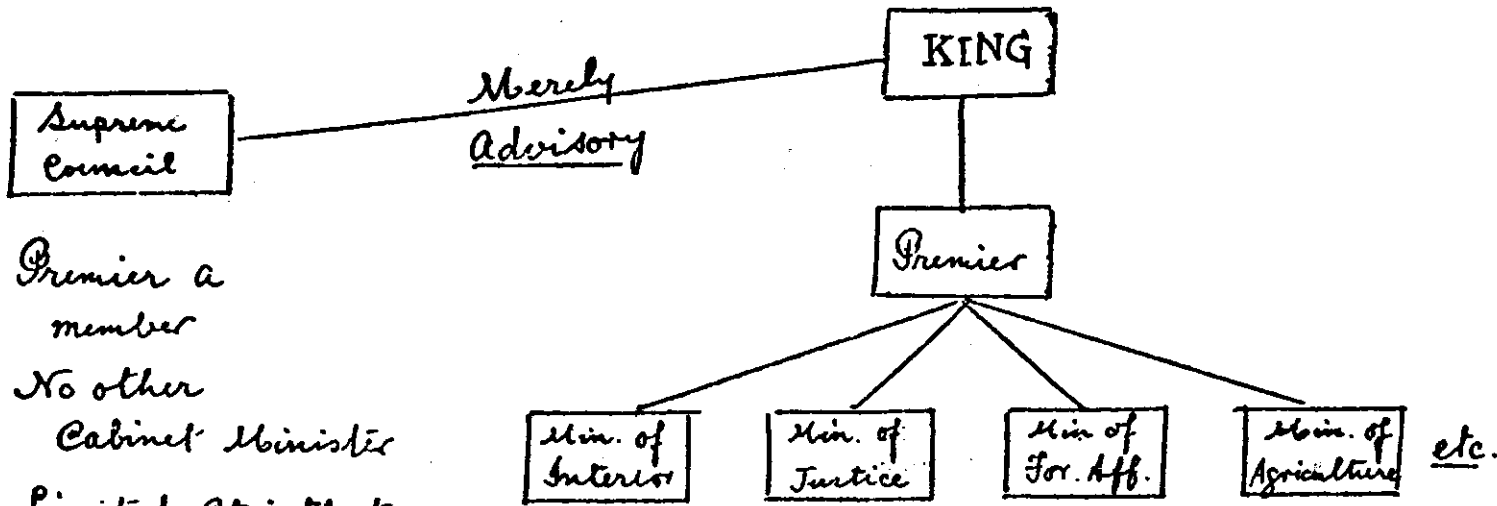
The idea which I am trying to suggest is that the production of Siam should by stimulated and increased in order to increase the prosperity of the country. All this would seem largely dependent upon the efforts of the Department of Agriculture but that Department of course, is helpless to undertake such activities without adequate funds. In as much as the future prosperity of Siam depends largely upon the stimulation and increase of her agricultural resources, does it not seem that perhaps a greater proportion of the revenues of the kingdom should be allotted to the Ministry of Agriculture than that at present allowed? Might not a similar remark be made with regard to the ministry of Education, whose work again vitally concerns the future development of Siam? The thought in the back of my mind with regard to the question of financial policy is the fundamental problem of whether it might not be wise to reconsider afresh the proportion of revenues allotted to each Ministry in the light of the future hope of Siam.

During the year B.E. 2467 out of a total national expenditure of Tcs. 96,452,497.00 the expenditure of the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture was only Tcs. 4,177,709.00 and of the Ministry of Education only Tcs. 2,640,344.00 Should not the allotment of revenues as between the different Ministries be freshly considered and determined more in accordance with what will make for the greatest prosperity and strongest Siam of the future?

The 9th question which Your Majesty proposed is whether anything can be done to make the Chinese become Siamese as in the old days. This is a matter of such far reaching importance that I do not feel that I ought to venture an opinion as to it without considerably more study than that which I have been able to devote to it in the two days since Your Majesty's questions were put to me. I should like before coming to any definite conclusions to discuss further with Your Majesty certain underlying problems of policy upon which this question must ultimately depend.

In order to put into concrete shape some of the ideas which I have expressed to Your Majesty, and in compliance with Your Majesty's desire, I have put into the form of a preliminary draft of a short constitution the framework of the government discussed above. I am sure that Your Majesty will understand that this is not intended in any sense as a finished document but merely as a hastily prepared starting point upon which to base later discussions.

SD/PHYA KALYAN MAITRI.
(Francis B. Sayre)



Premier a member
 No other Cabinet Minister
 Limited Strictly to
 (1) Advice
 (2) Questions of Policy
 Unrelated to Cabinet.

OUTLINE OF PRELIMINARY DRAFT

ARTICLE I.

The Supreme Power throughout the Kingdom shall be vested in His Majesty the King.

ARTICLE II.

The King shall appoint a Premier who shall be responsible to the King for the entire executive work of the Government. He may be dismissed by the King at any time.

ARTICLE III.

The Premier shall appoint and may remove on his own responsibility the Ministers of State at the heads of the various Government Ministries. He shall be responsible to the King for the entire work of each Ministry. He shall also be charged with the duty of carrying out the general Policies of the Government as directed by the King and of co-ordinating for this purpose the work of the Separate Ministries.

ARTICLE IV.

Each Government Minister shall be responsible directly to the Premier for the work of his own Ministry. He shall assist in carrying out the general policies directed by the Premier.

ARTICLE V.

The Cabinet shall be called together and presided over by the Premier, and shall be composed of all the Ministers of States. It may discuss matters of common interest, but the responsibility for all decisions shall rest with the Premier.

ARTICLE VI.

The Premier will refer to the King for decision all questions of large general policy. In all matters he shall be subject to the direct control of the King.

ARTICLE VII.

The King shall appoint a Supreme Council of five members. The Premier shall be a member *ex officio*, but no other Cabinet officer shall be a member. The Supreme Council shall exercise no executive power whatsoever. Its function shall consist solely in giving to the King when called upon to do so advice on questions of general policy or on questions other than the detailed executive work of the Government. It shall have no power to advise as to appointments nor as to details of administration. It shall however have the power to interpolate the Premier or any Cabinet officer.

ARTICLE VIII.

The King shall appoint and may remove at any time the members of the Privy Council.

ARTICLE IX.

Within three days of ascending the throne the heir apparent shall be provisionally chosen by the King with the advice and consent of the Privy Council. The choice shall be limited to sons of a King and a Queen or to those of Royal Blood, but shall not be otherwise limited either by rank or seniority. The choice of heir apparent shall not be irrevocable, but shall be freshly made by the King with the advice and consent of the Privy Council at the end of **each five year period thereafter**. (Note: Or perhaps a period longer than five years may be desired). Should the King die before any choice has been made, the heir apparent shall be chosen immediately after the King's death by the Privy Council. In all cases three quarters of the members of the Privy Council then within the Kingdom shall be necessary to elect.

ARTICLE X.

The judicial power, subject to the supreme power of the King, shall be vested in the Supreme or Dika Court and in such inferior Courts as the King may from time to time create.

ARTICLE XI.

The supreme legislative power shall rest in the King.

ARTICLE XII.

Changes in this fundamental law may be made only by the King with the advice and consent of three quarters of the members of the Privy Council.

MEMORANDUM

1. I have carefully read His Majesty's memorandum, as well as that of Phya Kalyan. I have nothing except endorsement to express regarding H. M's memorandum but to P. K's memorandum, while admiring the exposition of his views and agreeing to in some parts, I regret to find myself differ from him in others. But time allowed to formulate my answer is short, and the handicap in my case by having to express my views in English instead of Siamese, compels me to write only briefly. However the proposals made by P.K. in his memorandum are of two kinds, namely, proposal on matters to be promulgated immediately and proposal on matters to be given further considerations. I will only comment on the former.

2. The most important proposal, as it seems to me, is to change the system of administration of the Kingdom by the appointment of a Prime Minister with the power of selection and dismissal of ministers of state, and with the sole power to formulate policy and direct the administrations of the Kingdom, subject of course to the consent of the King and the shadow of a control by the Supreme Council of State. I am bound to admit my limitations both in the studies and the knowledge of the administrations of European countries. My impression is that a Prime Minister is indispensable in parliamentary government, but in a country where absolute monarchy prevails such as, for example, Russia, Turkey, and Persia, the system did not seem to do much good without a strong monarch, nor indeed able to save a weak monarch from his ruin. But I repeat again that I do not consider myself competent to judge matters of European nature, so I will confine my comment entirely to what I think would effect Siam and the Siamese.

3. First of all I will consider the general impressions that it would likely make in the country, because a Prime Minister such as proposed by P.K., or indeed, a Prime Minister in the European sense, is an unknown functionary in Siam, and to create one is an innovation that would naturally give rise to all sorts of conjectures. Plausible explanation may of course be written in the preamble of the decree, but would it be possible to convince the people? The fact that the King has appointed another person, whom they do not respect as much as the King himself, to govern the country in his stead, will most naturally make them ask, Why? Is it because the King does not care to do the work as a King should do, or that the Supreme Council, seeing that the King is too weak to rule, persuaded him to appoint a Prime Minister? In either case the authority and the prestige of the King would suffer in the eyes of the people. The innovation may be applauded by some Westernized Siamese, but how many are they comparing with the whole people of Siam? In short, I am of opinion that the innovation would create a general unfavourable impression in the country. One must not forget that general impression means much in this country, as it has already proved by the result of H.M's first act in creating the Supreme Council of State.

4. I will now consider the likely effect that the innovation would take upon the ruling class, taking the effect already seen by the creation of the S.C.S. as a standard of judgement. It would in all probability create 3 kinds of sentiment, i.e.,

(A) Those who applaud and willing to support the innovation, either by conviction, or by allowing loyalty to the King to override their conviction, and those who applaud because they expect personal benefit from it.

(B) Those who are indifferent and sceptical, either because they have no interest of their own to concern, or being opportunists simply awaiting to profit themselves out of whatever result it may bring.

(C) Those who oppose it either by their own conviction, or by personal jealousy, or having profit or interest to lose by the innovation.

In fact no matter what system of government is adopted it can never give universal satisfaction, and there bound to be divisions of sentiment something similar to what I have said. The only thing to be hoped for is that the proportion of favourable sentiment be the majority, which I do not think would be the case in the appointment of a Prime Minister as proposed.

5. H.M. rightly stated in his memorandum that he has received deplorable inheritance when he ascended the Throne, because the authority of the sovereign had fallen much in respect and confidence, the treasury was on the verge of bankruptcy, and the government was corrupted and the services more or less in confusion. It was the master's stroke of H.M. in the creation of the S.C.S. immediately after his accession that instantly restored the general confidence in the Throne. Now let us look at the composition and the working of the S.C.S. The Council is a committee of five persons of repute and experience preside always by the King in person, and every resolution passed in the Council is executed by the King alone, no member of the Council is ever mentioned in any act, nor has any of them interfered with the work of ministerial departments, and yet accusations are not wanting, that the Council has usurped H.M.'s authority and power, and also trying to interfere with the ministerial responsibility. I am glad indeed that H.M. himself refuted these accusations in his memorandum. But the fact that mischievous accusations are capable of being made against a Council of five persons (perhaps I may be allowed to call of high repute) is enough to make one realise what difficulties a Prime Minister alone would have to face against all sorts of intrigue, while on the other hand he is being held responsible for the good administration of the country. Here one discerns the necessity which may arise that a Prime Minister would be obliged to resort to stratagems, good or bad in order to keep his position or otherwise throw up his appointment altogether.

6. Now I come to the person and the responsibility of the Prime Minister. No doubt H.M. will select the best qualified person in the Kingdom as his first Prime Minister, and let us presume that the selection meets with universal approval. The first impression created by the appointment of the Prime Minister would be that he is expected to improve

the administration in such a way that will give entire satisfaction to the public. Should he fail to realise general expectations however unreasonable, he would always stand to have censures heap upon his head which would make it extremely difficult for a Prime Minister to maintain the public confidence for any length of time. Moreover the Prime Minister, however wise and able he may be, has to carry on his work with the approval of the King as well as loyal support and competent assistance of the ministers of state. How is he to be assured of it? It is indeed proposed that the Prime Minister should have the power of removal and selection of ministers. But such powers have always been considered to belong to the King alone, and considered to be the mainstay against personal intrigue of others. It will be a great difference between the King exercising those powers in the S.C.S., and permitting the Prime Minister to exercise them with his approval. If the King's own backstair is considered obnoxious, what would it be to have another one of the Prime Minister? Let us suppose that nothing I have said would happen. Now if the Premier considers one or more ministers of state incompetent. who would he select to replace them? Naturally he would select those whom he has confidence in ability as well as loyalty towards him. Here we may discern the element of party government introduced into Siam but without parliamentary control, such element could easily tends to be a government by faction.

7. The relation between the Sovereign and the Prime Minister is also most important and most delicate matter. It would be utopian to expect that the King and the Prime Minister would always see eye to eye, or indeed that every Prime Minister would have the same degree of favour and confidence of the King. If the King wants to dismiss a Prime Minister, he would have to find convincing reason for so doing, but in the absence of parliament who is to furnish the convincing reason that protects H.M's decision from being considered unjust and arbitrary? The dismissed Prime Minister naturally would not procliam his own faults, and he, being a great man, may have more or less admirers who agree with him, and here we see the element of official opposition being introduced into Siam, and again without parliamentary control. But the worse would happen when the King wants to dismiss a Prime Minister and he has the general support of the people, even in Bangkok alone.

8. There is another thing which in Siam is still different from European countries where the system of government by Prime Minister existed. In a country like England or France where government changes according to the will of parliament, or even Russia in the old days when ministers were often changed according to the will of the Monarch, in those countries they have organised departments of Civil Service in which the permanent officials run the work, the minister only directs the policy ; so a change of a minister does not effect the works of the department. Now in Siam, at present at any rate, and I am of opinion that for some time to come yet, the minister is the backbone of the ministry he presides. The organisation as well as the work of a department are still visibly effected by the competency of the minister. That is why even without constant changes of the

minister it is difficult to find a real competent man as head of a ministerial department. If a ministerial post becomes unpermanent before a through organisation is made in the ministries in the same way as in European countries, I am afraid local discipline will also break down, and because instead of looking to one chief all the time, speculation as to a coming chief would constantly arise. It may be argued that the Prime Minister is expected to cure all those imperfections, but from the nature of things existing in this country as aforesaid, can one man do it? It may be argued again that the answer could be known only if we give the idea a trial. But why run the risk of a trial for the sake of an idea when there is no necessity.

9. I do not wish it to be understood that I think parliamentary government and the system of government by having a Prime Minister are for ever unfit for Siam. I only maintain that both are unfit and undesirable in the condition and circumstances which now exist in Siam, and the result would be disastrous even if the system of government by a Prime Minister alone is adopted now. What Siam urgently wants at the present moment is to remedy the evils existed before H.M. came to the Throne, and to organise an efficient administration of the Kingdom before anything else. In this respect H.M. himself has done a great act, which can never be overpraised, by the creation of the S.C.S., and himself working with it loyally and arduously with the satisfactory results, that confidence in the government has been re-established, and the national budget balanced, and put a stop to official embezzlement and irregularities by removing undesirables from offices and putting in competent men to do the work of reorganisation of the administrations. One should not forget that all the good works accomplished by H.M. was done within the last ten months, and there are many more works to be done, and "Rome was not built in a day". Even if the innovation is introduced I doubt whether it can accomplish more rapidly, not to say, or better. I am an old man and may be considered naturally conservative, but with sincere conviction I beg leave to ask that what fault or drawback the present system has shown, so as to endanger the safety or retard the progress of Siam, if it is allowed to continue? Is there any apparent and convincing necessity which requires radical modification? if the benefit of the present system is found to exist no longer or has been compromised, I do not think any member of S.C.S. would hesitate to remedy it even with its own desolution, but if the S.C.S. is still considered useful, I beg to warn that the appointment of a Prime Minister as proposed, and no matter what the proposal may provide for, the S.C.S., is bound to be extinguish the S.C.S. in so far as its usefulness is concerned even within the life-time of the old men who now serve in it.

10. H.M. has done me a great and gratifying honour by mentioning my name in his memorandum among the first and firm supporters of his idea in the creation of the S.C.S. I did so because I was absolutely convinced that such council alone would be practicable for the successful administration of Siam under the present circumstances. If I remember rightly I have also expressed my opinion to H.M. even then. I do not think a system of government by Prime Minister would do in Siam. It was therefore a sort of

pride and satisfaction to me to see the results of H.M's creation of the S.C.S., because it made me feel that I was not wrong in giving him my support, and I wish H.M. to know that it was a real pleasure to me when sitting in the Council to see and feel that everyone of its members from the King downwards discard all personal ambitions and work together solely for the benefit of Siam.

11. As regards the impracticability of having a parliamentary government in Siam till the people are sufficiently educated to understand their responsibility in the election, I entirely agree with P.K. and think that he is absolutely right. I would only add that either when the institution of the S.C.S. is found wanting in usefulness, or when the time approaches that H.M is considering the creation of the parliamentary government, then the question of government by Prime Minister should be taken up for consideration.

12. As regards making municipal institution, the starting point for representative government I need not comment in this memorandum, because it was also a subject which I agreed with and supported H.M's idea before he came to the Throne just the same as I have supported his idea of the creation of the S.C.S.

1st. August 1926.