

Thai Monarchy Is Going Down With the British Empire

by Mike Billington

April 17—After a month of mass demonstrations in the streets of Bangkok by the Red Shirt-clad opposition to the government of Democratic Party leader Abhisit Vejjajiva, who had been placed in office by the monarchist/military elite, the government shot itself in the foot by violently assaulting the demonstrators, leaving 23 dead, including 5 soldiers, and over 500 injured. Yet the government failed utterly to remove the determined demonstrators from their positions. The failed use of force not only discredited the government, but has created a situation in which the fate of the monarchy itself is now on the line.

Lyndon LaRouche said, after the violence of April 10: “When a monarchy turns against the people, in such a fashion, the monarchy itself is a likely victim to go.” The few remaining Kings and Queens around the world do not easily forget the fate of France’s Louis XVI.

Thus it is that the Thai monarchy and its Privy Council took a drastic turn on April 12, two days after the bloody attempted crackdown. The Election Committee, appointed by the King and used in the past by the monarchists to dissolve the parties associated with deposed Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra (who is supported by the Red Shirts), was turned against their own Prime Minister, Abhisit. Acting on a five-year-old charge of illegal campaign contributions, the Election Committee ruled that the governing Democratic Party must be dissolved. While the case must go through the Constitutional Court and could take several months, one must ask, why is this royalist structure throwing out its own boy?

The answer is that the stakes are much greater than the survival of this government, even if Abhisit is British born, raised, and educated, and is trusted to implement Britain’s neo-colonial policies of globalization. With the world financial system in a state of advanced collapse, the imperial interests governing the international financial institutions are activating every destabi-

lization they can, from a frantic push for war against Iran, to an opium war run through NATO-occupied Afghanistan. Asia is the target, aimed at breaking up the recent emergence of Eurasian unity centered on cooperation among Russia, China, and India. In such a global crisis, the British do not want to lose their monarchy in Thailand.

The Economics of Monarchy

The state of “permanent crisis” in Thailand since 2005 was launched by the royalist/military elite in the Thai Privy Council, headed by former Prime Minister Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda. The elite were worried that the overwhelming popularity of Prime Minister Thaksin was a danger to their power. The monarchy promoted a “self-sufficiency” policy for the rural poor: a policy of bare survival without progress, the historic British imperial model of the “noble peasant,” thankful for a primitive life with just enough to eat, while control over the masses is maintained by elevating the King to an almost godly status. Prime Minister Thaksin, a former police officer and self-made billionaire in the telecom business, offered the poor in both the countryside and the cities an opportunity to progress, through educational grants, access to cheap and decent health facilities, and credits for farmers and rural villages. Although Thaksin and his followers swore their fidelity to the King, the monarchists could see that the allegiance of the masses to their neo-feudalist institution was threatened.

In addition, Thaksin stood up to the British demonization of Myanmar, establishing good relations through economic engagement, and also with Thailand’s other poorer neighbors, Cambodia and Laos. While working with the Myanmar junta to pacify ethnic drug lords and eliminate most of the opium production which had devastated Myanmar since the introduction of drugs by British colonial masters in the



An opposition “Red Shirt” protester, injured in the government’s April 10 assault on peaceful demonstrations in Bangkok. The military itself is split over the policy.

19th Century, Thaksin also waged a highly successful, if brutal, war on drugs within Thailand. Thaksin became a primary enemy of the British “Dope, Inc.” apparatus which runs the international banking institutions. For all these reasons, Thaksin was targeted for destruction by the British Empire and its minions within Thailand.

Anarchy on the Streets...

A movement of Baby-Boomer elites from Bangkok was created, wearing the royal color yellow, which held mass demonstrations against Thaksin in 2006, providing cover for a military coup in September 2006, and the establishment of a military junta run by the Privy Council. The junta imposed a wildly authoritarian constitution, such that when elections were finally held, with Thaksin’s followers winning by a landslide, the monarchists were able to remove the next two prime ministers over frivolous issues—in one case, for hosting a cooking program on TV while serving as prime minister!

By 2008, recognizing that they could not defeat Thaksin’s supporters in an election, the Yellow Shirts were deployed to carry out anarchistic street actions, occupying the Government House (the seat of government) for several months, and closing down the international airport for a week, bringing the nation to the brink of collapse. The Army was ordered to protect the anar-

chists, rather than remove them, and the anarchists were never brought to justice for their crimes. In fact, one of the leaders of the airport occupation, former diplomat Kasit Piromya, was appointed foreign minister in the subsequent puppet government.

...and Peaceful Mass Demonstrations

A parliamentary maneuver was used to place Abhisit and his Democratic Party in power, where they sit today, besieged by hundreds of thousands of Red Shirt supporters, organized as the United Front for Democracy, demanding only that new elections be held immediately.

The Red Shirts maintained extraordinarily peaceful demonstrations for such huge numbers for the past month, as the Abhisit regime refused to budge, claiming that next year was the earliest possible date for new elections. The government then declared a State of Emergency, forcefully shut down the opposition media, print and television, and ordered the arrest of the Red Shirt leaders.

The April 10 military assault on the peaceful demonstrators brought with it a breakdown of the military command structure. The military is badly split, with many flag-grade officers opposed to the illegal government and even more opposed to the use of force against the Red Shirts. Many retired officers have joined the pro-Thaksin Party, the Pheu Thai, now headed by another former prime minister and military leader, Gen. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh. Even the current Commander in Chief of the Royal Thai Army, Gen. Anupong Paochinda made known that he would not support the use of force, and his deputy was put in command of the assault.

Although rubber bullets and tear gas were used in the first, failed attempt to clear the demonstrators, Prime Minister Abhisit made public that soldiers with live ammunition could fire on demonstrators in self-defense. In the second assault, after dark on April 10, live ammunition was used and many demonstrators were killed. It is reliably reported that undetermined

military personnel, dressed in black, then fired upon the soldiers with rifles and grenades, killing and wounding scores of soldiers.

In the past, blood on the streets of Bangkok inevitably led to the resignation of the government and the appointment by the King of an interim government from the ranks of the elites. With the growing anti-monarchy sentiment, together with the King's age (83) and ill health, this is not likely to be repeated.

That both the British and Thai monarchies are terrified that the Red Shirt revolt will end in the collapse of the Thai monarchy itself, was confirmed in Washington on April 12, when Foreign Minister Kasit—the same Kasit who had been a leader of the Yellow Shirt occupation of the Bangkok airport—told his U.S. audience that the taboo against discussing the role of the monarchy must be dropped, and that the “rural poor” (i.e., Thaksin's base of support) must be given more power under a “reformed monarchy.”

Why is a leading monarchist offering to “reform” the monarchy? To save it from the mounting anger of the population. What Kasit had in mind was made clear when he said that the proper models for a successfully “reformed” monarchy were those of the British and the Dutch—the heart of the Empire!

The Army itself stands humiliated, both by the assault itself, and its failure to clear the demonstrators. On April 16, this humiliation was multiplied when Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban, who had been placed in charge of the State of Emergency, went on TV to announce that the “terrorists” (meaning the Red Shirt leaders) were in the process of being arrested; but within minutes, the news was out that the Red Shirts had all escaped. Prime Minister Abhisit immediately fired Minister Suthep as head of emergency operations and placed General Anupong directly in charge. Anupong, the day after the bloodshed, had said that the only route to a solution was new elections. The situation remains tense as of this writing.

The world is poised in a showdown between the decrepit and vile forces of the bankrupt international financial empire centered in London and New York, on the one hand, and the developing new geometry of a Pacific-centered alliance of the Eurasian powers and the United States under new leadership, on the other. Thailand can be a significant force in this new Pacific alliance, or be dragged to hell by the dinosaurs of the European monarchical powers.

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