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A History of the Reorganization and Extension of Thai Public Elementary Education 1946-1975

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A HISTORY OF THE REORGANIZATION AND EXTENSION OF THAI PUBLIC ELEMENTARY EDUCATION 1946-1975

by

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VITA

The author, Ladtongbai Bhuapirom, is the daughter of Poon and Jaruayporn (Sakornpun) Bhuapirom. She was born in Bangkok, Thailand.

Her elementary and secondary education was obtained in the public school system of Thailand.

In 1956, she received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. In 1957, she became a teacher of English at Suan Sunandha Teacher College.

In 1960, she received the Diploma in Education from Sydney University, Australia.

In 1961, she was appointed an instructor at Sri Nakharinwirot University in Bangkok; in 1975, she was appointed assistant professor. She also served on the staff of the Bangkok Institute for Child Study.

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INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing realization that education is the largest "business" in the world.[1] The importance of primary education, in particular, can be seen in its rate as a building-block of citizenship; a promoter of social progress; and an enemy of illiteracy. While the turn of the century saw the establishment of universal elementary education in Thailand this movement has been beset by many problems. Even though the government has always made great efforts to provide free, universal compulsory education, limited financial resources have placed a great burden on the central government ever since public education was introduced. Decentralization of the administration of public elementary education has become an important measure. Initiated after the proclamation of the Primary Compulsory Act of 1921, it was hoped that public elementary education could be supported by a variety of sources, such as local taxes, private donations and an education poll tax. Cooperation and support from local people, however, was limited due, in part, to their poverty. In the words of Nathalang,

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[1] M. A. Brimer and L. Pauli, Wastage in Education: A World Problem (Paris: UNESCO, 1971), p. 1.

"politico-socio-economic" circumstances have greatly affected the evolution of the Thai educational administrative system.[2] Educational administration at the primary level was periodically transferred from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Education and back again. In adopting a policy of decentralization, the transfer of responsibility for public primary schools from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of the Interior took place again in 1966. The Ministry of Education still shared responsibility for public primary schools which were technical in nature. Consequently, many problems have never been eliminated from the primary school system and additional problems have been created.

In the primary school system, the period of compulsory primary education was occasionally changed; usually a five or six year period was advocated, but the government's educational policy was subject to fluctuation. After 1936, compulsory education consisted of a four-year course. After World War II, the majority of ideas for the extension of compulsory education came from international experts. It was not until the 1960's, however, that the recommendations of the "Karachi Plan" were adopted and a program was set up to launch seven-year compulsory schooling; it was hoped that

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[2]Ekavidya Nathalang, "Summary: Lessons Learned from a Century of Experience," Education in Thailand: A Century of Experience (Thailand: Ministry of Education, 1970), p. 131.

the educational standard of the Thais would be raised in compliance with the social and economic development of the nation. The government wished to accelerate the plan in order that compulsory education be achieved in a ten-year period instead of twenty years as recommended by UNESCO. It was not feasible, however, to achieve this goal within a shorter period of time due to insufficient funding. Frequently when a policy of change or reorganization in the Thai education system is proclaimed, immediate implementation is always expected throughout the system without a recognition of the fact that only limited resources are available. In addition, a new problem--rapid population growth--emerged after the war resulting in a large increase in primary school enrollments. As a result, the government has been unable to provide free, compulsory education for its population and private organizations have had to help the government provide education; inequality of educational quality and educational opportunity have been the result.

This study will investigate a number of major changes in the Thai public elementary education system that occurred after World War II and prior to 1975. It will focus on two major issues: (1) the shared responsibility for public elementary education between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education in 1966 (the former is charged with school administration and finance, and personnel while the latter is responsible for providing assistance

to local authorities and municipal schools in relation to the methods of teaching, curriculum development, instructional service and so forth); and (2) the extension of compulsory education from four to seven years, recommended by the Karachi Plan of 1960 (the period of compulsory education varied from time to time, yet, prior to the extension of compulsory education from four to seven grades, the required period of compulsory education was four years of schooling).

Because of differences in historical background, economic and social conditions, and points of view, no country could totally adopt the school system of any other. In a study of the transfer of educational control from a central authority to local administration and the effects of the extension of compulsory education on social mobility (both horizontally and vertically), for example, the effects of Thailand's ancient traditions and relatively late (mid-nineteenth-century) contact with Western society are evident. Thailand represents a well-defined field for the study of institutional change since it is essentially homogeneous in religion, language and culture. An historical study of recent educational change in Thailand will be invaluable to other developing nations which can use it as a model for basic educational development and modify it according to their own specific needs. In addition, an historical study will furnish information for educational historians and comparative educators in that it will provide a comprehensive

examination of some major changes in Thai public primary education after the mid-twentieth century. Specifically, to Thai educators, teachers and executive administrators, such an historical analysis will provide a clear picture of certain pressing problems which impede the development of elementary education in Thailand.

Definition of Terms

In order to facilitate an understanding of this study, it is necessary to define the following terms:

Compulsory education refers to education as required by law. Every child between the ages of 7 and 14 years regardless of sex or religion must attend primary schools, with the exception of those children who have finished Grade IV or those who have reached 14 years of age. Although the extension of compulsory education began to be enforced in 1963, not all villages throughout the country are following the plan.

The Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO) is an administrative body of the local government with the Governor as its executive leader and the Changwad (Province) Council as the legislative body. It deals with various matters of importance to the locality including education, health, communications, the promotion of vocations at the local level, agriculture and irrigation.

Public primary schools refer to those primary schools supported by the government including the schools administered by the Changwad Administrative Organization of the Ministry

of the Interior, demonstration schools organized by the Department of Elementary and Adult Education of the Ministry of Education, and the municipal schools administered by the municipalities.

Paw Paw refers to a "Certificate in Education" or "Elementary Teacher Certificate." Every individual is required to take an entrance examination before being accepted for teacher training. Prior to 1954, students had to pass the tenth Grade and were trained for three years in teacher training institutions. After 1954 the requirement was changed: students now must obtain a twelfth-grade certificate and take a one-year training program before receiving the "Elementary Teacher Certificate."

Paw Kaw Saw is also an "Elementary Teacher Certificate"; it requires students who hold the tenth-grade certificate to pass an entrance examination before taking a two-year teacher training course.

Review of Related Studies

Many studies have examined specific features of Thai public elementary education including, the development of Thai elementary education, methods of teaching, administration and supervision, the transfer of responsibility for public primary education, and the administration of compulsory education after the extension of the required period of schooling from four to seven grades. No previous studies, however, examined the effects of shared responsibility for

public primary education which followed the transfer, nor the processes and shared responsibility which accompanied the expansion of compulsory education.

Uma Huvananda studied the underlying effects of the transfer of public primary schools to the Changwad Administrative Organization in 1966 with regard to the decentralization of educational administration, the reduction of the national budget, and public participation in the operation of primary education.[3] In particular, Miss Huvananda made an intensive survey of provinces, districts, communes and public primary schools under the jurisdiction of the Changwad Administrative Organization. According to her findings, it appears that decision making at the local level was still limited, that insufficient funds for the operation of public primary education were the rule rather than the exception; that local residents had no conception of the policy of the transfer; and that the main hindrances to public participation in school affairs were due to a low level of education and poverty on the part of the local population. Miss Huvananda made the following recommendations: the central government should be advised to authorize the Changwad Administrative Organization to assume full control of the administration of primary education; the central government

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[3]Uma Huvananda, "A Study of Certain Aspects of Public Primary Education Administration in Thailand: A Case of Public Primary Schools under the Responsibility of the Chang-Wad Administrative Oraganization since the Transfer in 1966 (B.E. 2509)" (Ed.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1974).

should be advised to revise the tax system in order that more funds be allocated at the local level; the central government should make a nationwide effort to encourage local participation in the operation of the educational system.

Skool Intusophon examined the administration of compulsory education since the 1961 Act which extended the period of compulsory schooling from four to seven grades (Prathom 4 to 7).[4] In addition to presenting a description of the development of administration in compulsory education as well as the educational administration under the control of the Changwad Administrative Organization, a number of crucial problems including deteriorating educational quality at the primary level, insufficient funding, a shortage of adequately trained teachers, a lack of materials and a large number of repeaters and dropouts were identified. He concluded that for educational administration to be effective in a compulsory education system, cooperation between the two Ministries (the Ministries of Education and the Interior) must be increased; that to secure public donations public participation should be widely stressed and, that to better the quality of primary education there must be

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[4]Skool Intusophon, "Compulsory Education Administration" (Master's thesis, National Institute of Development Administration, Bangkok, 1968).

improvement of teacher qualifications and recruitment as well as teaching facilities.

Henry Holmes'[5] dissertation was concerned with the value of primary schooling and the school's function in providing seven years of basic education; it was based on a survey of northeastern Thai villagers. With regard to rural schooling Holmes found that rural people place little value in upper primary education as either job training or preparation for a farming career.

This study will present an historical analysis of the Thai primary education system between 1946 and 1975; it relies primarily on government documents printed in Thai. The information utilized in this research can be categorized as follows:

a) Thai government documents and publications, and research bulletins, including statistics, compiled by government agencies;

b) Books and reports written in English by foreigners who spent some time in Thailand--these studies emphasize the social, political and economic conditions that have influenced educational development in Thailand;

c) United Nations reports and bulletins of demographic data;

d) United Nations Educational Scientific and

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[5]Henry Cobb Holmes, "School beyond the Village: A Study of Education and Society in Northeastern Thailand," Dissertation Abstracts International 35A (1974), 2532-33 A.

Cultural Organization (UNESCO) conference reports on primary education and information related to compulsory primary education in Thailand;

e) Newspapers and articles in journals published both in English and Thai;

f) Unpublished documents such as thesis and mimeographed reports; and

g) Personal experiences of the author in the educational field in Thailand.

The following chapter will present background information on political, socio-economic and educational conditions in Thailand at the end of World War II.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS IN THAILAND AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II

To understand the character of Thai public primary education as it exists at the present time, it is important to consider the factors which shaped its development. Chapter II will present some general information on the background of Thailand as it existed prior to World War II and will examine the effects which the Japanese occupation had on the country. It will briefly describe Thailand's economy and social structure during the pre-war period. Throughout, empahsis will be placed on the effects which each of these factors had on the educational system. The chapter will conclude with an exploration of some of the post-war reconstruction programs which were formulated in an attempt to revitalize Thailand's economic, social and educational services.

Geographical, Cultural and Political Setting

Thailand, known as "Siam" until 1939 and again between 1946 and 1949, is the only country in Southeast Asia which has never been ruled by a Western power. It is a

tropical country located in the center of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula and stretches southward into the narrow Malay Peninsula. The country is bounded by Burma and Laos on the north; Laos and Cambodia on the east; Burma and the Bay of Bengal on the west and the peninsula areas share its southern boundary with Malaysia. The country is composed of 72 provinces, with Bangkok as its capital city.

Geographically, Thailand is divided into five regions: North, Northeast, Central, South, and Southeast. The climate, topography, and ecology vary within these regions. Minor cultural differences have resulted from these environmental variations. Thailand is predominantly agricultural; the most important crop, rice, is grown mainly by small land holders. Modernization has been hampered by the predominant pattern of small scale farming.

The country covers an area of about 200,000 square miles (approximately the size of France). The 1970 census recorded a population of about 34 million, 75 percent of which is pure Thai. At present, several non-Thai minority groups dwell in various sections of the country. In addition, there are cultural variations between the rural and urban population and between the inhabitants of the Central region and those of the northern and northeastern regions. These differences are accentuated by the use of non-standard (although mutually understandable) Thai dialects. The Chinese, who comprise one of the largest minority groups,

have migrated to Thailand in recent times and are engaged basically in commerce. Despite their minority group status, second and third generation Chinese have tended towards intermarriage and assimilation with Thai society.

Another minority group, the Thai-Malays constitute approximately 80 percent of the population of Thailand's four southern provinces. The majority of these individuals speak Malay; very few, with the exception of local government officials can speak Thai. Their culture, like their language, is typically Malay. Consequently, language barriers, and cultural as well as religious differences, have kept the region separated from the country.

Although religious freedom is permitted, Buddhism is the national religion. Approximately 94 percent of the total population are Buddhists; the remaining 4 percent are Muslims, Christians and Hindus. The Wat (Buddhist temple) is one of the most important Thai institutions; the way of life of the Thai people, their customs, traditions and culture come from and are linked to the Wat. It is not only a place of worship, but also a meeting place for villagers and a center of activity for ordination, cremation ceremonies, yearly festivals, and various amusements of villagers.

From the thirteenth century until 1932, Thailand (Siam) was ruled by a paternalistic monarch who held absolute power in all areas of life; he had total control over the government, directed all military policy, and was given

primary consideration in all religious matters. In 1932, a bloodless coup, led by a group of European-educated officials and army officers, abolished the absolute monarchy and established a limited monarchy. The first constitution of December 10, 1932 was signed by King Prajadhipok, who later abdicated and was succeeded by his ten-year old nephew, Prince Ananda, who was proclaimed King. Due to his age, a regency council consisting of three members assumed King Ananda's duties, until he became of age. Until 1938, political stability was preserved by the moderate leadership of Colonel Phya Bhahol. He was succeeded by Colonel Pibul Songkram who served as prime minister from 1938 to 1944 and periodically between 1948 and 1957. When his regime was overthrown by General Sarit, Pibul fled to Japan where he later died. During Pibul's prime ministership, the government moved towards a military dictatorship. The economy was brought under closer government control, and foreigners (especially the Chinese) were expected to relinquish their dominant economic position to Thai nationals. At the same time, the government began to exercise stronger control in the area of education.

Sarit assumed the post of prime minister in 1958. During the six-year period of his regime, political freedom was negligible. Martial law was used to discourage dissenters. Economic and social progress, however, were more evident than at any prior time. Upon Sarit's death in 1963,

his deputy, General Thanom became his successor. The change in leadership, however, brought forth few real changes. Thanom continued to follow Sarit's policies of maintaining political stability and promoting economic development.

The government has enforced an anti-Communist policy since the end of Worl War II. Succeeding governments have attempted to aid those areas most susceptible to Communist intervention: the Northeast, Central-Western and Mid-South regions. The government's approach to this problem has been two-fold: military security combined with rural development. Since 1951, the United States' assistance to Thailand in the form of military and economic aid has attempted to bolster Thailand's security and improve its economic base.

It is worth noting that whenever a military regime seized power the Constitution was usually abrogated. Martial law which had been imposed under the Sarit regime of 1958 continued in effect (although it was not always enforced to the same degree) until 1971. The government rationalized its use as a weapon in the on-going battle against Communist insurgency. In October 1973 the Thanom regime was overthrown by the student movement; demonstrators demanded a new constitution (the old one was disregarded when the military seized power in a bloodless coup in 1971) and free elections. From 1973 until 1975 Thailand was ruled by a civilian government under two prime ministers.

The 1973 student movement, which played such a large

role in the establishment of a civilian government, has had a great influence on educational reform. This impact is noted in the report of the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform made in 1974:

> The impetus which arose out of the revolution of October 14, 1973, has truly shaken the Thais out of our self-complacency and, for the first time prompted them to scrutinize the evolution of our society. This is most unprecedented in our history. As for education of the nation, there have been severe critical comments from those educationally involved and concerned and interested individuals that the present Thai educational system is altogether not relevant to and indeed, completely out of touch with reality of the present time.[1]

The student movement of October 1973 had a significant impact on contemporary social and educational developments in Thailand. In order to assess these later developments, it is necessary first to examine the period of World War II and the years of Japanese occupation of Thailand. In the following section, the impact of the Japanese occupation on Thai political, social, economic, and educational developments will be treated.

The Japanese Invasion

The sudden invasion of Japanese troops on December 8, 1941, left the Thai government, headed by Field Marshal Pibul Songkram, a virtual puppet of Japanese rule. Faced

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[1]The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Education for Life and Society, Report to the Minister of Education for Submission to the Cabinet, Bangkok, Thailand, December 4, 1974 (Bangkok: Office of the National Education Commission, 1976), Introduction b.

with the inevitable possibility of a total takeover by the Japanese, the Thai government was forced to ally itself with Japan and consequently, to declare war on the United States and Great Britain. This action, however, was not without opposition. Pridi, regent for the young king, secretly formed a "Free Thai" movement resisting the declaration of war. A similar organization was also initiated in the United States by the Thai ambassador, Seni Pramoj and Thai students in American universities. After the defeat of Japan the Thai government proclaimed that the 1942 declaration of war against Great Britain and the United States was unconstitutional. Although the British rejected this explanation, the United States accepted it, and did not regard Thailand as a transgressor. This position prompted the United States to intervene in the peace negotiations between Thailand and Great Britain. As a result, Thailand did not have to make restitution to Great Britain for damages inflicted during the war.

The Thais, however, felt the impact of the war in other ways: railway lines, roads, bridges, and harbors were damaged by bombing; schools, universities, and institutions were closed. Between 1942 and the end of 1946 a number of schools had been occupied, first by the Japanese and then by the Allies. After the war, the economic condition of Thailand deteriorated. The most feasible solution to Thailand's many problems came in the form of international

aid directed at social, economic and educational reconstruction.

The following section will examine the Thai system of education in relationship to postwar social and economic development.

Educational Condition

As mentioned previously, education was severely affected by the events of the Second World War. Insufficient school attendance, for example, forced the Ministry of Education to cancel all final examinations at all levels.[2] The enemy bombardment combined with a large flood caused most of the schools throughout the kingdom to be closed for one and a half months in 1942. The decrease in elementary school enrollment produced an inevitable increase in illiteracy.[3]

M. L. Manich Jumsai clearly illustrated the consequences suffered by the educational system during the war years, ". . . when the country was occupied by successive foreign troops the students could not concentrate on learning; educational materials became scarce. . . ."[4]

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[2]Ministry of Education, Prawat Krasuang Suksa Thikarn, 2435-2507 (The History of the Ministry of Education, 1892-1964) (Bangkok: Kurusapha Press, 1964), p. 353.

[3]Tasniya Isarasena, "The Development of Elementary Education in Thailand" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1953), p. 108.

[4]Manich Jumsai, M. L., Compulsory Education in Thailand (Paris: Unesco, 1951), p. 60.

The Primary School

The effects of the war were felt in every sector of the educational system. The Cabinet had changed several times, and general education policy was reformulated with each change. The policy for primary education, however, remained unchanged; the government had an ardent desire to equip as many schools as possible so that the school-aged population could receive a compulsory primary education. Change took place, not in this general policy, but rather, in specifics; the curriculum had to be revised, and teacher qualifications had to be raised.

The compulsory law had been in operation since 1921. According to the 1947 census, Thailand had a population of 17,442,689 and a literacy rate of 54 percent; this rate rose to 71 percent in 1960 and 82 percent in 1970. The rising rate of literacy seems to demonstrate primary education's success as an agent in the diffusion of literacy in an agricultural country, possessing limited resources.

Although primary education would continue to expand, however, the war left the educational system with some major problems. For example, before the war 11 percent of the national budget was allocated to the Ministry of Education; but this allotment dropped to 4 percent during the war.[5]

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[5]Isarasena, "The Development of Elementary Education in Thailand," p. 108.

With the war over, the cost of living had multiplied fourteen times by 1948; the school budget, however, was only one seventh the size it had been before the war.[6] Two-fifths of the amount of the 1948 school budget was spent on preparatory and elementary schools. Moreover, increased enrollment in 1948 presented the schools with an economic problem which made the maintenance of standards, much less progress, impossible.

The Curriculum and Methods of Teaching

If one studies the history of educational development in Thailand he will find that Thai education was traditionally based on the monastery education delivered by the monks. The curriculum of Buddhist education was limited; instruction which was basically religious in orientation, emphasized recitation and memorization.[7] This method, passed from generation to generation, was accepted until the late nineteenth century. It was not until 1871, when the reigning monarch, King Chulalongkorn, introduced a system of modern education, that the curriculum was expanded and the administration became secular.

Between 1911 and 1936, the five-year course of

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[6]John Sargent and Pedro T. Orata, Report of the Mission to Thailand (Paris: Unesco, 1950), p. 19.

[7]Isarasena, "The Development of Elementary Education in Thailand," p. 135.

primary education consisted of three years of general education and two years of vocational education. After 1936, compulsory education consisted of four years of general education. After the war, the 1937 curriculum (modified in 1950) was prescribed. The subjects taught were as follows: civics and morality, Thai, arithmetic, geography and history, nature study, hygiene, physical education, drawing, handicrafts, singing, scouting (for boys) or junior Red Cross work (for girls). Ordinarily, primary school children were required to attend classes five hours daily for five and a half days a week. Textbooks and syllabi were determined and prescribed by the Ministry of Education of the central government.

The emphasis in primary schools was on formal knowledge; the curriculum was rigid. School activities were confined exclusively to textbooks and the course of study. The methods of teaching could not be questioned since most learning was done by rote memory in which pupils learned multiplication tables, spelling, reading and so forth, and then gave the answers to the teacher when called on. In learning a crude arithmetic, for example, children were instructed to count with their fingers. They were trained in rote repetition and regurgitation of "facts" rather than in thinking critically and independently for oneself. This method made the teacher active while the children becane passive.

The methods of instruction used in local primary schools, at that time were clearly illustrated by M. L. Jumsai's book, Compulsory Education in Thailand, in which he states:

> The method of teaching children to read and write in local schools is dry. It is the old traditional method of teaching the alphabet which arouses no interest and taxes the mental faculty too greatly.[8]

The elementary students usually had to supply their own text, exercise books, slates, pencils and other equipment. In the rural areas, most students could not afford their own books. Therefore, the teacher had to write the lesson on the blackboard and the children copied it on their slates or exercise books. During the war, paper became unavailable; textbooks were unobtainable. A primer's price increased over a hundred times its original value because of the paper shortage; few, if any, students could afford to purchase a primer. The primer itself needed revision due to the very dry and the old alphabetic method of instruction.[9]

In promoting the children to the next grade, written examinations, based on the curriculum, were used as the chief criterion. It was contended, however, that such an evaluation judged only the child's ability to absorb, but not his ability to apply what he had learned to life.[10]

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[8]Jumsai, Compulsory Education in Thailand, p. 66.

[9]Ibid., p. 72.

[10]Sargent and Orata, Report of the Mission to Thailand pp. 25-26.

It was recommended that a valid evaluation, therefore, should include a test of the child's ability in a practical area: problem solving and the ability to utilize one's potential for individual gains as well as the good of the community.[11]

School Buildings and School Equipment

Most public primary schools were located within the Buddhist temple compound despite the fact that monks played little, if any role in the secularized system of primary education. The types of primary school buildings varied, ranging from temporary open-sided buildings to standardized ones designed by the Ministry of Education. Due to the shortage of funding, some temple buildings were still used as schools. However, there was a slight increase in the percentage of permanent local school buildings due to the central government's and local authorities' efforts to construct these buildings. A 1940 report showed that over 30 percent of school buildings were temporary structures, while almost 70 percent were temple buildings. By 1945, 24 percent of the buildings were permanent; this percentage increased slightly to 28 percent by 1950.

The Ministry of Education planned to construct more permanent buildings, lessening the number of temporary school

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[11] Ibid.

buildings as well as the temple buildings used for educational purposes. Such temporary structures made instruction inconvenient and good hygiene difficult.[12] Between 1947 and 1950 the Ministry of Education provided a great amount of funding for repairs and construction of permanent school buildings.

In addition to constructing buildings, the central government usually supplied schools with a limited amount of equipment such as blackboards, chalk, school records, desks for teachers and desks and benches for children. Textbooks and syllabi were also provided for teachers, but only a small supply of teaching aids such as maps, globes, pictures and models was available. This was and continues to be especially true in most local and village schools.

Primary School Teachers

The shortage of teachers and the question of teacher qualifications seems to have been pressing problems since public education was first provided. It was extremely difficult to meet the need for well-trained teachers. Pressured by the influx of children into the schools, educational administrators were faced to accept makeshift arrangements and employ unqualified teachers. Thus, a great number of teachers had neither teaching experience nor academic

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[12]Ministry of Education, Prawat Krasuang Suksa Thikarn, 2435-2507, p. 712.

qualifications; they had been educated only up to the elementary or secondary level.[13]

Table 1 shows the increased number of children in public primary schools from 1945 to 1950.

Regarding the teachers' qualifications, the available statistics show that in 1940, 80 percent of local primary school teachers (termed "unqualified" by M. L. Jumsai) had no certificates compared with 81 percent recorded in 1950.[14] Ten years time saw little improvement in teacher qualifications, and yet, there were even more pressing problems to be considered. The student enrollment, for example, increased so rapidly that it was difficult to keep the supply of adequately trained teachers parallel with an increasing number of students.[15] Thailand's rural character also posed a problem; the majority of Thais live in rural areas and depend chiefly on agriculture for a living. In many areas villages were scattered and not accessible by the normal means of transport; they were without the urban amenities. Thus, it was difficult to recruit teachers for schools in remote rural areas. Moreover, teachers were reluctant to accept assignments in areas which abounded in different kinds of diseases such as malaria and illnesses

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[13]Jumsai, Compulsory Education in Thailand, p. 61.

[14]Ibid., p. 63.

[15]Ibid., p. 61.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS--1945-1950

Year	Local	Municipal	Total
1945	--	--	2,532,361
1948	2,372,755	107,564	2,480,215
1949	--	--	2,578,887
1950	--	--	2,627,864

SOURCE: Manich Jumsai, M.L., Compulsory Education in Thailand (Paris: UNESCO, 1951).

contracted by the consumption of contaminated water and food.[16] Finally, following the war, like other countries, Thailand had been confronted with inflation. The cost of living increased about fourteen times while the salaries of elementary teachers multiplied eight times. As a result, the teachers found it difficult to maintain a minimum standard of living; a large number of teachers, therefore, had to leave their teaching careers to take up higher-salaried occupations. Even though there was a revision of the salary scale, the teachers, especially those in urban provinces where the cost of living was higher, were still faced with a decreased standard of living.

Teacher qualifications are a prime factor affecting the quality of education in any country. Although other factors work to retard educational progress in Thailand, the large number of inadequately trained teachers have contributed to the failure of students. In the lower grades, there is a significantly high proportion of failure and also a large number of students who must repeat their work in the lowest grades. The statistics in Table 2, supporting the above statement, show the small number and percentage of primary grade children who successfully completed their primary education from 1942 to 1950.

An effort was made to reduce the proportion of un-

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[16] Ibid.

TABLE 2

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN COMPLETING PRIMARY EDUCATION 1942-1950

Year	Total Number of Children in Primary Grades	Number of Children Completing Primary Education	Percentage
1942	2,500,241	197,747	7.9
1943	2,608,520	248,942	9.6
1944	2,663,722	271,503	10.2
1948	2,564,900	183,076	7.1
1949	2,443,471	168,678	6.9
1950	2,540,658	201,630	8.0

SOURCE: Jumsai, Compulsory Education in Thailand.

qualified teachers by providing in-service training conducted by the Teachers' Council so that teachers with low qualifications were able to upgrade themselves. Such training was to prepare untrained teachers to take the examinations for crediting their teaching certificates. In-service courses comprising annual summer courses and lecture tours were offered to those who wanted to work toward the following certificates: national primary teachers' certificates, junior secondary teachers' and senior teachers' certificates. The in-service program, usually conducted between 4 and 6 P.M. in Bangkok and other urban provinces, was funded by the government. Unfortunately, the teachers in local schools found the urban locations inaccessible, and as a consequence, were deprived of the benefits offered by the program. Consequently, they were encouraged to engage in self study after which they sat for the examinations conducted by the Department of Educational Techniques of the Ministry of Education. The examinations were quite difficult; in 1948, for example, the result of the examinations showed that only 6 percent of the teachers passed their examinations for national primary teachers' certificates, 28 percent for junior secondary teachers' certificates, and 9 percent for senior secondary teachers' certificates.

Due to the shortage of teachers, in 1949, the Ministry of Education set up an emergency course of one year's duration, offered to those who had completed a two-year

course in preparatory schools (equivalent to Grade 12).[17] During this period, the students were given grants. Upon their completion of the emergency course the students were appointed teachers with salaries equivalent to that of post primary teachers.

As mentioned previously, the instructional method in primary schools was dry and unsystematic and very much in need of revision. In 1946, the Ministry of Education introduced a new method of instruction to improve teaching. This method was instituted in the four centers of Bangkok, Ayudhya, Nakorn Rajsima, and Chiengmai. The experimental method which utilized "play" as a form of learning was employed in 164 schools with 494 training teachers. The new method appeared to be effective but it needed to be permanently implemented in the primary schools. This new project was extremely costly since it required the preparation of new materials. The high level of expenditure led to the abandonment of the project. The national financial problems of the postwar period were important factors leading to the ending of the project. The following section will be a presentation of the Thai economic conditions after World War II.

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[17]Ministry of Education, Report of Educational Developments in 1949-1968. The XXXIst International Conference on Public Education at Geneva, July, 1968. (Bangkok: Karn Sasana Press, 1968), p. 3.

The Thai Economy

The most important sector of the economy in Thailand is agriculture. The major agricultural activities comprise farming, forestry, animal husbandry, and fishing. Among these activities, rice farming is the most important. Rice is the principal crop for both internal consumption and export. Over 80 percent of the total population is engaged in rice cultivation, and half of the national income is derived from farming. The central plain has over two-fifths of the land in rice cultivation.

Prior to World War II, rubber, which is widely grown in Southern Thailand became a valuable export, second only to rice. The northern area which is primarily hilly and mountainous contains teak; while teak production rose after World War II, overcutting has resulted in a decrease in potential production.

Fishing and animal husbandry are important facets of the rural as well as the urban economics. Their contribution to the total output, however, is quite low since their products principally supply the local market.

Tin mines are located in the southern peninsula and are generally under the operation of foreign companies. Thailand is known as the world's third largest producer of tin. Other minerals mined include gypsum, marble, tungsten, fluorite, and limestone. Most industries, however, are still operated on a small scale.

The national income contributed by manufacturing is only 15 percent, with the major part of it coming from agricultural processing, forestry and mineral products. In 1959, a Thai National Economic Development Board was established to promote industrial development.

The city of Bangkok and its metropolitan area is the economic center of the country where industries, banks, import and export exchanges and facilities, and transportation facilities are located. In northern Thailand numerous cottage industries produce textiles, teak carving, and lacquer ware. Table 3 shows the national income comparing the earnings from different sources.

The figures in Table 3 reveal that agriculture during the period from 1938-1952 was the most important sector of the Thai economy. Trade ranked second, contributing 14 to 17 percent to the gross national product. Manufacturing was the third with 10 to 16 percent out of the gross product.

Due to a lack of the basic fuel and metal resources such as coal and oil, Thailand is virtually incapable of developing heavy industry. Despite the fact that agriculture is the mainstay of Thai economy, traditional techniques are still used in rice production. An individual Thai farmer usually works at small-scale family farming and relies on family and communal labor without using advanced agricultural techniques. As a result, the rice crop yield is sometimes

TABLE 3

NATIONAL INCOME, 1938-1952

Year	Total (Million Baht)	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	Manufacturing, Construction	Trade	Transport and Communications	Government	All Others
		%	%	%	%	%	%
1938	958	46	13	27	3	5	6
1946	10,333	61	11	14	1	2	11
1947	15,839	60	11	15	1	3	10
1948	18,457	61	10	17	1	3	8
1949	22,199	60	13	15	1	4	7
1950	25,595	57	15	15	1	4	8
1951	27,544	55	16	14	3	4	8
1952	29,147	49	16	15	4	6	8

SOURCE: United Nations, Statistical Yearbook (Paris: The UNESCO Press, 1955).

reduced due to low rainfall, drought conditions and epidemic diseases. Consequently, reconstruction programs developed after the war years, concentrated on improved methods of rice farming, including plans for water control systems; fertilizer application; seed improvement and; pest and disease control.

With regard to trade, Thai exports of raw materials are shipped to Western markets while agricultural products go to Asian countries. The 1960 record reveals that the bulk of Thailand's imports were supplied by Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and West Germany. Principal Thai imports are machinery, petroleum products, chemicals, and paper. Before the war, Thai exports exceeded imports, but from 1952 the trade balance was slightly unfavorable, partly because of World War II damage and the need for capital goods to develop the country's economy.

Rivers and canals are the principal means of inland transportation in Thailand while foreign trade is conducted by ship through the Port of Bangkok which was developed between 1939 and 1954 at Klong Toei on the Chao Phya River. Motor transport, which began to grow in the years before the war, was available only in Bangkok. With the rail system covering 32,000 kilometers, railroad track seems adequate to meet the country's need.

The development of a highway system had started as early as 1936; a five-year construction program had been

undertaken during 1936-40. Recently, more attention has been paid to the construction of highways and feeder roads for commercial as well as strategic purposes.

Transport by air to Bangkok's international airport has expanded in recent years. The state-owned airline, Thai Airways Company, Ltd., created in 1959, undertakes domestic service, while international travel is served by Thai Airways International in conjunction with the Scandinavian Airlines System. In 1960, approximately nineteen airlines had regular service to Bangkok.

According to Sanoh Unakul, there have been two groups of foreigners controlling the Thai economy since the nineteenth century: Europeans and Chinese.[18] Before World War II the former were involved in large-scale businesses such as mining, the teak concession, and import-export trade. The latter had monopolized wholesale and retail business, especially in the sale of rice, rubber, and tin.[19] During and after the war, Chinese residents had entire control of the Thai economy. The government, however, formulated a policy of economic nationalism to reduce foreign control of Thailand's economy. This policy resulted in the naturalization and assimilation of the Chinese.

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[18]Sanoh Unakul, "Education and Changes in the Social and Economic Structure," A Century of Experience (Thailand: Ministry of Education, 1970), p. 18.

[19]Ibid.

Before the war, Thailand exported almost two million metric tons of milled rice every year. This output, however, declined during the war. By the end of the war, Thailand's monetary system was in disarray. During the war the entire country was under Japanese occupation, and vast changes in the money system were made by the military government. For instance, the baht was placed on a yen exchange standard. The exchange rate was one baht to one yen. It meant a devaluation of more than 36 percent of the previous exchange rate. As a result, Thailand experienced serious inflation. This situation, however, did not last for a long time. Following the war, there was a great demand for rice on the world market. In 1948 about 812,000 tons of Thai rice were sent to different parts of the world: to China and Southeast Asia including Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, and to Europe, especially to Holland, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland.[20] As a result, the earnings from rice exports in 1948 doubled the national output during the period from the end of the war to the end of 1947.[21]

It is apparent that the gross national product derived from rice export as shown in the previous statistics has declined. This decline in the importance of rice as an

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[20]"National Income," The Bangkok Post, January 3, 1949, p. 5.

[21]Ibid.

export was not due to a decline in its production but because of increasing domestic consumption. The rapidly increasing population is one crucial problem that leaves less agricultural surplus for export.

It is important to note that after the war the government found it necessary to play an increasingly important role in the economic development of the country so that the momentum of the economy and the welfare of this growing people could be maintained. According to governmental policy, private enterprise in agricultural as well as industry, including foreign investments are encouraged in order to bring about diversification in the economy.

The Social Milieu

The 1947 census recorded that the total population in Thailand was about 17 million, with a 56 percent literacy rate. The literacy rate tends to rise each year; the rate was 71 percent in 1960 and 82 percent in 1970. The population, however, continues to grow at a rapid rate. Table 4 shows that the increase in population and the annual rate of increase from 1947-1959 was constant at 1.9 percent. But from 1960 to 1975, the annual rate of increase was tremendously higher. Also, the age distribution within the population is marked by a high ratio of children to adults. The Statistical Yearbook of Thailand records that over 40 percent of the total population in 1947 and 1960 was under

TABLE 4

POPULATION IN THAILAND
1947-1975

Year	Population (In Millions)	Percentage of Annual Rate of Increase
1947	18.0	1.8
1951	21.0	1.9
1955	23.0	1.9
1959	26.0	1.9
1963	29.0	3.0
1967	33.0	3.1
1971	35.3	3.2
1975	43.0	3.2

SOURCE: National Statistical Office, Statistical Yearbook, Thailand 2506 (1963) (Bangkok: Office of the Prime Minister, 1963); United Nations, Demographic Yearbook 1972 (New York: Nation Unies, 1973).

fifteen years of age. According to Prachuabmoh's paper on Population Growth and Educational Development in Thailand, the 1960's progress in education could only attempt to keep pace with the increasing number of school-aged population.[22] Perhaps a faster growth of population, as well as a greater percentage of dependent population, has pushed the country further behind in its attempts to reach economic and social development generally, and education advancement in particular.

Family Size, Family Planning, and Birth Control

Fertility has remained high in Thailand. Attempts to prevent conception are rare. The family planning program, designed to reduce fertility, has only recently been emphasized. Instead a few decades ago the Thai government, with the misconception that a densely populated country could become a country with great power, had a policy of increasing population by offering government support to large families.

Studies conducted in the early 1960's by the Bangkok Institute for Child Study in one village in the Northeastern region and one in the North show an average of four children in these two villages, and the studies also reveal that the sampled mothers show a strong desire to plan their family

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[22] Irene B. Taeuber, SEADAG Reports: Population Growth and Development in Southeast Asia: The Population Seminars, 1972 (New York: Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group of the Asia Society, 1972), p. 17.

size.[23] Yet, due to lack of knowledge concerning family planning and birth control their desire cannot be fulfilled. It is likely that women with high socio-economic status know about birth control and use it in greater proportion than those of lower socio-economic status. At the present the government has approved a program of family planning which, if effective, will lower the growth rate to 2.4 percent in 1985.

Health Conditions

Over 80 percent of the total population lead a simple life in rural villages. Though Thailand has never suffered from famine in her history, nutritional diseases are still prevalent in many areas due to lack of adequate knowledge regarding nutritive food.[24]

At the end of the war, Thailand's health and welfare services remained far from adequate. The number of qualified doctors and nurses had not grown in proportion to the increasing population. The figures show an average of one

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[23]Bangkok Institute for Child Study, Itthipol Khong Sungkom Taw Patthanakarn Khong Dek, Research Bulletin 13 (Bangkok: Kurusapha Press, 1970), pp. 3, 16-17.

[24]Phya Srivisar, Thailand Official Yearbook (Bangkok: Government House Printing Office, 1968), p. 232.

doctor to every 13,600 in 1947[25] and increased to one doctor per 6,800 inhabitants in 1954.[26]

Health services have been available only in the Bangkok metropolitan area, while rural villages lack such services. General government hospitals and medical schools have been located in Bangkok and in other metropolitan areas. There also have been general hospitals built in some urban provinces. The rural areas however are served only by health centers; Second or Third Class Health Centers (staffed by paraprofessionals such as midwives and sanitarian agents) provide the rural population's only link with health care. And in isolated villages, serviced by inadequate or non-existent roads, peasants are unable to obtain help at the health centers in the provinces or districts when they fall sick. Many Thai villagers have to depend upon traditional doctors who use medicinal herbs for their treatment.

It appears that the health services in Thailand have greatly improved after the war years. The number of general hospitals as well as the number of physicians had increased year after year in both the metropolitan area and in the country as a whole. The records compiled by the Central

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[25]The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, A Public Development Program for Thailand: Report of a Mission (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959), p. 154.

[26]United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, Statistical Yearbook (Paris: The Unesco Press, 1955), p. 561.

Statistical Office show that in 1953 there were 64 general government hospitals with 2,056 physicians throughout the kingdom; and in 1963 the number of the hospitals increased to 93 with 3,815 physicians. Epidemics (such as cholera and smallpox) and malaria which had been the great causes of sickness and deaths in the country, have been substantially eradicated since the early 1950's.

Urbanization

After the Second World War a tremendous influx of technical advisors from other nations, and representing all branches of science came "on loan" into Thailand. The influx of new ideas for modernization is having a considerable effect on the rural areas of Thailand. Due to the centralized economic system in Thailand, factories have been set up in Bangkok and within the metropolitan areas. The young and the poor from other regions have come to Bangkok seeking to earn money. The attraction of the capital and other urban centers as arenas for social and economic advancement has greatly increased. As a result, Bangkok has become overcrowded with a population ranging from the very rich to the very poor. Accordingly, the rate of crime has become substantially higher and traffic has become heavy due to the use of the streets for business--all of which produces a dangerous physical environment. Moreover, sanitation

problems have become aggravated by the influx of rural people to the cities.

Another group of rural migrants are those who have come to the capital and to other urban centers since 1950 to attend higher educational institutions. Upon their graduation, they often look to a job in the city as the ultimate goal.

The Reconstruction after World War II

The end of World War II left Thailand with economic, educational, and social damage that posed the greatest problems for a program of postwar reconstruction. Every aspect in each area needed to be modernized and reformed. Needless to say, however, Thailand was not in a position to shoulder these enormous responsibilities due in part to insufficient finances, and natural as well as human resources.

Following the war, some developed countries and international organizations have poured assistance, in the form of aid, grants, cooperation, and loans, into Thailand. The United States was one among the countries which substantially contributed to Thailand through the Special Technical and Economic Mission Program (STEM program). The objectives of this program were designed to help Thailand

develop her economic, educational, social, military, and political capacities.[27]

Educational Development: Unesco's Activities

In developing Thai education, the United Nations Edcuational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) was one of a number of international organizations engaging in the postwar rehabilitation measures; Thailand had held membership in this organization since 1949. Unesco's resources provided to the country included personnel as well as finances. To improve education in Thailand, Unesco, at the request of the Thai government, sent a consultative mission to survey educational needs and problems, and submit its recommendations for appropriate improvements.

As a result of the Unesco mission's recommendations, the "Pilot Project at Cha Choengsao" was established to conduct experimental work in educational reform. The project, aimed at reorganizing the educational system, covered all major facets of education. It emphasized the extension of compulsory education, fundamental education and adult education, teacher education, curriculum development, vocational and technical education, and an extensive program of health education. In addition to Unesco's contribution of

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[27]U.S. Congress, House, Report of the Special Study Mission to Pakistan, India, Thailand, and Indo China, 83rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1953, p. 48.

specialists and equipment, some specialized personnel were also provided by other organizations such as FAO, WHO, ILO and the United States (Point Four Program). By 1959 the project was extended to all of Thailand's seventy-one provinces.

In 1954, the Thailand-Unesco Fundamental Education Center or TUFEC was established to study local conditions to determine socially and economically the needs and problems of the region, to train fundamental education specialists and field workers; to produce educational and instructional materials.

The Thailand-Unesco Rural Teacher Training Project, TURTEP, was launched in 1956. The main objective was to reorient the training of primary school teachers by developing a teacher education program which would prepare teachers to play the double role of an educator and community leader.

In addition to the aforementioned projects, Unesco also granted educational aid such as scholarships to provide overseas study to Thai officials. School materials such as films, recordings, maps, books and scientific materials, were also furnished through the Unesco coupon scheme.

Under the Special and Economic Mission Program, or STEM, the principal work in the field of education was directed towards technical education. Since Thailand was short of technical teachers and skilled mechanics, more than 200 trainees were sent to the United States to be trained in

agriculture, irrigation, public administration, medicine, and education.

Economic Rehabilitation

As mentioned previously, the postwar economy in Thailand was extremely poor because of ". . . her inability --caused primarily by a lack of trained governmental, managerial, technical, and scientific personnel--to develop her own agricultural, industrial, and financial potentialities to the maximum possible."[28] As such, international organizations and some developed countries have provided technical assistance for Thailand's attempts to vitalize the economic conditions in the country after the war. For instance, at the request of the Thai government, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development Consultative Mission, comprised of nationals from France, Italy, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States, visited Thailand in 1957. The Mission made recommendations on developing and improving agriculture, manufacturing, mining and power, transport and communications, social services, education, financial management and so forth.

To develop economic conditions, such program as the Special Technical and Economic Mission Program of Agricultural Assistance, or STEM, was established. The STEM program sought to improve rice production by 10 percent more

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[28]Ibid., p. 44.

rice in the first year and 20 percent in another two years. Production was to be increased through better irrigation and improved fertilizer application. Moreover, the planning and construction of highways as a means of getting the agricultural production to market was also integrated in this program.

In 1949 the World Bank offered Thailand a sum of money on loan for restoration of the communication system damaged during the war, for the construction and expansion of the Bangkok harbor, and for the construction of the Chao Phya Dam at Chainat in the hope of promoting more agricultural production.

In the light of agricultural development, pest and disease control and irrigation are important contributions to agricultural productivity. In 1949 the Food and Agricultural Organization had sent a veterinarian expert, in cooperation with the Thai Veterinary Service, to help eradicate "rinderpest" from the whole region by vaccinating Thai animals.

Concerning the irrigation schemes, the 1949 budget had allocated over 10 million baht for private irrigation plans since the 1948 record points to the effectiveness of the private irrigation schemes which had increased the rice cultivation throughout the country by at least 30 percent.

Social Betterment

Both before and after the war, the nation's social

services regarding health, housing and social insurance were far from being fully developed. These services, however, are considered important in that they could affect the efficiency and the productivity of the population. Therefore, it appears that after the war the government's public health department had contributed much to the improvement of health conditions through the efficient control of epidemics and malaria.

The attack of malaria, smallpox and other diseases had been widespread during the war years. But these diseases had been largely brought under control through treatment and preventive measures; thus this campaign could satisfactorily reduce the toll of the diseases to a marked degree. However, without the technical and financial assistance from various organizations, namely the World Health Organization, the U.N. Children's Fund, the U.S. International Cooperation Administration (ICA) program, and the American Presbyterian Mission, these achievements would never have been accomplished.

With the cooperation of the ICA, a program for the improvement of the rural health services was adopted in 1957. Its objective was to provide at least one First Class Health Center for each 50,000 inhabitants; it had, therefore, to strengthen the staff and increase the facilities of these centers so that they could serve a large area.

In 1951 the National Nutrition Committee was

established to help people improve nutritional standards, to correct faulty food habits, and to encourage a balanced diet among them.

As for the improvement of sanitation, in the early 1960's the Ministry of Public Health, with the assistance of UNICEF, started a program which was integrated with the program for national economic development. The program was aimed primarily at controlling filth diseases by improving sanitation and social well-being in the villages. Moreover, some mobile health units were furnished to assist in demonstrating to schools and communities the importance of sanitation, prevention of disease and prompt response when disease broke out.

The Division of School Health under the Ministry of Public Health first came into existence as early as 1925. But the school health service was available merely in the Bangkok area and covered approximately 117 schools in 1949. In the provincial areas the school children were taken care of and inspected by the Public Health and Red Cross Centers. Most of the symptoms found among children in Bangkok in 1949, were trachoma, decayed teeth, tonsillitis, and skin diseases.

The XIVth International Conference on Public Education organized jointly by UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education recommended that free meals for children be provided. School meals service, however, involved

considerable expenses, therefore this program had never been successfully implemented. However, to promote school children's health, in 1950 UNICEF distributed milk to children of primary schools; but again it included only those children in the urban areas.

Medical Assistance

Since medical facilities and trained medical staff were limited to the capital and to regional centers, under the STEM program, the provincial hospitals were furnished with surgical and X-ray equipment. To train the staff in the medical field, the World Health Organization (WHO) had offered some fellowships for study abroad. Those fellowships provided for study of different areas such as tuberculosis treatment and prevention, malaria control, nutrition, venereal disease control, maternal and child welfare service.

Education has been of primary importance to the Thai government since 1921; this is especially evident in the establishment of a compulsory and universal system of primary education in that year. Although the government changed periodically, the educational system maintained a rather high degree of stability.

While Thai education has faced a number of major problems: inadequate finance, a shortage of qualified teachers, lack of teaching equipment, a shortage of permanent school buildings, lack of textbooks, the central government

has attempted to expand and improve primary education as well as to cope with current problems. For example, a large budget was alloted for educational expenditures.

When Japanese troops occupied the country during World War II, educational progress semed to have ended. With the result being that educational grants became meager; teachers left services; and the quality of education decreased. With the war over, the educational budget became more adequate and international aid with its goal of educational reconstruction, attempted to correct existing problems. An extension of compulsory education was one of the recommendations made by international experts. Although educational funding grew, the major part of it was spent on repairing the war-damaged schools and on the construction of new buildings (in order to keep pace with an increasing number of school enrollments). As a result, many of the problems relating to compulsory education in Thailand remained unsolved.

The next chapter will investigate shared responsibility between the Ministry of Education and the Department of Local Administration of the Ministry of the Interior when the transfer for public elementary education took place in 1966.

CHAPTER III

THE TRANSFER OF CONTROL OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

Thailand has a highly centralized system of education; all educational institutions are under the control and supervision of the State. At present the responsibility for administration of educational establishments is distributed among the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior, the State Universities Bureau, and the private sector. On the primary level, administrative authority is divided among three government agencies--the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), the Ministry of Education (MOE), and the State Universities Bureau (see Figure 1).

Historically, administrative responsibility for public primary education in Thailand was shared by the Local Administrative Authorities of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education. Yet, the total administration of public primary education was, at one time, under the Ministry of Education. In 1963 government policy gradually began to change and by 1966 responsibility for public primary schools was transferred to the local authorities and municipalities of the Ministry of the Interior.

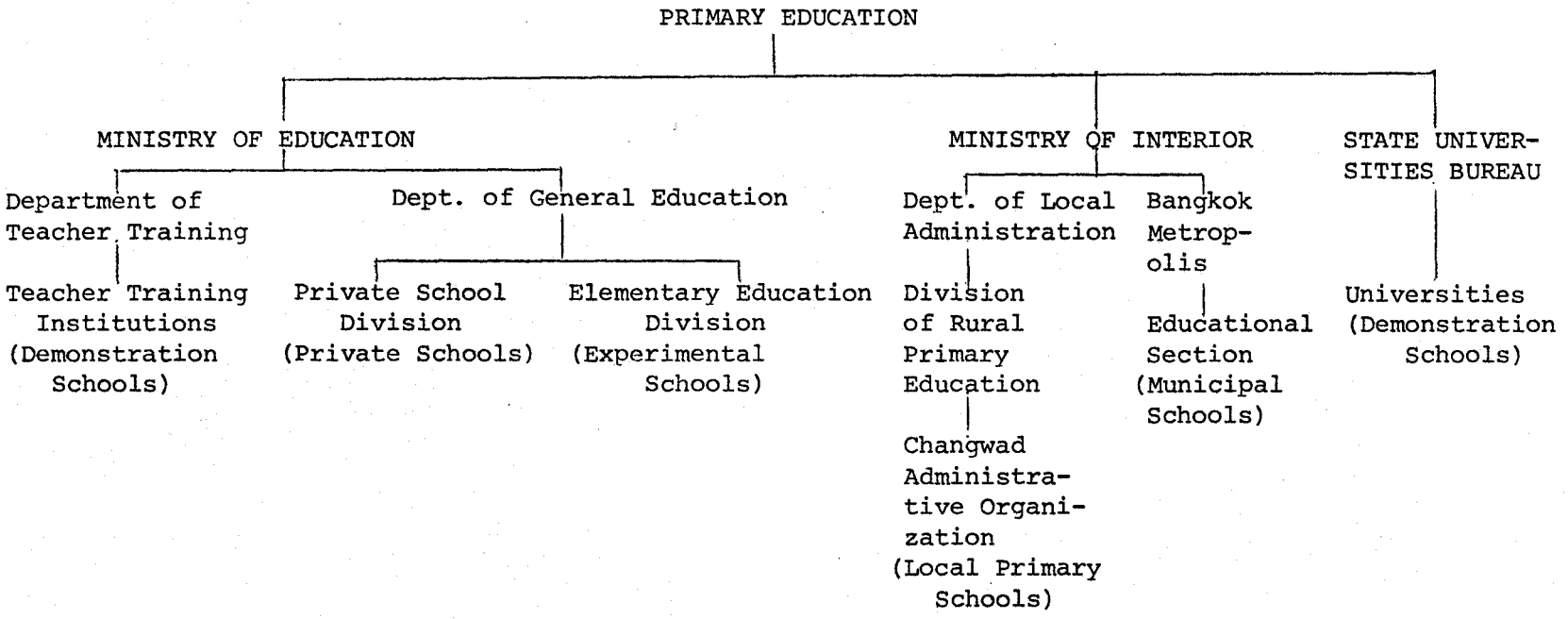

Fig. 1.--Educational Administration of Primary Education

SOURCE: "Karn Apiprai Rueng Prathom Suksa Lae Karn Suksa Prachabarn (Discussion on Public Primary Education)," TV 5 telecast, September 29, 1975: Ekavidya Nathalang and Poj Sapianchai. Interviewer, Anong Mesprasart.

This chapter is comprised of two parts; the first part will briefly trace the historical events which led to the foundation and reorganization of public primary education in Thailand; the second part will examine the shared responsibility between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education, which took effect on October 1, 1966. In addition, an attempt will be made to examine the major problems which accompanied this transfer of responsibility, as well as the solutions formulated to deal with these problems.

The Historical Background

Before the State assumed responsibility for the education of its citizens and set up an educational system patterned after the Western model, Buddhist monks had taken the responsibility of teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic as well as the rudiments of religion. After first establishing a school (in the Grand Palace) for training students in the civil services in 1871, King Chulalongkorn began setting up schools for the general population. These schools were to be located in the monasteries. He considered education to be of prime importance and viewed it as a means of developing his people's potential and consequently, advancing his nation. In 1884 the first school was opened at Wat Mahannaparam in Bangkok;

in a few years similar schools were opened in the Bangkok area as well as adjacent provinces.

The expansion of elementary education into the provinces necessitated the development of some form of administrative body. In 1887 the Department of Education was established; it became the Ministry of Education five years later. The Ministry of Education was responsible for education at all levels; its tasks included: curriculum design, school inspection, and textbook production and printing.

Responsibilities of the Ministry of Education

With the establishment of the Department of Education, education became the responsibility of the central government. Under the leadership of King Chulalongkorn's half brother, Prince Damrong, who was appointed as the first Director of the Department of Education and later the first Minister of Education, plans were made for a system of national primary education. Unfortunately, however, Prince Damrong was transferred from the post of Minister of Education to Minister of the Interior in 1892 and his educational plan was not implemented.

After Prince Damrong left the Ministry of Education, he was replaced by Chaophraya Phatsakorawong, the Minister of Agriculture. Although Chaophraya Phatsakorawong formulated an educational program and attempted to carry it out, he was met by budget cuts. The budget for

the primary schools in the monasteries was more severely affected. Although Chaophraya Phatsakorawong worked wholeheartedly to raise educational standards, his 1892 educational plan failed.

During this period the budget for the Ministry of Education was usually allotted from the Royal Treasury. In order to draw up the budget, the minister was required to submit the report or devised plans, if any, and to give a clear explanation of the plan to the Cabinet by December. It must be noted that the funding for provincial education was extremely meager. According to Tasniya Isarasena, educational financial support in the provinces was always meager in comparison to that of the capital.[1] As a result, several of the schools in the monasteries were closed and the printing press of the Department of Education was shut down.[2] Both of these factors made the progress of elementary education in the provinces difficult. Perhaps, the cuts in the educational budget were due in part to the inability of Chaophraya Phatsakorawong to make a clear explanation of the educational plan to the Cabinet.[3] In 1902,

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[1]Isarasena, "The Development of Elementary Education in Thailand," p. 65.

[2]Jaruwan Waijet, Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub Khong Thai, 2464-2474 (Compulsory Education in Thailand, 1921-1931) (Bangkok: Department of Teacher Training, 1974), p. 74.

[3]David K. Wyatt, The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 297.

when the Minister of Education had resigned a new minister, Phraya Wutthikarnbodi, was appointed and the Minister of the Interior became a consultant to the Ministry.

Responsibility for Provincial Education

By 1885, a number of schools for school-aged boys and girls had been established in the provinces. Plans were developed to establish village schools. Due to insufficient funding for the expansion of provincial education, the schools had to be located in the wat (monasteries). This plan, however, was not merely problematic since physical facilities already existed in the wat and the monks were qualified to teach. It should be recalled that the first teacher training college was first founded in 1892. Since Buddhism is a strong force in Thai society and influences the daily life of the people, it was logical that the school and the wat should be closely connected.

In 1898 King Chulalongkorn entrusted the Supreme Patriarch with the task of organizing modern education in the provinces with the support of Prince Damrong. The monks' endeavor was totally supported by the government; assistance included free textbooks for all of the monk teachers.

Shared Responsibility for Provincial Education Prior to 1966

Steps were gradually taken to expand provincial schools. The breadth of this task made it impossible for

the Ministry to be solely responsible for its completion. Therefore, conferences of regional commissioners of the Ministry of the Interior were held in 1898, 1908, and 1909 in order that responsibility for modern education in the provinces could be discussed and divided. In order to facilitate provincial administration, the country was divided into circles (monthon), provinces (changwad), districts (amphur), communes (tambon), and villages (muban). These administrative units were under the Ministry of the Interior. In the Bangkok area, the Ministry of Metropolitan Affairs was responsible for educational administration. The conference of 1909 resolved the issue of responsibility for public primary education as follows:

1) The Ministry of the Interior was delegated the task of organizing elementary schools in the provinces; this ministry already had personnel available in all units. In carrying out this duty, an educational committee was appointed in each village. The committee was comprised of the headman of the commune, the abbot of the village temple, and the local doctor. The tasks of the committee were to set up new schools, to check school enrollment, to recruit teachers, to raise funds, and to support the existing schools. This type of school was termed "the local school."[4]

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[4]Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub (The Accomplishment in Compulsory Education) (Bangkok: Karn Sasana Press, 1973), pp. 34-35.

In Bangkok, the Ministry of Metropolitan Affairs was responsible for organizing elementary schools.

The Ministry of Education assumed responsibility for government schools at higher levels such as post primary and secondary schools. In addition to appointing the provincial education officer to assist the Governor in educational activities, the Ministry was also entrusted with helping provincial schools in curriculum planning, methods of instruction, school inspection and supervision, administering examinations and allocating funds from the budget of the Department of Education.

This shared responsibility between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education was maintained from 1909 to 1948.[5] In accordance with the guidelines set for expenditures on public primary education, government schools (elementary and secondary) were funded by the Ministry of Education, while educational funds for provincial schools were financed by the Ministry of the Interior from a combination of an education tax and contributions. Because of the inability of many people to pay the education tax, it was abolished in 1930. Meanwhile, the Primary Education Act of 1921 provided that District Officers enforce the establishment of local schools in every commune; the

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[5]Huvananda, "A Study of Certain Aspects of Public Primary Education Administration in Thailand: A Case of Public Primary Schools under the Responsibility of the Changwad Administrative Organization since the Transfer in 1966," p. 40.

educational budget for these schools were derived from grants-in-aid of the Ministry of Education and from local donations.

In 1948, responsibility for primary education was returned to the Ministry of Education; it was reasoned that such a transfer would contribute to the improvement of the quality of education.[6] According to the new Civil Service Act enacted in 1948, the status of all primary school teachers was raised from that of local employees to government civil servants.[7] Since that time ". . . the Ministry of Education had full power to set regulations and to inspect the administration and supervision of all public primary schools. . . ."[8] This responsibility was held by the Department of Elementary and Adult Education of the Ministry of Education until 1966.

The Transfer of Responsibility for Public Primary Education in 1966

The policy for the decentralization of control of Thai public primary education has been in effect since the

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[6] Ibid., p. 44.

[7] Swat Chongkol, "A Historical Sketch of Thai Education Administration," Education in Thailand: A Century of Experience (Thailand: Ministry of Education, 1970), p. 79.

[8] Huvananda, "A Study of Certain Aspects of Public Primary Education Administration in Thailand: A Case of Public Primary Schools under the Responsibility of the Changwad Administrative Organization since the Transfer in 1966," pp. 44-45.

reign of King Chulalongkorn (1909). At one time, however, the total administration of the primary education system had been under the Ministry of Education. In 1963, responsibility for government primary schools in municipal areas (with the exception of demonstration schools), was transferred from the Ministry of Education to the municipalities. Decentralization was further advanced in 1966, when most of the public primary schools in rural areas were transferred from the Ministry of Education to the provincial administrative authorities or the Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO). The Ministry of Education is still responsible for experimental and pilot schools attached to teacher training colleges and some universities, some non-compulsory upper primary schools in villages and schools for socio-economically deprived children. Both the provincial administrative authorities and the municipalities are under the control of the Department of Local Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. Consequently, administrative authority over public primary education is split between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Interior.

It is essential to examine the rationale for the transfer of administrative authority in 1966 in order to understand the concept of shared responsibility between the two ministries.

1) By virtue of Thailand's democratic system,

decentralization of all types of administration, including education, is called for in Article 70 of the Constitution which states that "The Government should promote local administration and encourage the local administrative bodies to carry out effectively their work according to the authority and responsibility given to them."[9]

2) It is the government's desire to entrust the community and the local population with the task of operating public primary education since they know their needs and problems well. In addition, the present rate of population growth, rising expectations, and business development make it difficult for the central government to serve each community's needs and requirements.

3) Each year the government has allocated almost 2,000 million baht for primary education. Yet, this amount seems insufficient to keep with the rapid expansion of primary enrollments.

> If the community and people will be made to feel that the operating of education is their own responsibility as it has been practised in other civilized countries, the community and people will then bring the resources of the community and of their own to operate education and this will relieve the burden of the Government.[10]

The Role of the Ministry of the Interior

When the transfer of responsibility for public primary education took place in 1966, the responsibility

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[9]Ibid., p. 4.

[10]Ibid., p. 5.

for certain aspects of public primary education, was divided among the Changwad (provincial) Administrative Organization of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education. Prior to 1966, the administration of public primary schools throughout the country was the responsibility of the Department of Elementary and Adult Education of the Ministry of Education which operated and supervised schools in cooperation with the Changwad (provincial) Governor and the Changwad Education Officer. The Transfer of Compulsory Education Act of 1966 delegated the Changwad Administrative Organization and its local district officials with responsibility for the administration, operation and financing of public primary schools, while teaching techniques, curriculum matters and supervision of instruction were still centralized in the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the following detailed tasks:

1. Determination of support funds, allocation, and control of expenditures.
2. Supervising constructions of buildings and furnishings.
3. Personnel administration in the areas of recruiting, appointment, promotion, salary increases, discipline, personal records, and pensions.
4. Inspecting school statistics and records and making arrangements to have children attend schools.
5. Approving the establishment and abolition of elementary schools.
6. Providing extension of compulsory education.
7. Establishing a community school program.
8. Giving different types of assistance to school children such as providing textbooks and educational equipment.

9. Coordinating with the Ministry of Education and Changwad Administrative Organizations especially in the following:

9.1. Provide training to teachers at Changwad level.
9.2. Dealing with various projects concerning the elementary educational system.[11]

As noted in Chapter II, the Thai primary education system has encountered a number of pressing problems. At this point the question which arises is whether those problems were alleviated when the Municipalities and the Changwad Administrative Organization of the Ministry of the Interior were assigned a portion of the responsibility for public primary education. If this question is answered affirmatively, it leads to a second question: what solutions were used? This section will present some of the significant responsibilities for public primary schools which were assigned to the Department of Local Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. They include authority over the budgetary appropriations for provinces and control of the execution of those budgets; the control of school construction and equipment, personnel administration (i.e., appointment, placement, promotion, and discipline of teachers), and the administration of auxiliary services.

Financing for Public Primary Education

The Thai primary education system has continually

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[11]Audrey Ward Gray and Alton C. Straughan, Jr., Education in Thailand: A Sector Study (Bangkok: The United States Operations Mission to Thailand, 1971), pp. 11-12.

suffered from the inadequacy of educational expendutures. Although the central government has allocated more funds for public primary education than any other educational level, the amount has been insufficient. In 1963, for example, 63.82 percent of the budget of the Ministry of Education was earmarked for the Department of Elementary and Adult Education. It was hoped, however, that with the transfer of responsibility for public primary education to the Changwad Administrative Organization, educational finances for public primary schools allocated from the government's budget will be decreased. At the present time the Bureau of the Budget of the Prime Minister's Office allocates all of the public primary education budget through the Ministry of the Interior's Department of Local Administration for the municipal and rural primary schools, and through the Ministry of Education Department of General Education (formerly the Department of Elementary and Adult Education) for the remaining schools (previously mentioned). In reality, however, public primary funds come from three different sources:

1. Grants-in-aid from the Ministry of the Interior's Department of Local Administration.

2. Twenty-five percent of the local tax is financed to local schools; and

3. Local endowments and contributions.[12]

It is interesting to note that since the transfer of responsibility to the Changwad Administrative Organization in 1966, the educational outlay for primary schools, which is derived from the provincial revenue (grants-in-aid) has been increased considerably. With regard to the local tax, only some types of it are levied by local bodies; thus the insufficiency of revenue for local activities still remains. It is also apparent that local donations in cash have been significantly increased year after year. After the transfer of responsibility in 1971, particularly, people donated a great amount of money (almost 17 million baht--approximately 20 baht are equal to $U.S. 1) for public primary schools throughout the country.[13] In addition to donations of money, local residents frequently donate contributions in kind and volunteer manpower to erect local schools.

If by using Tables 5 and 6 we compare the educational appropriations for public schools from 1954-1960 (before the transfer), to that from 1967-1972 (after the

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[12]Huvananda, "A Study of Certain Aspects of Public Primary Education Administration in Thailand: A Case of Public Primary Schools under the Responsibility of the Changwad Administrative Organization since the Transfer in 1966," p. 66.

[13]Department of Local Administration, Ministry of the Interior, Witdhayakarn Kiew Kub Karn Suksa Prachabarn (Knowledge Regarding Local Schools) (Bangkok: Suan Tongtin Press, 1972), p. 7.

TABLE 5

EDUCATIONAL BUDGET DISTRIBUTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND ADULT EDUCATION 1954-1960

Year	Central Government Grants (Baht)
1954	127,875,583
1955	109,625,017
1956	120,899,753
1957	132,969,725
1958	172,764,955
1959	813,905,600
1960	822,241,140

SOURCE: Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1954-1960 (Bangkok: Department of Educational Techniques, 1961).

TABLE 6

EDUCATIONAL BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REVENUE FOR LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 1967-1972

Year	Central Government Grant (Baht)	Local Tax Income (Baht)	Local Donations (Baht)	Total (Baht)
1967	1,333,160,038	12,362,305	25,993,009	1,371,515,352
1968	1,473,906,000	21,192,335	86,008,838	1,581,107,173
1969	1,875,648,800	23,987,794	15,824,846	1,915,461,440
1970	2,193,460,600	85,179,920	42,294,186	2,320,934,706
1971	2,455,717,080	97,240,351	38,110,054	2,591,067,485
1972	2,604,969,786	162,708,473	65,593,738	2,824,271,997

SOURCE: Uma Huvananda, "S Study of Certain Aspects of Public Primary Education Administration in Thailand: A Case of Public Primary Schools under the Responsibility of the Changwad Administrative Organization since the Transfer in 1966 (B.E. 2509)" (Ed.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1975), p. 67.

transfer), it appears that after the transfer of responsibility, public primary education funds have become more sufficient (see Figure 2) as local tax income as well as local donations have been supplemented. Yet, it is interesting to investigate further the government's ability to satisfy the rising demands for compulsory education. This problem and its solution will be discussed in a later section of this chapter.

School Buildings and Equipment

The shortage of school buildings is a contributing problem in the public primary education system. Before the transfer of responsibility for primary education in 1963, there were 23,482 primary schools throughout the kingdom; approximately 43 percent were situated in permanent buildings; 13 percent were semi-permanent; 15 percent were temporary buildings and 26 percent were temple buildings used as schools. In the fiscal year 1966 the number of primary schools under this department rose to 25,034. These statistics show that there was a rapid increase in the number of schools. The absence of a comparable increase in educational funding,however, made it impossible to keep up the quality of school buildings and to assure satisfactory conditions regarding both hygiene and teaching requirements.

It is worth noting that due to inadequate funds for the construction of school buildings in the rural areas,

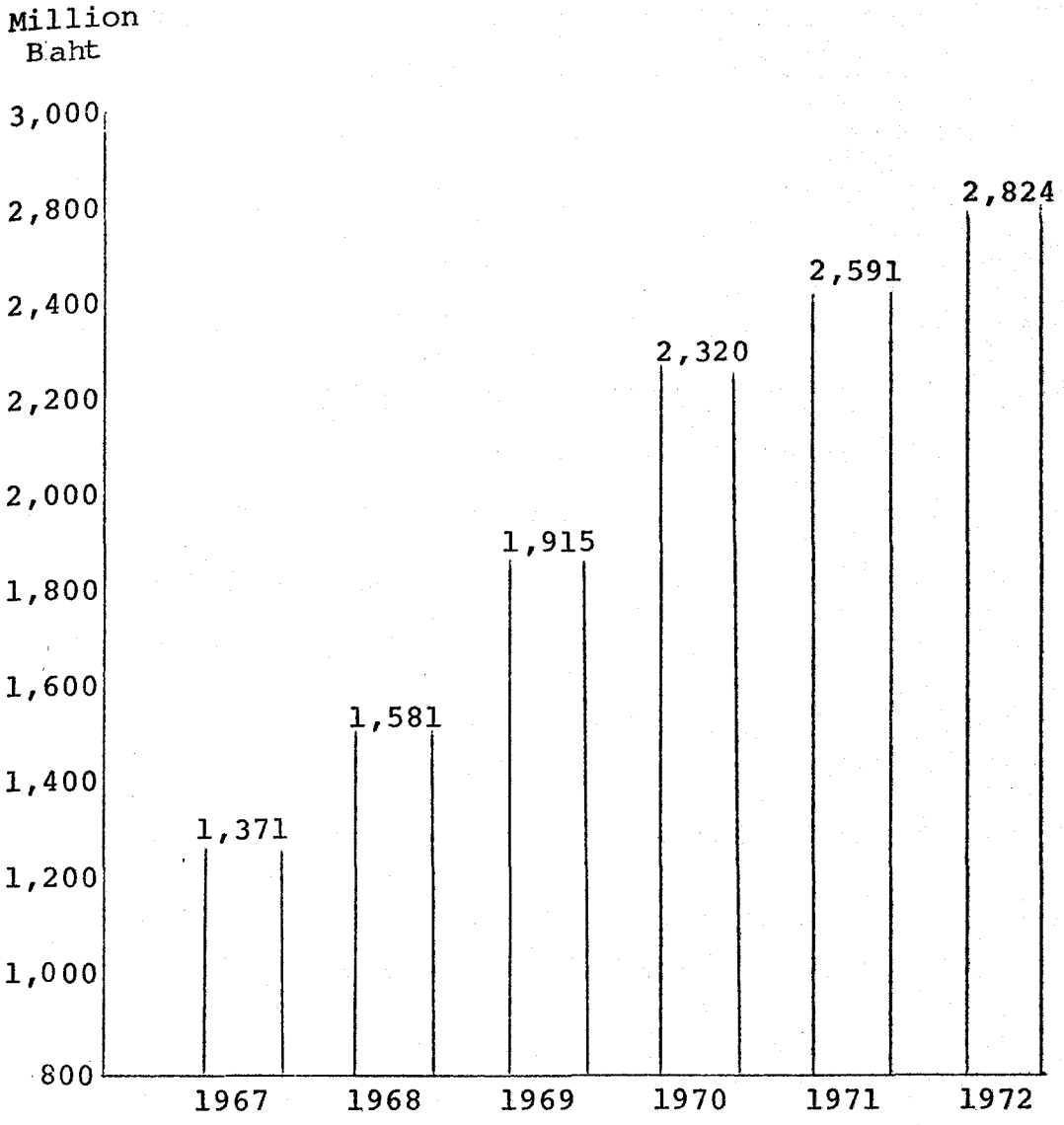

Fig. 2.--Annual Budget for Local Primary Schools, 1967-1972

government teachers throughout the country were requested to donate one day's wages each year on the occasion of Teacher's Day (January 16). These donations paid for several primary school buildings each year, but the custom is no longer in existence.

From 1966 onward, the task of the construction and furnishing of school buildings fell upon the Department of Local Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. According to the Third National Plan for Educational Development, 1972-1976 (Third Five Year Plan), it has been proposed that both temporary buildings and temple buildings used as schools have to be converted to or replaced by permanent buildings after 1972.[14] Also, new buildings to be constructed must be permanent and should house at least four classrooms. In some remote areas, however, many temporary school buildings with poor conditions (two-sided or three-sided buildings) that can be destroyed by the weather still exist.[15] Particularly in the rainy season, it is impossible to hold classes; thus those schools urgently need to be replaced by permanent ones. With regard

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[14]Ministry of Education, Phan Putthana Karn Suksa Chabub Thi Sam, 2515-2519 (The Third Five Year Educational Development Plan, 1972-1976) (Bangkok: Karn Sasana Press, 1971), p. 368.

[15]This statement was based on the author's impression of photographs of school buildings. See Woravidya Wasinsarakorn, Karn Suksa Khong Thai (Education in Thailand) (Bangkok: Mitr Siam Publishers, 1973), p. 72.

to school facilities such as blackboards, chalk, teachers' desks and chairs, school records, students' desks and benches, it can be said that the facilities in the 1970's are as inadequate as those mentioned in Chapter II. For example, in some schools, students' desks and benches are non-standard.

In 1960, approximately 6 percent of the Department of Elementary and Adult Education's budget was for school-building construction compared to 25 percent spent on the construction of school buildings and facilities in the early 1970's. The latest record tends to show an improvement of the number of school buildings and facilities. In his article entitled, "What Was Seen from the Survey of the Primary School's Efficiency," Wathana Wathanapan describes the conditions of twelve local schools:

> A decade ago it was always said that the number of schools did not suffice. But it does not hold true now. It is incredible that these schools are much better than some in the Bangkok area. Children can play in nice playgrounds as they like except that no plaything is available for them. It means that there is no problem regarding school buildings any more. . . .[16]

The author contends, however, that adequate schools cannot be found in some remote areas, due in part to a lack of natural resources. The recent statistics indicate that

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[16]Wathana Wathanapan, "What Was Seen from the Survey of the Primary School's Efficiency," The Social Science Review 11 (September, 1973): 34.

12.93 percent of the local schools under the Changwad Local Organization still use temple buildings.[17]

Teaching Staff in Public Primary Schools

In the period 1960-1972, according to the national statistics, the number of primary teachers rose from 89,535 in 1960 to 184,447 in 1972. This sharp increase in the teaching force has been necessary in order that it match the expanded student enrollment which increased from 3.2 million in 1960 to 6.6 million in 1975. The pupil-teacher ratio declined from 36:1 in 1960 to 31:1 in 1972. Despite an increase of this magnitude, the supply of teachers has not yet met the demand. Consequently, the shortage of teachers, especially in remote rural areas remains a problem. It is recorded that 14 percent of the entire teaching force of the public primary schools urgently need to be posted in those remote areas.[18]

Another problem which prevails in the public primary education system is the lack of trained and qualified teachers; a considerable number of newly qualified teachers are absorbed into the private sector upon completing their education. As for the quality of teachers, however, the trend is toward improvement as is shown in Table 7. For

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[17]Ministry of Education, Phan Putthana Karn Suksa Chabub Thi Sam, 2515-2519, p. 35.

[18]Ibid.

TABLE 7

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHER'S QUALIFICATION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 1969-1973

Qualification	1969 %	1970 %	1971 %	1972 %	1973 %
Bachelor degree or higher	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.6	2.1
Diploma in Education (14 yrs.)	18.3	22.5	24.0	27.4	30.3
Certificate in Education or Vocational Certificate (12 yrs.)	45.3	44.7	45.4	44.5	43.7
Lower Teaching Certificate	35.3	31.6	29.4	26.5	23.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: National Statistical Office, 1972 Final Report on Education Statistics (Bangkok: Office of the Prime Minister, 1972).

example, of all primary teachers in public primary schools in 1967, 18.3 percent held the Diploma in Education (14 years of basic education and training); this percentage grew to 30.3 percent by 1973, while the percentage of teachers holding Lower Teacher Certificates declined from 35.3 percent in 1969 to 23.9 by 1973. This implies, according to the teacher survey of 1962, that after being in the educational service for some years, qualified as well as unqualified teachers had upgraded their qualifications.[19] Every effort is being made to raise the academic and professional attainment of teachers by means of the summer courses, "evening courses," in-service instruction and self study. It is notable, however, that the information obtained from the same survey reveals that the best qualified teachers are found in Educational Regions land 3, while the least qualified ones are in Educational Region 2[20] where the majority of inhabitants are Thai Malays. This implies that there is a lack of uniformity in personnel placement in the public primary education system. Certainly, this imbalance must critically affect the achievement of primary school children living in this region.

Another problem associated with the teaching force

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[19]Educational Planning Office, Ministry of Education, Report: Teacher Survey, A.D. 1962 (Bangkok: Karn Pim Kuekool, 1963), p. 17.

[20]Ibid., p. 14.

is an acute shortage of trained teachers to teach specific subjects such as practical arts. To comply with the objectives of the National Scheme of Education of 1960, this subject is prescribed in the curriculum in order to help primary school students learn manual skills.[21] The means to solve this problem that an increase is needed in the number of teachers of practical arts educated in various training colleges.

It should be noted that because of the shortage of primary teachers, one-teacher, two-teacher and multi-teacher schools become evenly distributed in the rural areas, while one teacher per class is the norm in urban schools. Moreover, it is apparent that under-utilization of trained teachers is another problem of the teacher shortage; many teachers have been relieved from classroom duties to perform clerical and secretarial work in the Changwad (province) and Amphur (district) offices.[22] All of these problems of teacher staffing need immediate attention by Thai educational administrators.

Primary school teachers are trained at the Certif-

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[21]Ministry of Education, Report of Educational Developments in 1949-1968, p. 117.

[22]The Bureau of the Budget, Organization and Management of the Ministry of Education: Survey and Recommendations (Bangkok: The Bureau of the Budget, 1966), p. 47.

icate Level (two years on completion of ten years' secondary education) in teacher training colleges. The recruitment of applicants for teaching positions is a responsibility of each province; vacancies must be advertised. The applicants are required to take examinations; sometimes there are hundreds of candidates but not many positions available. Yet, in remote rural areas there is an insufficient number of teachers to fill the available vacancies; the training of teachers is inadequate to keep up with the existing vacancies and to provide for future demand.[23] The status of the teaching staff in public primary schools is that of civil servants. This status is outlined in the new Civil Service Act enacted in 1948, which covers all questions of appointment, security of employment, and retirement. Salaries are the same for men and women teachers. The salary schedule, based upon qualifications, is uniform for the entire country. Annual increments are dependent upon satisfactory service during the year. In addition to protecting the rights and benefits, the Teachers' Council is responsible for the promotion of teachers as well as disciplinary measures.

Teaching Materials and Textbooks

Teaching materials and textbooks are important resources for an instructional program. Usually the Changwad

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[23]Gray and Straughan, Jr., Education in Thailand: A Sector Study, p. 207.

(provincial) Administrative Organization supply public primary schools with these materials. But many schools, especially in the rural areas, still appear to have non-standard blackboards and students' desks and benches; no instructional materials are available. The shortage of teaching materials has become extremely acute; in some schools there are no syllabi lesson plans or curriculum guides for teachers.[24] Some resourceful teachers can improvise teaching aids with the means at hand, but most of them are unable to do so or have no idea for using local resources which offer many possibilities. However, in some schools where instructional materials are available, many teachers still rely on traditional techniques of instruction based on memorization of academic information.[25]

As mentioned before, children in public primary schools are required to buy their own texts, exercise books and stationery; many parents of children in local primary schools are unable to afford these supplies due to their low income. In her article entitled "Educational Wastage at the Primary Level," Aree Sunhachawee indicates that despite the shortage of textbooks in primary schools, the

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[24]Kamol Sudaprasert, "Primary Education in Thailand," First Level of Education in the Asian Region, Bulletin of the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia, No. 14, June, 1973 (Bangkok: Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia, 1973), p. 181.

[25]Ibid.

government has set high expectations for local primary school teachers to teach effectively so that children can master their reading and writing skills. She suggests that teaching in primary schools will become more successful if the government can annually allocate an additional expenditure of 500-600 million baht for supplying primary schools with teaching materials, textbooks, stationery, books for the libraries; and for the improvement of the quality of primary teachers, by increasing the number of supervisors.[26] The following section will present the academic responsibilities of the Ministry of Education for public primary education.

The Role of the Ministry of Education

From 1966 onward, the Ministry of Education no longer held responsibility for the administration of public primary schools. Yet, the ministry is still responsible for academic affairs for elementary education. Responsibility vested in the Ministry of Education includes:

1. Supervising the following:
   1.1 Preparation of syllabi and curriculum development (through Department of Educational Techniques and Department of Elementary and Adult Education).
   1.2 Preparation of textbooks (through Department of Educational Techniques).

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[26] Aree Sunhachawee, "Kwam Soon Plau Khong Karn Prathom Suksa (Educational Wastage at the Primary Level)," Education Center, January-September, 1972, p. 102.

1.3 Educational Evaluation (through Department of Elementary and Adult Education).
1.4 Inspection and supervision of education (through Department of Elementary and Adult Education).

2. Rendering services on:
   2.1 Producing teachers (through Department of Teacher Training).
   2.2 Training teachers and educational officials for promotion of qualifications in the regions at ministry level (through Department of Teacher Training and Teachers' Council).
   2.3 Conducting educational research (through Department of Elementary and Adult Education and Department of Educational Techniques).
   2.4 Experimenting and Demonstrating (through Department of Elementary and Adult Education).
   2.5 Providing textbooks (through Department of Elementary and Adult Education).

3. Coordinating with the Ministry of the Interior and Changwad Administrative Organizations in the following matters:
   3.1 Laying plans for developing education in compliance with the economic development plans.
   3.2 Determining and maintaining educational standards.
   3.3 Determining and supervising the standard and number of teachers in line with the principles of educational administration
   3.4 Advising and propagating educational techniques.[27]

The Ministry of Education's Department of Elementary and Adult Education has authority over approximately 400 primary schools (located throughout the country) which are designed as "experimental" or "model" schools; the school for the deaf; twelve schools for children in remote areas and adult education. The following are some major tasks shared by the Ministry of Education.

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[27]Gray and Staughan Jr., Education in Thailand: A Sector Study, p. 12.

The Preparation of Curriculum and Syllabi

The preparation of curriculum and syllabi is the responsibility of the Department of Educational Techniques and the Department of Elementary and Adult Education. A permanent committee for curriculum development comprises the Under-Secretary as the chairman and the Director General of all the departments of education including specialized personnel representing the various subject fields.

The educational objectives for primary education include 36 statements categorized as: (1) self-realization, (2) human relationship, (3) economic efficiency and, (4) civic responsibility. By virtue of the National Scheme of Education of 1960, one of the aims included in this scheme describes education as comprising four major areas:

a. Moral education--that aspect of education which deals with ethics and refinement, moral responsibility, and with the spirit of service.

b. Physical education--that aspect which deals with the promotion of good health, mental and physical, and a sporting spirit.

c. Intellectual education--that aspect which deals with the improvement of thinking, and with the acquisition of knowledge, techniques and principles conducive to a useful and happy life.

d. Practical education--that aspect which deals with habits of industry, and perseverance, and with the training in manual skills that are basic to good living and occupation.[28]

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[28]Ministry of Education, Division of Educational Information, National Scheme of Education B.E. 2503 (1960 A.D.) (Bangkok: Kurusapha Ladplao Press, 1966), p. 2.

As such the general curriculum is framed to be consonant with those objectives of education and the National Scheme of Education. Since the extension of the compulsory education period from fourth to seventh grade in 1960, primary education consists of the lower level (grades 1-4), and the upper level (grades 5-7). The curriculum in grades 1-4 (see Table 8) includes the Thai language, social studies (formerly morality, civics, geography and history), elementary science (formerly natural study), mathematics (formerly arithmetic), health and physical education (formerly health and hygiene, and physical education) and, arts studies (formerly drawing, singing and handicraft). At the upper elementary level (grades 5-7), the curriculum is similar to that for the lower elementary level, but two additional subjects, English and handicrafts are included (see Table 9). Handicrafts are included for the purpose of training the students in manual skills. The subjects taught and the standard number of teaching hours for each subject in such grades are shown in Tables 8 and 9. The total number of school days in a year is 179 with 70 percent of attendance required for promotion.

The central theme of the program of the elementary schools is education for Thai citizenship. The basic skills in language arts (important for literacy) include reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In addition, the mastery of arithmetic is considered basic for every

TABLE 8

SCHOOL SUBJECTS AND THE NUMBER OF STUDY HOURS PER WEEK IN LOWER ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Subjects	Hours per Week
Thai Language	7
Social Studies	6
Elementary Science	3
Mathematics	3
Health and Physical Education	3
Arts Studies	3
Total	25

SOURCE: Ministry of Education, Education in 1961 (Bangkok: Thammasat University Press, 1964), p. 42.

TABLE 9

SCHOOL SUBJECTS AND THE NUMBER OF STUDY HOURS PER WEEK IN UPPER ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Subjects	Hours per Week	N.B.
Thai Language	4	A school may choose either (a) 3 hrs. of English and 8 hrs. of handicrafts or (b) 5 hrs. of English and 6 hrs. of handicrafts
English Language	3 or 5	
Social Studies	4	
Elementary Science	3	
Mathematics	4	
Health Education	2	
Arts Studies	2	
Handicrafts	8 or 6	
Total	30	

SOURCE: Ministry of Education, Education in 1961, p. 42.

citizen's everyday living. In implementing such a curriculum, the syllabus is designed by the Ministry of Education (Department of Educational Techniques and Department of Elementary and Adult Education) to guide teachers in teaching as well as textbook writers in writing books. It is the responsibility of the regional education offices to prepare "courses of study" in compliance with the geographical and economic conditions of the locality. The courses of study include lesson plans and suggestions for teaching methodology. Yet, there are still some problems, and criticisms of the primary school curriculum are found in a number of studies. These include:

a) The study of the primary school curriculum conducted by the Department of Elementary and Adult Education with the joint cooperation of the Bangkok Institute for Child Study, which reveals the opinions of sampled teachers and administrators on the school curricula; they conclude that the syllabi of instruction for primary schools are neither comprehensive nor in harmony with the local needs and conditions; the curriculum itself prescribes too much content, impeding teachers from completing the prescribed courses of study; at the same time, the material for study also seems to be too difficult for the children.[29]

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[29] Somporn Buatong, A Study of the Primary School Curriculum in Thailand (Summary) (Bangkok: Bangkok Institute for Child Study, 1968), pp. 11-16.

b) Nicholas Bennett examined the Thai primary school curriculum and concluded that all subjects taught are to prepare children for further education rather than to provide a basic education to enable them to enter the working world; those prescribed subjects are not consonant with the child's life outside the school.[30]

c) As pointed out by Audrey Gray and Alton Straughan, "The aims and goals of the syllabi are general and vague and difficult to translate into specific, time-related, measurable objectives."[31] Even though there was a revision of the curriculum in 1960, it was not yet based on research studies. Moreover, the curriculum itself tends to emphasize the purely academic rather than the practical.

A study of the aims of elementary education reveals that, according to the opinions of the sampled teachers in primary schools and in teacher training colleges, they consider academic subjects more important than those in other areas.[32] In her article entitled "Evolution in Curriculum

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[30]Nicholas Bennett, "Commitments for Compulsory Education or Miseducation in Thailand--Some Alternative Strategies," paper presented to the Seminar on "The New Face of Thai Education" at Wang Kaew Garden, Rayong, May 1-4, 1973, p. 8.

[31]Gray and Straughan Jr., Education in Thailand: A Sector Study, p. 189.

[32]Prayoon Asanam, "Karn Suksa Kwam Kidhen Khong Kru Prathom Lae Kru Sathabun Fuekhud Kru Kiew Kub Kwam Moongmai Khong Karn Prathom Suksa (A Comparative Study of the Aims of Elementary Education)," Education Center 16 (May, 1969): 55.

and Teaching," Aree Sunhachawee concludes that:

> A majority of educators and classroom teachers still value general academic subjects higher than vocational oriented subjects such as handicrafts, agriculture, and home economics. Many upper elementary classroom teachers (grades 5-7) teach mathematics and English in hours alloted to handicrafts.[33]

Perhaps the prescribed content in the curriculum is too extensive for the teachers to complete within one academic year; there is evidence that they desire to have time allotments increased for some specific subjects, namely Thai and arithmetic.[34] Taking all of these factors into consideration, the Ministry of Education came to the following conclusions:

> . . . curriculum objectives of the elementary level were too broad and idealistic with respect to what primary pupils can actually learn, while the curriculum content was primarily subject-matter oriented; inducing, to a large extent, only cognitive development. Besides, the stated purposes, content prescription and time allotment proportions, little attention was given to suggesting ways and means for teachers to organize, in the light of children's needs and curiosities, the learning program, materials and desirable environments which lead to sensible learning experiences.[35]

Teaching Techniques and Evaluation

Reference was made in the earlier chapter to the

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[33]Aree Sunhachawee, "Evolution in Curriculum and Teaching," Education in Thailand: A Century of Experience (Thailand: Ministry of Education, 1970), p. 113.

[34]Buatong, A Study of the Primary School Curriculum in Thailand (Summary), p. 11.

[35]Sudaprasert, "Primary Education in Thailand," p. 182.

methods of teaching in public primary schools. In the 1970's there was still much reliance on book learning, the traditional lecture method and subject-matter memorization rather than pupil participation.[36] The teaching techniques of primary teachers in the 1970's seems to follow the same patterns of teaching as were illustrated in the 1952 study by Lamaimas Saradatta:

> The usual method of teaching consists of calling on a student to read a part of the text, explaining when and where the teacher thinks it necessary to do so, and assigning lessons to be memorized and reproduced in the next class period. . . . Every student works at the same thing at the same time; no consideration is taken for the individual interests, or needs, or capacities. . . . There is still little opportunity for students to share with the teacher in the conduct of the teaching-learning process.[37]

Nicholas Bennett comes to the same conclusion regarding methods of instruction in primary schools: ". . . repetition and rote memorization are still the norm in most rural Thai schools. . . . Little attempt is made to develop individual questioning or reasoning abilities. . . ."[38] He continues: ". . . though the problems are physical, they are taught verbally--no attempt is made to involve the child

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[36]Ibid., p. 181.

[37]Lamaimas Saradatta, "Proposed Policies and Procedures for the In-Service Education of the Public Primary School Teachers in Thailand" (Ed.D. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952), pp. 49-50.

[38]Bennett, "Commitments for Compulsory Education or Miseducation in Thailand--Some Alternative Strategies," p. 9.

in experimentation to prove the applicability of the words spoken by the teacher or written in the textbook . . ."[39] According to Ekavidya Nathalang, at present there still exists a big gap between proposed methods of instruction and the real situation going on in primary schools; new techniques of teaching aim at encouraging students to learn by discovery rather than rote memory, but in practice the old ways prevail; most teachers still use the method termed "repeated behavior"--let pupils copy what is written on the blackboard and learn it by heart.[40]

In the same study of primary school curriculum, achievement tests on subjects such as science and geography were administered to the samples of fifth grade students; the result of the tests revealed that the sampled students achieved best on memory tasks but did very poorly on the application of information and understanding of the concepts.[41] An additional study showed that the methods of teaching reading in Grade 1 as reported by sampled teachers consisted of different techniques--at various times, students memorize given whole-word units and form new words by

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[39]Ibid., p. 8.

[40]Ekavidya Nathalang, "Saparb Karn Lae Punha Prathom Suksa (Situations and Problems in Primary Education)," Education Center, January-September, 1972, p. 31.

[41]Buatong, A Study of the Primary School Curriculum in Thailand (Summary), pp. 11, 15.

means of the synthesis of consonants and vowels.[42] The findings of the aforementioned studies tend to support the belief that primary education follows a traditional pattern.

It should be noted that the traditional methods widely used in most primary schools have aggravated the problem of providing quality education on the primary level. A number of questions must be put to the educational system: while Thais have been exposed to new educational ideas since the early 1950's, why do teachers still lag in applying these ideas? Are there any conditions which make teachers unreceptive to changes? Among the criticisms of the Thai elementary educational system are the following: teachers are unreceptive to change and not open to learning new ways; a popular feeling still exists is that the old is better than the new.[43] Questions such as these will remain until research can provide some definitive answers.

Since primary schools in Thailand are graded, promotion to the next grade is determined by end-of-the-year examinations prepared by the teachers (except for the terminal grades: Grade IV--lower elementary which are administered by the District Education Officer and Grade VII by the Changwad Education Officer). Although the examina-

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[42] Ibid., p. 13.

[43] Department of Engineering, Engineering Executive Program, An Application of Advanced Technology to the Educational System of a Developing Nation (Los Angeles: University of California, 1968), p. 88.

tion system at the primary level is defective, it puts a premium on rote memorization; it has apparently resulted in educational wastage with a high percentage of dropouts and of repeating grades. In 1958 a new system of testing and measuring the pupils' school performance was introduced. In addition to depending on final examination results, general development such as health, work habits and the year's work were taken into account for grade promotion. The scheme follows:[44]

Grade	General Development	Year's Work	Final Examination
1-2	10%	65%	25%
3-4	10%	45%	45%
5-7	10%	60%	50%

The passing grade for leaving a level and going on to the next is 50 percent. In addition, required school attendance is 70 percent of the school year, otherwise, students are not permitted to sit for final examinations. On completion of the upper primary level, pupils wishing to continue in the secondary level must take competitive examinations. Criticisms of these examinations as a key to measure the pupil's achievement include the following: they are non-standardized, non-objective, and time consuming for preparing and scoring the papers; and above all they are of

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[44]Gray and Straughan Jr., Education in Thailand: A Sector Study, p. 100.

little or no value in diagnosing students' learning difficulties.

Instructional Supervision and Inspection

Supervisors play an important role in the improvement of the teaching-learning situation in the educational system. The Supervisory Unit for primary schools was first organized in 1954. Each department provides a separate supervisory unit. There are twelve educational regions headed by a Regional Officer throughout the country. In each educational region and province, at least ten educational supervisors are posted to perform such tasks as school visitation, inservice-training programs, improvement of curriculum and methods of instruction, and production of instructional aids. Since 1959, it was required that four supervisors must be posted in each province to help improve the quality of primary education.[45] The supervisor must be a person who holds a bachelor's degree and two years of teaching experience. Since it is sometimes impossible to find individuals with such qualifications, a person with lesser qualifications has to be accepted. At present, supervisory units are understaffed. The number of public primary schools and the number of supervisors are not well proportioned. A shortage of

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[45]Ministry of Education, Prawat Krasuang Suksa Thikarn, 2435-2507, p. 715.

supervisory personnel can considerably affect the methods of teaching on the part of primary school teachers especially in remote areas, thus leading to a lower quality of primary education. Aree Sunhachawee states that if the government can distribute a greater proportion of the educational expenditure for the increment of supervisors, the teaching situation in primary schools will be more fruitful.[46] A major problem which supervisory units have encountered regionally, departmentally and provincially is the lack of funds and vehicles for transportation. As a result, supervisors cannot reach remote primary schools; only those schools in close proximity to educational offices receive educational supervision.

As for school inspection, there are four inspectors appointed by the Office of the Under-Secretary. Since the country is divided into four sectors for the purpose of inspection, each of these persons is responsible for one sector which comprises approximately 18 provinces. Upon inspection a report must be submitted directly to the Under-Secretary. The report usually covers personnel, finance, administration and recommendations.

Teacher Training

All of the teachers' institutions preparing teachers for service in schools operated by the Ministry of Education

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[46]Sunhachawee, "Kwam Soon Plau Khong Karn Prathom Suksa," p. 102.

are controlled and administered by the Department of Teacher Training. The functions of this department are: to train elementary and secondary teachers for government, municipal, and private schools; to conduct and supervise in-service programs and to carry out qualifying examinations for those wishing to upgrade their academic and professional status. It is the teachers who have to implement curriculum and syllabi; it is the teachers who have to understand and use the textbooks; it is the teachers who have to apply new teaching methodology. Consequently, the quality of teacher training can determine considerably educational quality. This section will examine the preparation of elementary school teachers.

According to set requirements, teachers for primary schools are trained in teacher training institutions; all teacher training institutions are state-owned. There are two types of training: Paw Kaw Saw and Paw Paw which lead to the "Certificate in Education."

Students are required to hold a certificate from the tenth grade (Maw Saw 3) of the lower secondary school and to pass an entrance examination before being admitted to the Paw Kaw Saw training course. The course is of two years duration, provides 130 credits, and consists of General Courses (Thai, English, Social Studies, Mathematics, General Science) similar to that of the upper secondary schools with the addition of Education Courses (Educational

Psychology, General Principles of Teaching, Student Teaching, Methods of Teaching Thai, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies), and Special Courses (Agriculture, Home Economics, Handicrafts, Physical Education and Health Education, Music and Thai Dancing, Art, Boy Scouts and Junior Red Cross, and Library Science).

The Paw Paw Certificate for those who finished Grade 12 (Maw Saw 5) of the upper secondary schools, is a one-year course with 55 credits. The required program includes a Professional Course, a General and Specialized Course, and Student Teaching. Upon their graduation, students in both Paw Paw and Paw Kaw Saw programs are awarded a "Certificate in Education" and are ready to serve in primary schools.

As noted previously, educational methodology is limited by traditional methods of teaching which place great emphasis on rote memorization. It is essential to call for change, especially in the courses of study for the primary school teaching certificate. "General Principles of Teaching," one of the education courses, includes methods of teaching primary grades; how to make teaching aids with the local resources; how to prepare lesson plans and so forth. In addition, methods of teaching various subjects are also included. In student teaching, a student must spend three months of his second year in a primary school; during this period the student is closely supervised

and observed by his instructor. With regard to student-teaching experiences, the Department of Teacher Training has experimented with a special program called the "rural teacher training program" in one northeastern province since 1956. After its initial success, this program was later launched in teacher training institutions in the northern, southern and central provinces of the country. The purpose of this program is to train student-teachers at certificate level to work closely with rural schools as well as the communities so that he or she will become a well-rounded elementary teacher in the future and also able to serve as a community helper. During their three-month period of practice teaching, student-teachers go out to rural schools and join in school activities such as improving teaching methods, introducing the use of teaching aids, helping the school in administrative tasks and so on, in addition to participating in the community activities such as improving roads or assisting in a general civic plan for the village and giving advice in agriculture, and animal husbandry.[47]

It can be assumed that primary teachers graduated from teacher training institutions are well trained to serve in primary schools. Yet, not all primary teachers are qualified; the statistics show that in 1973 approximately 24

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[47]Department of Teacher Training, "Its Work and Organization," July, 1969 (Bangkok: Department of Teacher Training, 1969), p. 5. (Mimeographed.)

percent of public primary teachers were unqualified. Accordingly, the Department of Teacher Training has been attempting to supply qualified teachers in order to replace the unqualified and at the same time to meet the future demands made by increasing enrollments.

The Preparation of Textbooks

The Textbook Division of the Department of Educational Techniques of the Ministry of Education is responsible for the preparation of textbooks to be used in elementary, secondary, and vocational schools. Some textbooks are produced within the ministry, while others are submitted by outside persons or private enterprises. Within the ministry, the Textbook Division submits a proposal for a new textbook to the undersecretary. After the undersecretary gives his approval, the division recommends a committee of writers to the director-general of the Department of Educational Techniques and to the undersecretary. It is the division's responsibility to correct and approve the written text and submit it to the undersecretary for a proclamation. The text then goes to the publication department. In the case of a text being submitted from outside, the undersecretary appoints a committee to screen the book. If it is approved by the committee, another committee appraises the text following the division's guidelines for textbooks. If the text is approved by this

committee, the undersecretary issues a proclamation to license the book.

The content of the textbook is usually adjusted to the curriculum syllabus. The textbooks are not revised more than once every five years in order that second-hand copies can be used. If the curriculum is revised it is the task of the Textbook Division to decide which textbooks can be used and which must be changed. These textbooks are sold at prices regulated by the government. Although children from poor families cannot afford them, the government is yet unable to supply textbooks for them. The following are the number of subjects taught and the corresponding number of textbooks used in Thai primary schools:[48]

	Grade						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of Subjects:	6	6	6	6	8	8	8
Number of Textbooks	6	6	5	5	10	10	10

Problems Facing the Administration and the Operation of Thai Public Primary Schools

Educational authorities in Thailand, like those charged with the responsibility for education in other countries, face certain problems. Some of these grow out

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[48]UNESCO, First Level of Education in the Asian Region, Bulletin of the UNESCO Office for Education in Asia, No. 14, June, 1973 (Bangkok: UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia, 1973), p. XL.

of the system of administration and operation of schools. In particular, this study will examine problems in the administration and in the operation of Thai public primary education. Great efforts have been made by the Thai government to cope with these problems.

As was mentioned previously, responsibility for primary education rests on different sectors such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior (Changwad Administrative Organization), the Municipalities, the State Universities Bureau, and the private sector. This system seems not only to create obstacles and problems in coordination,[49] but also complicates the problem of distribution of educational resources. Thus, the quality of primary education suffers due to a limitation of national resources.[50]

This section will examine only those problems which hamper administration in public primary schools in which responsibility is shared by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Interior. From a management point of view, the decentralization of educational administration without good coordination among units seems likely to create new problems such as: a duplication of work and non-

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[49]Wichit Srisa-an, "Current Situation, Problems and Needs of Education in Thailand," Education Center 16 (May, 1969): 12-13.

[50]"Discussion on Public Primary Education," TV 5 telecast, September 29, 1975: Ekavidya Nathalang and Poj Sapianchai.

economical management.[51] In essence, the system of Thai educational administration can be termed "a confusing system."[52]

According to the Bureau of the Budget, the transfer of elementary education has produced a number of administrative problems, such as: first, the transfer of responsibility will make coordination ineffective since the Ministry of Education is responsible for developing the policy and technical supervision while the Ministry of the Interior is charged with financial control of primary education; accordingly, ". . . the problem of properly establishing costs of programs becomes extremely complex."[53] Second, there is a need for better cooperation between elementary and secondary education since these two educational levels must be closely integrated and appropriate technical service provided. Third, primary teachers have to serve both the Ministry of Education which supervises their technical services and also the Ministry of the Interior which employs them and pays their salaries. Fourth, the transfer can cause a duplication of personnel and a conflict of duties in that the Ministry of the Interior might not be

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[51] Srisa-an, "Current Situation, Problems and Needs of Education in Thailand," p. 16.

[52] Ibid.

[53] The Bureau of the Budget, Organization and Management of the Ministry of Education: Survey and Recommendations, pp. 54-56.

willing to provide the funds for in-service programs conducted by supervisors of other ministries, the result being that the Ministry of the Interior might appoint its own supervisors and inspectors.[54] Moreover, some educators have observed that the municipalities and provincial authorities are faced with the shortage of qualified educational personnel as well as administrators, but qualified staff members were not transferred to the Ministry of the Interior. As a result, new offices were set up and new personnel had to be recruited, thus making an investment not equaled by the return of services.[55] Consequently, one important suggestion to minimize the problem of coordination concludes that the "multilateral" administrative system should be changed to a "unified" system.[56]

Educational Finances

Some of the problems relating to the effective operation of schools in Thailand have their roots in limited finances. These problems could be solved if more money was available to the schools. Some of these problems

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[54] Ibid.

[55] Sadab Attasara, Somchai Wudhiprecha, and Surat Silpa Anan, "Educational Administration in Thailand," Administration of Education in the Asian Region, Bulletin of the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia, No. 15, June, 1974 (Bangkok: UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia, 1974), p. 201.

[56] Ibid., p. 202.

were mentioned previously, but the following section will offer a number of possible solutions. In spite of the fact that public primary schools under the administration of the Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO) receive a major portion of the outlay for education plus local tax and public donations, financing of primary education has been perennially deficient. A reliable source points out that about 90 percent of the expenditure is spent on personnel, primarily teachers; 25 percent goes for the construction of school buildings and facilities, and only 2 percent for teaching materials.[57] Therefore inadequate financing accounts for a shortage of other resources such as classrooms, facilities, instructional equipment and materials, textbooks and reference books.

To secure more funds for primary schools, the Changwad Administrative Organization proposed that the central government distribute more local funds to the localities. The CAO would be authorized to charge and collect taxes on business, oil and minerals at the local level as well as those taxes obtained from local resources such as para rubber, and allocate these taxes for educational expenditures. Since the early 1970's, this proposal has been under the consideration of the committee for improving local income.

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[57]Sudaprasert, "Primary Education in Thialand," p. 183.

The Shortage of Teachers

Apart from the problem of the shortage of teachers in primary schools, there is also a problem of inadequately trained and semi-qualified teachers. As in other parts of the world, increased birth rates have rapidly increased the post-war school population. In addition, in 1960 Thailand adopted the Karachi Plan to extend compulsory education from four to seven years of formal schooling. This move dramatically raised the need for a greater number of teachers. Some emergency measures have been taken to remedy these problems. Various approaches include the following:

a) Since 1960, monks with academic and ecclesiastical qualifications were invited to teach in local and municipal schools throughout the country. The first group of 120 monks were given intensive instruction in educational practices, teaching methods, and general psychology before starting this task.

b) Around 1954, a village institute was established at Rajburi, a town in the southern part of the country. Its main objectives are to increase the production of teachers for provincial primary schools, and to serve as a regional center for the improvement of education and the standard of life. It is a boarding school providing a five year tuition-free teacher training course

for male students who completed Grade 10. Upon his graduation, the student must teach in his locality.

c) A number of programs for the increased production of primary school teachers in order to remedy the shortage have been established by the government. For example, a special one-year teacher training course for those students graduated from pre-university schools (Grade 12) was launched in 1950 in some of the secondary schools in Bangkok. This program was extended to other schools in the Bangkok area and to some provinces in 1953. But this program was merely an afternoon session for those students attending the second year of a pre-university course. Since 1951, training programs for primary school teachers have been provided at teacher training schools in some provinces. At present, there is an average of one teacher training institute for every two provinces.

Between 1968 and 1974 the government decided to accelerate the training of teachers at all levels to relieve the acute shortage of qualified teachers. There has been a great increase in the number of regular course students in teacher training institutions and more "evening" courses, have been opened in these institutions. Table 10 and Figure 3 show the rapidly increasing number of teachers training at the Certificate Level (Paw Kaw Saw and Paw Paw) in both regular and "evening" courses. Solutions to this problem are not easy to devise, and have, in fact,

TABLE 10

NUMBER OF TEACHER TRAINING STUDENTS REGULAR AND EVENING COURSES, 1968-1974

Level	Year						
	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Regular Course:							
Paw Kaw Saw	18,301	22,082	26,562	32.054	34,864	38,959	42,703
Paw Paw	1,246	2,873	2,741	2,761	3,715	4,378	3,204
Evening Course:							
Paw Kaw Saw	524	6,667	17,264	27,757	50,064	59,978	50,743
Paw Paw	270	3,993	6,259	9,345	13,665	19,802	26,445

SOURCE: The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Education for Life and Society. Report to the Minister of Education for Submission to the Cabinet, Bangkok, Thailand, December 4, 1974 (Bangkok: Office of the National Education Commission, 1976), Appendix 6/2, 6/3.

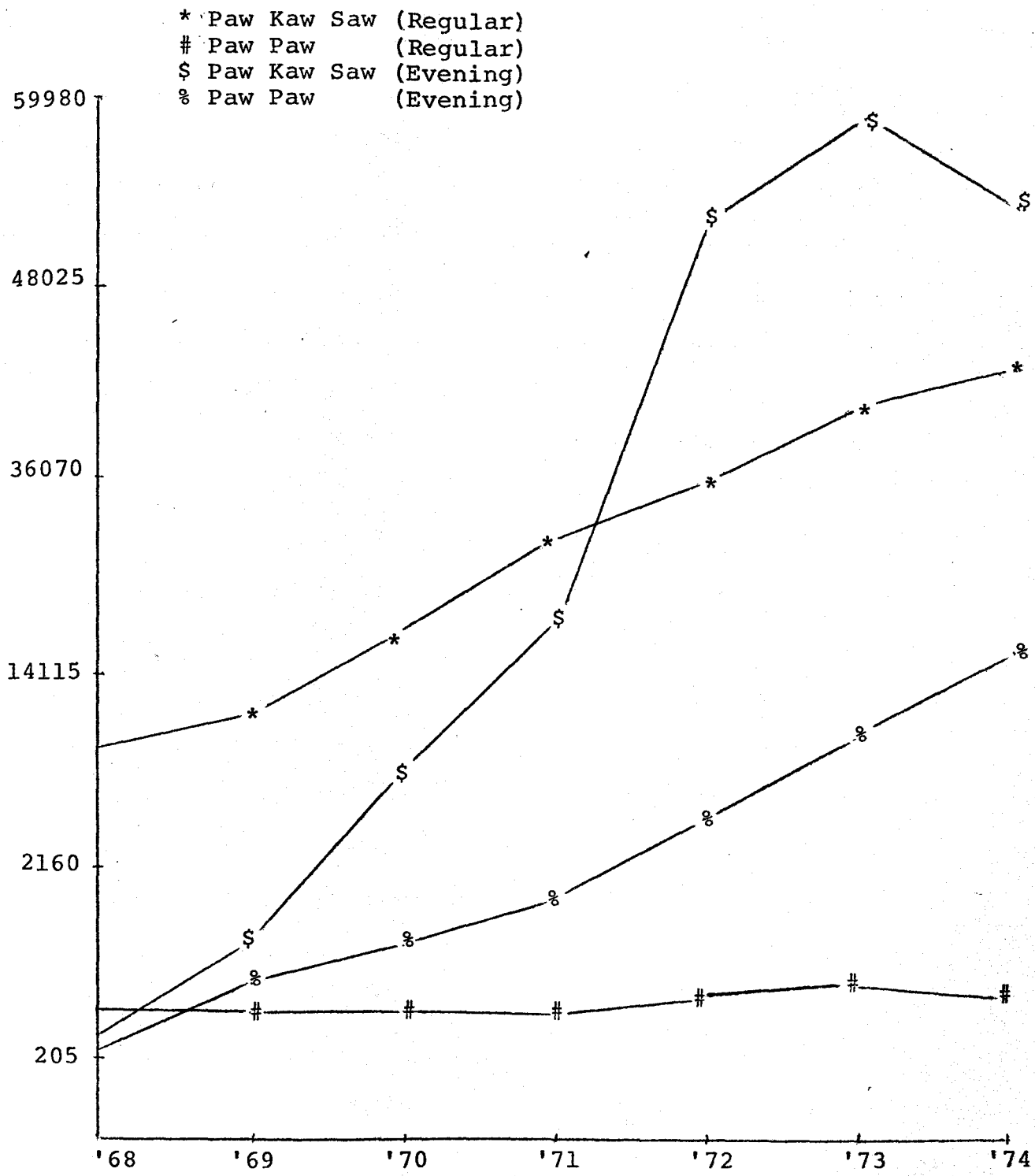

Fig. 3.--Number of Teacher Training Students (Regular and Evening Courses), 1968-1974

led to other problems such as a surplus of qualified teachers at all levels. In actuality, such measures are unlikely to maintain the quality of teacher education; they are aimed primarily at increasing the actual number of teachers produced. Even though a surplus of qualified teachers exists, reliable sources show that the recruitment of unqualified teachers also exists, especially in public primary schools under the CAO as well as in private schools. This situation suggests two problems: ". . . the hiring and appointment of teachers does not comply with the production";[58] and ". . . there are not efficient measures to control the production and usage of teachers."[59] However, there are reasons for the reluctance of teachers to accept posting to primary schools in remote rural areas: the government provides neither security nor motivation for teachers. Furthermore, newly graduated teachers are reluctant to accept an assignment in rural areas which do not include the amenities of normal urban living. Thus visible disparities between educational conveniences and cultural environment in rural and urban areas are still prevalent. Such disparities will certainly retard the establishment of universal literacy.

(d) Some measures undertaken by the Changwad

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[58]The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Education for Life and Society, p. 6-7.

[59]Ibid.

Administrative Organization to relieve the shortage of primary teachers were:

i) Establishing of a three year program that from 1968 to 1970 provided six-month pre-service training programs for 420 participants who had completed Grade 10 (Maw Saw 3) before appointing them to primary schools in remote areas.

ii) Providing scholarships for those individuals in attendance at teacher training institutions at the Certificate and Diploma Levels as well as to those students at village institutes. After completing his or her teacher education, the student must return to teach in his or her locality in remote rural areas where there is an acute shortage of primary teachers. This program has been in effect since 1969.

iii) The Ministry of the Interior suggested to the Changwad Administrative Organization that those teachers who held clerical and secretarial positions at the provincial and district offices resume their classroom duties.

iv) Suggestions were made to the provinces and districts regarding the improvement of teacher placements. For example, qualified teachers were to be posted to primary schools in remote areas.

v) To solve the problem of the shortage of teachers of some specific subjects, an in-service program established in 1971, began training teachers in subjects such as

health and physical education, agriculture, and handicrafts.

vi) Retired teachers with teaching qualifications have been hired to teach in one-teacher local schools or in schools where teachers have to take over more than one classroom.

vii) To promote the welfare of primary teachers, especially in remote rural areas, construction of residences for them has been undertaken on an increasing scale. In addition, teachers in those areas are given a special bonus besides their regular salaries.

School Buildings

In order to cope with the problems related to school buildings, a number of measures have been taken. They included an introduction of the dual-shift system in the densely populated areas since 1954; this system, however, was abolished in 1959. According to the Third Five-Year Educational Development Plan, 1972-1976, an effort is being made to reduce the number of temporary buildings and the temple buildings used as local schools and to replace them with reinforced permanent buildings; in order to implement this plan, more funds are allocated each year.[60] In some communities where a number of small schools exist, the CAO is consolidating adjacent small schools.

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[60]Ministry of Education, Phan Putthana Karn Suksa Chabub Thi Sam, 2515-2519, p. 368.

Teaching Materials and Textbooks

Under the Third Five-Year Educational Development Plan, 1972-1976, the government endeavored to provide more teaching materials for local primary schools in order to improve the teaching-learning situation in the primary education system. Plans were made to distribute one set of teaching aids to each local school (lower as well as upper primary) throughout the country.

With regard to textbooks, it is apparent that most parents cannot afford their children's textbooks. Assuming that the student's school performance can be affected by this disparity, the government published a great number of textbooks to distribute to poor students in local schools all over the kingdom. In addition, the United States Operations Mission to Thailand (USOM) provided the free distribution of textbooks to schools in the Accelerated Rural Development areas. By this measure, it is hoped that the rate of school failure in primary schools can be minimized. To help the students with financial difficulties, the Foundation for Needy Students was set up in Bangkok. The Ministry of the Interior has also encouraged the educational authorities in provinces to adopt this policy.

Teaching Techniques

As "chalk and talk" remains the general method of teaching in primary schools, it is the shared responsibility

of the Department of Elementary and Adult Education and the Changwad Administrative Organization to help improve the methods of instruction in primary schools and to update current knowledge in the educational field in order that primary teachers can utilize it in their teaching situation. According to this plan, the CAO with the joint cooperation of the Department of Elementary and Adult Education, conducted in-service training programs with a two-fold purpose: to upgrade unqualified teachers by conducting four-month courses following the teacher training curriculum and; to carry out one-month training programs for qualified teachers in teaching methods--namely, how to prepare lesson plans, how to evaluate a student's performance, and how to improvise instructional aids.

In improving instructional techniques of primary teachers, supervisors play an important role in conducting in-service training programs. Accordingly, the government had allocated more funds for the increase of supervisor personnel. For example, there must be 12 supervisors in each province; if the number of primary schools exceeds 200, one more supervisor for each 100 schools must be posted in that province.

It is reported that the Department of Teacher Training with the assistance of UNESCO experts, had a plan to improve instructional supervision in all teacher training institutions throughout the country by familiarizing

teachers with modern educational technology in order that their effectiveness in teaching in elementary as well as secondary schools be improved.[61]

Educational Wastage

There is no single factor specified as the major cause of educational wastage; it is therefore impossible to advance any measures to control wastage. In fact, educational wastage exists in Thai schools at all levels, but it is especially obvious in the lower elementary schools; a study of repeaters conducted in 1965 reveals that 50 percent were in the first grade, 25 percent in the second grade, 18 percent in the third, and 7 percent in the fourth grade; a 1971 follow-up study indicates similar findings.[62] It is apparent that the majority of repeaters were in schools located in four southern provinces, in some provinces in the east, and in remote areas in the northern part of the country where cultural and language problems are prevalent.[63] Also, a high percentage of repeaters is found

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[61]"Morning News," National Broadcasting Station of Thailand, November 29, 1975.

[62]Sudaprasert, "Primary Education in Thailand," p. 184.

[63]Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Rai-ngarn Summana Punha Nak Rian Prathom Suksa Sum Chun (Seminar on Problems of Primary-Grade Repeaters) (Bangkok: Kurusapha Press, 1966), p. 138.

in schools in rural areas as opposed to their urban counterparts.

Another cause of grade repetition is that students were absent from taking the end-of-the-year examinations; three-fifths of the repeaters did not pass their examinations; the rest were absentees.[64] There were several causes for this failure and absence such as illness, insufficient attendance, poverty, unqualified teachers, and moving to other localities without notification and so forth. However, in actual fact, the reduction of wastage can be remedied only with an input of greater resources. Many measures and efforts have been taken to remedy the situation. They include:

i) Changes in the technique of evaluation (made in 1958), by taking the year's work, and the general development of students into account in addition to relying on final examination work. A policy of automatic promotion has been implemented since 1964. The Department of Elementary and Adult Education first experimented with this technique in Grades 1, 3, 5, and 6 in some metropolitan primary schools; it was extended to provincial schools in 1966.[65] The experiment was conducted for seven years and

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[64] Ibid., p. 139.

[65] See detailed information in Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Rai-ngarn Prajum Pi, 2514 (Annual Report, 1971) (Bangkok: Kurusapha Press, 1972), pp. 104-106.

in 1971, the Ministry accepted the effectiveness of this promotion policy. However, not all primary schools throughout the country can use an automatic promotion; some continue to meet the school standards set by the Department of Elementary and Adult Education.

ii) Adding numerous pre-primary classes to primary schools, especially in some southern provinces with non-Thai speaking children.

iii) Conducting in-service training programs to upgrade unqualified teachers as well as to update qualified teachers in order to improve their teaching expertise.

It is significant from an historical point of view that under the administration of the Ministry of Education, a number of efforts have been made to reorganize and develop the Thai public primary education system, in the hope of bettering the system and alleviating existing problems. Many of the problems facing primary education arise from a lack of sufficient financial resources. This problem is reflected in the difficulty of providing the rapidly increasing school population with sufficient equipment.

In 1966, the total administration of public primary education was decentralized; with the municipalities and the Changwad Administrative Organization, assuming some of the responsibility. This move made additional funding (at the local level) available, and provided for the partic-

ipation of the local population in the operation of primary education. The Ministry of Education, however, is still responsible for the academic responsibilities of curriculum development, instructional service, the production of teachers and related functions. With the transfer of responsibility, an impressive increase of appropriations for public primary schools become even greater.

Although underlying problems confronting public primary schools have been tackled by various measures, a new problem of a "multilateral" system of educational administration has emerged; the lack of coordination between two ministries leading to duplication of work makes educational investment higher; the lack of communication between the educational authorities responsible for the recruitment of primary teachers and the department charged with the production of teachers creates a problem of surplus teachers in the urban area while the shortage of adequately trained teachers in remote local schools still remains. Consequently, new problems have arisen on a nation-wide scale.

The following chapter will present the extention of compulsory education from fourth to seventh grade.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXTENSION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Compulsory education in Thailand began in 1921 but was not fully operational until 1952. Since the end of World War II there has been a continuous effort to improve the Thai educational system. According to the Thai government's current policy, education should contribute to national economic and social development. Since the post-war period, the government has attempted to expand primary education; by the sixties, this effort was largely successful. Expanded educational opportunity has produced a higher literacy rate. Since greater literacy contributes to economic growth, it can be said that an increase in educational opportunity often results in economic expansion.

This chapter will describe the system of compulsory education in Thailand. Attention will be focused on the extension of compulsory education that occurred in the early sixties; particular emphasis will be placed on the processes of implementation used in this extension, and problems which were encountered.

Fundamental Issues for Compulsory Education in Thailand

As was noted earlier, schools for the masses were first erected in the monasteries in Bangkok and then gradually extended to other provinces in 1885. A decade later, significant trends which would lead to the enactment of a compulsory education law began to emerge. Chaophraya Phatsakorawong, the Minister of Education, had drafted education laws in 1892, which, in essence, embodied the idea of compulsory primary education for all children between the ages of 7 and 15. He envisioned primary education as becoming universal and serving as a basis for higher education. The most controversial idea presented by Chaophraya Phatsakorawong was his stance towards primary education in rural areas: if lower elementary schools (mula schools) were opened in the rural monasteries, all children between the ages of 7 and 15 would be compelled to attend either these schools or "reform school" where students were compelled to study and to do manual work. Although this proposed legislation never came into effect, similar proposals were considered.

In 1898, Phraya Wisut Suriyasak, the ambassador to England, proposed that Thailand base its educational system on the British model.[1] With regard to primary education in

[1]Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub, p. 77.

the Bangkok area, Phraya Wisut made the following proposals: a sufficient number of primary schools, capable of enrolling all children, should be established; schooling was to be free; and the Compulsory Education Act was to be enforced.[2]

During the period of expansion of public education in the provinces, the monasteries had shown a willingness to cooperate in the educational process. The greatest obstacle to compulsory education, however, came from the family; if parents were unable to see the value of education, they did not send their children to school. In order to combat this parental obstacle, Phra Thammatrilokacharn, director of Monthon Krungthep proposed a plan in 1900; men who wished to enter the Buddhist monkhood had to be literate as well as acquainted with the basic precepts of Buddhism. Only those individuals who did not have easy access to education were to be excused from this requirement for ordination.[3] It was believed that by this means education would become universal since Buddhist ordination ". . . was widely regarded by Thai men as a religious, social, and cultural necessity, and that they would endure

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[2]Ministry of Education, Prawat Krasuang Suksa Thikarn, 2435-2507, pp. 127-128.

[3]Wyatt, The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn, p. 251.

considerable sacrifice to achieve this end."[4] This suggestion, however, had to be dropped since it was not compatible with Buddhist philosophy. Moreover, the number of schools and teachers were insufficient to accommodate all school-aged children at the time.

As noted in the preceding chapter, a committee consisting of a headman of the commune, an abbot, and a local doctor was appointed to carry out educational activities in certain rural localities; these activities included: establishing a lower elementary school in every commune; and persuading parents to send all of their school-aged children, male as well as female, to school.

After King Chulalongkorn's death in 1910, his son, Prince Vajiravudh succeeded to the throne as King Rama VI (Vajiravudh). King Chulalongkorn's educational policy on the expansion of public primary education was maintained and carried out by his successor. When a 1911 conference was held by the Ministries of Education, the Interior and Metropolitan Affairs, the following three important proposals were made: (1) responsibility for public primary education should be divided between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Interior (as mentioned in Chapter III); (2) there should be three types of schools; government schools set up and financed by state government;

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[4]Ibid.

local schools operated by local authorities and maintained by local revenues and contributions of local people; private schools set up and maintained by private individuals or organizations; and (3) a royal ordinance should compel parents to send their children to school.

When the proposals were submitted to the King, he approved the recommendations. While each was significant, the last was particularly important for it gave royal sanction to the idea of compulsory education. The Royal Decree which was issued in 1911, reads in part:

> . . . therefore parents are commanded to send all children both boys and girls when they reach the age of 8 years which is considered an appropriate age for schooling. Parents can send their children to any schools of their choice.[5]

The Royal Decree formed the basis for the Compulsory Education Act which followed.

In the reign of King Rama VI, education advanced at all levels. The National Education Plan based on the plan of 1898 was revised periodically. The National Education Plan of 1913, for example, was significant in that it refined the definition of types of educational program; there was the broad category of general and special programs, but within each of these programs there was a further delineation; there existed a body of information which had to be presented to all children, that is, compulsory educa-

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[5]Ministry of Education, Prawat Krasuang Suksa Thikarn, 2435-2507, p. 198.

tion, and "special" education for those who wished to continue their education after completing primary school. The term "compulsory education" was first used during this period.

The Enactment of the Primary Education Act of 1921

It was King Chulalongkorn's ardent desire to raise the educational standard of his people and to provide education for slaves and their children when the abolition of slavery was proclaimed. In addition, the impact of western civilization persuaded him that Thailand was in need of modernization. A major instrument of such modernization was education. His intention to make mass education universal was realized after his death when King Rama VI, his son enacted the Primary Education Act on September 1, 1921; it became effective on October 1 of that year.

Under the Primary Education Act of 1921, measures were taken to assure full legal enforcement of compulsory education. They were as follows:

1) Every child between the ages of seven and fourteen years had to attend a school in which instruction followed the prescribed primary education curriculum or its equivalent.[6] However, the period of school attendance could

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[6]According to the revision of the Primary Education Act in 1935, the age range was changed to eight to fifteen years.

be extended to ten years with the approval of the Ministry of Education if valid grounds existed in the locality such as a lack of school buildings, a shortage of teachers, or the inconvenient means of transportation.

2) The leaving-school age could be extended in the event that the child was still illiterate.[7]

3) Compulsory education was provided free of charge (in all municipal and local schools).

4) Every child had to attend school for 800 hours annually. No continuous absence without reason was allowed for more than thirty days.[8]

5) Some exemptions could be made in the following cases: those who finished the primary courses before reaching the age of fourteen; those who were physically or mentally handicapped; or those whose residence was more than 3,200 meters away from a school.[9]

The Implementation of the Law of Compulsory Education

Legally, the Compulsory Education Act was passed in 1921 but in reality, it was in effect only in those

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[7]This item was eliminated in the revision of the Primary Education Act of 1935.

[8]In 1935, the Primary Education Act was revised: the child could not be absent without reasonable cause more than seven consecutive days.

[9]The distance was reduced to 2,000 meters according to the revision of the Primary Education Act of 1935.

villages where schools were available. The government aimed primarily at expanding compulsory education quantitatively rather than qualitatively. In 1922, there were 2,311 village groups (out of 5,050) or 45.76 percent throughout the kingdom which adhered to the compulsory education system; this percentage grew to 76.76 percent in 1926.[10] The education district officers and inspectors were responsible for checking the number of school-aged children against census figures; parents or guardians were required to register their children's name at the district office. Before the academic year began, the list of school-aged children was sent to the school; parents and guardians were then notified to send their children to school. If they failed to do so, they had to pay a fine. Funds for the establishment and maintenance of public primary schools were procured through an education tax (suksa plee) which could be levied on men between 18 and 60 years of age, the tax was between one and three baht per year (the education poll tax was abolished during the 1930 depression).

The Compulsory Education Act had to be extended to larger areas as more villages were provided with adequate school facilities. Although each year saw the expansion of compulsory education, the goal of universal compulsory education was a thing of the future. While the Primary Educa-

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[10]Ministry of Education, Prawat Krasuang Suksa Thikarn, 2435-2507, p. 269.

tion Act could be enforced in every village throughout the country by 1935, the majority of children continued to be enrolled at the age of nine or ten. Therefore the Ministry of Education had to take the next step for implementing the Compulsory Education Law by lowering the enrollment age every year until 1952. Thus, by 1940 approximately 44 percent of the entire village groups had enrolled eight-year old children in the first grade, 50 percent of the first graders were nine years old, and the remaining number were ten-year old students.

With a decrease in the proportion of nine- and ten-year old first graders and an increase in the number of eight-year-old first graders (see Table 11), it was hoped that the literacy rate would increase. This relationship was supported by statistics recorded in previous years. Ih 1930, for instance, the primary school enrollment of children 5-14 years old was 25 percent while the literacy rate in 1937 was 31 percent; by 1950 the primary school enrollment of the same age group rose to 54 percent and the literacy rate went up to 52 percent during the same period.[11]

Although King Chulalongkorn and King Vajiravudh made mass education universal and compulsory for three decades, a number of major problems emerged: there was a shortage of funds, a lack of administrative personnel and

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[11]United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Illiteracy at Mid-Century: A Statistical Study (Paris: UNESCO, 1957), pp. 105, 166.

TABLE 11

SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS OF DIFFERENT AGE-GROUPED PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

	Number of Village Group Enrolling Children		
Year	Aged 10	Aged 9	Aged 8
1947	8	245	3,074
1948	8	234	3,085
1949	8	188	3,131
1950	8	153	3,166
1951	-	52	3,285

SOURCE: Jumsai, Compulsory Education in Thailand, p. 57.

teachers--(when Prince Damrong was transferred to the Ministry of the Interior a number of competent administrators went with him), and a lack of cooperation on the part of parents in sending their children to school. The last problem was the most difficult to solve. Due to misunderstandings and an inability to see the utility of a formal education, the first school, established in 1884, was poorly received; it was rumored that the government's prime intent was to conscript children for military service. When these misunderstandings were remedied, parents were willing to send their children to schools; this change in parental attitude was essential to the establishment of universal and compulsory education. In summary, it took the Thai government 65 years to implement the Primary Education Act; 34 years for the preparation of the compulsory law (1887-1921); 14 years for the implementation of the law by village groups (1921-1935); and 17 years for the full enforcement of compulsory education (beginning at age 8) throughout the kingdom (1935-1952).[12]

The Primary School System Prior to the Extension of Compulsory Education in 1963

Before proceeding to the extension of compulsory education in 1963, it is essential first to examine the Thai

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[12]Ministry of Education, Prawat Krasuang Suksa Thikarn, 2435-2507, p. 360.

primary school structure which, at various times, had undergone a number of reorganizations. When primary schools were first established, the education system was not yet systematically organized. In 1892, for example, primary schools comprised two levels: lower primary schools and upper primary schools. Even though a standard curriculum was first introduced in 1892 it was quite flexible depending on what subjects the teacher could teach; if he was not competent to teach a particular subject, he had no obligation to do so. In 1895, the educational system was reoranized. Primary education comprised three levels: three grades in level I; three grades in level II; and four grades in level III.

In 1902, a large scale reorganization of the Thai educational system was initiated after a group of three chief education inspectors had intensively studied the educational system in Japan and submitted their report. The National Education Plan of 1902 was derived from the revision of the National Education Plan of 1895 combined with the modification of the imported patterns of the Japanese system.[13] Accordingly, the new educational system consisted of two categories--general and special (vocational) education. The educational structure comprised pre-primary, primary (3 grades), secondary (3 grades), and higher education (4 grades). In order to continue general

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[13]Ibid., pp. 157-58.

education at higher levels, the student was required to pass an examination at the end of each level. As for special education at the primary, secondary, and higher levels, specialized courses were provided for those who desired to pursue particular vocations.

In 1913, during the reign of King Rama VI, the educational system was reorganized to provide an integrated five-year course consisting of three years of general education, and two years of vocational education. As the country is predominantly agricultural, the subjects taught in the fourth and fifth years of primary grades were chiefly related to agriculture. Yet, some optional subjects were also provided to fit the local and geographical conditions of each region. After finishing the third grade, students who wanted to go on to an eight-year secondary course did not have to take two years in the primary vocational stream. In the National Education Plan of 1913, it was stated that this two-year vocational training segment was provided for those children whose parents could not afford to support them at the secondary and higher levels. Those who possessed the ability could further their secondary education after passing their third year of primary general education. As for girls, the two-year vocational course was not compulsory; after finishing their third primary grade they could continue in secondary education if they so desired.

The revolution of 1932 brought another reorganization of the educational system. An education committee was set up to draft a new education plan which was implemented in the same year. With the government's new educational policy, terminal education programs were created; at each education level a vocational track was arranged for those who wished to pursue a career suitable to their abilities and aptitudes. Programs were placed in three categories: lower vocational education, intermediate vocational level, and higher vocational level. According to the revised educational system in 1932, primary compulsory education covered six years: four years for primary general education (pre-primary was abolished), and two years for special or vocational education. It is worth noting that the National Education Plan of 1932 stated that girls must have an equal opportunity for education with regard to both quantity and academic level. The curriculum for girls differed, however, since it was thought that boys and girls were by nature, different and the curriculum could not be identical for each group.[14]

In 1936, the revised National Education Plan emphasized the need to provide people with general and vocational education in order that they could fully meet their responsibilities as citizens within the constitutional

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[14]Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub, p. 39.

system; such an education included moral, physical, and intellectual components. The general structure of primary education consisted of four years of compulsory education (since six years of schooling was considered to be too long, the fifth and sixth grade were abolished). Accordingly, the whole system was divided into two streams: general and vocational education.

The following section will examine the extension of compulsory education which began in 1963. In reality, however, the ideas for this extension were presented seventeen years earlier.

Some Basic Documents Illustrating the History of the Extension of Compulsory Education

The idea of extending public primary education is not a new phenomenon. Viewing the early primary education structure which spanned the period from the early-twentieth century one sees that school-aged children were sometimes required to take five or six years of primary education depending on the national education plan enforced at that time. Many of the documents which outlined the government's position on the extension of compulsory education appeared only after the postwar period. The government's educational policy was finally presented in 1947. With regard to compulsory education it was stated that education

should gradually be made compulsory for all children, commune by commune.

It has already been noted that the UNESCO educational mission of 1949 concluded that compulsory education should be extended. In essence, the proposal recommended that compulsory education should be extended at least eight years (five years of primary education including one year of pre-school; and three years of junior secondary education) in order that it: ". . . will ensure not only the attainment of permanent literacy but also the minimum preparation for citizenship in a democratic State."[15] In addition, other factors involved in this project such as the funding and the supply of qualified teachers had to be taken into consideration before compulsory education could be achieved.[16]

In 1950, the Ministry of Education appointed a committee to draw up a new educational plan. It was proposed that compulsory attendance should cover seven years (instead of four): a four-year primary course which was general; and a three-year secondary course which could fall into one of three categories: academic, vocational, and general. The general stream was viewed as fulfilling the need for compulsory education as well as providing a term-

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[15]Sargent and Orata, Report of the Mission to Thailand, p. 36.

[16]Ibid., p. 37.

inal course of study for the general population. While academic and vocational streams were already in existence, the general stream, which was taught in "popular schools," was a direct result of the recommendations made by the UNESCO mission, and was part of a ten-year education plan. The "popular schools" were similar to the "progressive" schools which UNESCO consultants and local experts had established as part of an experimental plan called the "Chachoengsao Pilot Project" five years earlier. The experimental schools which possessed attractive physical and teaching facilities, were not compulsory since parents willingly sent their children to these schools. When the project was extended to a number of provinces including Bangkok, attendance remained noncompulsory.

The Karachi Plan

During 1956 to 1960 representatives of Asian countries with UNESCO membership met at Karachi to develop a plan for the provision of universal and free primary education. According to the "Karachi Plan," it was proposed that primary education in the Asian region should be extended at least seven years within a period of not more than twenty years; 1980 was considered as the target date. In addition, it was required that approximately 20 percent of the population had to be enrolled in schools by that period.

After hearing the report on the "Karachi Plan," the Sarit regime (then in control of the government) approved the plan, but stated that the twenty year period was too long. In a memorandum to the Minister of Education, Sarit demanded that implementation of the seven-year universal and compulsory education plan had to be accomplished within ten years. The government felt that international assistance would make the ten year goal a realistic one, and that compulsory education could be in full operation by 1970. As a result, 394 villages came under the compulsory extension plan in 1963. Despite the fact that Thailand has been faced with two persistent problems--the lack of financing and the rapid population growth--problems which made compulsory education difficult to achieve, progress was evident.

The Processes of Implementing the Extension of Compulsory Education

In brief, it can be said that the "Karachi Plan" combined with the Thai government's ardent desire to enforce primary education extension, were strong forces which resulted in Thailand's success in extending compulsory education from the fourth to the seventh grade in 1962. During this one-year period, the following tasks had to be accomplished: the revision of the Compulsory Education Act and the preparation of the primary extension plan. In

implementing the "Karachi Plan," a committee of twenty-seven members was set up with the Minister of Education as a chairman.

The Primary Education Act (the Second Act) of 1935 was revised in 1962. According to the Primary Education Act of 1962, children were required to begin primary school in their eighth year and remain in school until they reached their fifteenth year or passed their Grade 4 examination. Yet, depending on special circumstances in each locality, compulsory education could be extended to upper primary education (Prathom 7 or Grade 7), and prescribed by the Ministry of Education. By virtue of the Primary Education Act of 1962, the first decree of extending compulsory education from four to seven years was made in 394 districts throughout the country on December 27, 1963; it became effective in the 1963-64 academic year.

In the hope of providing some semblance of organization to the extension of compulsory education, the Department of Elementary and Adult Education was delegated to set up the "Ten-Year Compulsory Extension Plan." The objectives of this plan were to assure compliance with the Primary Education Act (the Third Act) of 1962, and to support the government's policy in raising the education standard of the Thais by extending the period of compulsory education from Prathom 4 to 7 (Grades 4 to 7) throughout the

kingdom within ten years (spanning the period 1961-1970). Guidelines set up to execute this plan were as follows:

1) There are 4,900 districts in the entire country. Districts in which compulsory education was to be enforced were divided into two types: (a) Districts (1,434) with schools which already had an upper primary course (Grades 5, 6, 7), and (b) districts (3,466) without an upper primary course. In the first case, the former lower grades of secondary education were changed to three upper grades (Grades 5, 6, 7) of primary education (Prathom). These grades, together with the four existing primary grades, made up seven years of primary education. In 1961, for example, the former Mathayom 1 became Prathom 5 (Grade 5); in 1962, the former Mathayom 2 became Prathom 6 (Grade 6); and in 1963, the former Mathayom 3 became Prathom 7 (Grade 7). This plan was aimed at changing the upper primary course gradually in at least one school in each district.

2) The upper primary school could be erected independently or consolidated with existing primary schools depending upon the local conditions.

3) The location of the upper primary school had to be centrally located so that it would accommodate the greatest number of students possible.

4) Students who were registered in upper primary

courses had to reside in a district where the compulsory extension plan was being implemented.

5) Funding for the compulsory education plan was allocated from the national budget, donations and aid from local people (particularly in the form of land for establishing schools) and international and foreign organizations.

6) When a decree of compulsory extension was made in any district, local people were to be persuaded to cooperate as much as possible.

7) In the municipal areas, primary extension would not be carried out until 1966.

8) The compulsory extension plan was to be enforced in such a way that it would not have a negative effect on the private schools which had, for some time, been helping the government provide universal education.

During the 1963-64 school year, there were one hundred districts with a hundred schools in which the plan was to be implemented in addition to three hundred districts where upper primary schools already existed. Since this was a costly and long-term project, it became apparent that over 2,000 million baht had to be allocated for such expenses as establishing schools and workshops, erecting teachers' residences, paying teachers' salaries, and maintenance costs of existing schools. Because the sum was so large, it had to be split annually into a smaller amount

ranging from 43 million baht to over 500 million baht. The large sum appropriated, however, was not the only problem. Although compulsory education came into law in 1962, the Bureau of the Budget had already allocated funds for the 1963 fiscal year--these allocations did not include funding for the proposed 100 schools. The committee felt that financial problems would pose the greatest difficulty in their attempt to accomplish compulsory education extension in a ten-year period. Consequently, upon receiving advice from a member of the Bureau of the Budget, the committee agreed that two more alternative plans were to be set up. These plans were: the First Ten-Year Plan; the Second Twenty-Year Plan; and the Third Plan which was dependent on the annual funding allocated by the Bureau of the Budget. The first plan was submitted to the Cabinet in early 1963 for approval in order that it could be initiated as soon as the academic year 1963 (May) started. At this time (1963), the other two alternative plans were not yet completely drawn up; work on the plans was slowed down by virtue of the fact that educators were also concerned with the transfer of responsibility for public primary education from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of the Interior which was occurring simultaneously.

The "First Ten-Year Plan' was submitted to the Cabinet for approval before the decree of compulsory ex-

tension became effective in 1963; in addition, the Cabinet also had to allocate a budget for the following academic year if the plan could take effect. This "First Ten-Year Plan" was, however, forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget and the National Education Council (NEC) for evaluation. After a thorough investigation, the Bureau of the Budget deemed the plan (which aimed at extending compulsory education to one school in each district--Prathom 5-7 with two classrooms for each grade)--incapable of extending compulsory education to a satisfactory degree. Since each district had seven schools, the extension of education in only one school in each district would not benefit the children attending the other six schools. Moreover, if the ten-year project was adopted, the educational expenditure would have to be increased five times while the entire national budget had only increased by 25 percent. Accordingly, it was suggested that (1) compulsory education be extended "gradually" in the districts where school buildings were available and the teacher-student ratio was favorably proportioned; (2) that educational appropriations be derived from any additional budget allocated for lower primary grades (Grades 1-4); and (3) that a cooperative situation (both educational and financial) be achieved by the Ministry of Education and the Bureau of the Budget.

In an evaluation by the National Education Council, the commission concluded that (1) the expenditures for the

compulsory extension project would continue to increase much more rapidly than the national income (which would increase only 5 to 10 percent per annum); (2) that the "First Ten-Year Plan" demanded an excess of financial and human resources, and physical materials and; (3) that the Ministry of Education should cooperate with the Bureau of the Budget concerning financial matters so that any problems regarding funding for this plan could be avoided.

Having considered all major viewpoints on the extension of compulsory education, the Cabinet concluded that the plan would have to be of necessity, solely dependent upon the national budget available for allocation to this project year by year. The Cabinet viewed the "Third Plan" (which was "shaped" almost totally by the amount of funding allocated by the Bureau of the Budget) as the most realistic. Since the Department of Elementary and Adult Education, which was responsible for carrying on the extension plan for compulsory education, was put in a difficult position by the Cabinet's decision (the Department was never sure how much money it would be working with during the next fiscal year, making planning all but impossible) it had to look for a remedy. The only conceivable solution was for the Department of Elementary and Adult Education to hold a meeting with the Bureau of the Budget so that the annual budget for the following fiscal year could be studied. In

this way the plans for extending compulsory education to more districts could be drawn up one year ahead.

The Second Compulsory Extension Plan of 1964

Even though the government was intent on extending compulsory education from 4 to 7 grades within ten years instead of the twenty years recommended by the "Karachi Plan," the problem of inadequate funds prevailed (as it had since the Compulsory Education Act of 1921). Thus, in 1964 the Bureau of the Budget suggested to the Ministry of Education that a long-term plan for compulsory extension be prepared; this plan was to include the number of new schools to be established and the number of districts which would be bound to the compulsory law. All such plans, however, had to be evaluated and approved by the Bureau of the Budget in order to avoid misunderstanding when funds were appropriated. In response, the Ministry of Education appointed a committee consisting of ten members with the Director-General of the Department of Elementary and Adult Education as chairman. This Committee was responsible for drafting five plans. Mindful of the fact that each of these plans needed a great amount of funds, the Committee realized that each plan would have to be carried out gradually. These five plans were:

i) a Six-Year Pilot Project in Compulsory Extension at Samut Songkram (1965-1970);

ii) a Ten-Year Compulsory Extension Plan at Region 2 (1965-1974);

iii) a Ten-Year Pilot Project in Compulsory Extension at Phuket (1965-1974);

iv) a Ten-Year Improvement Plan of Compulsory Extension in the districts that must be completely enforced within ten years (1965-1974);

v) a Ten-Year Plan for making 100 upper primary schools part of the compulsory education extension program (1965-1974).

Due to the lack of sufficient funds, the Committee found it necessary to curtail most of the projects. Only two plans were continued: the pilot projects at Samut Songkram and Phuket (since they were given technical assistance from UNICEF and UNESCO), and the project at Region 2 which the government viewed as a top priority project because of the serious language problem presented by the Thai-Malay natives in the four southern provinces.

In 1965, these five projects were submitted to the Bureau of the Budget for financial consideration. The decentralization of the administration of public primary education which became effective on October 1, 1966, however, put all decisions about the Compulsory Extension Projects at a standstill. Only three projects, two carried out at Samut Songkram and Phuket, and the project for extending

100 upper primary schools were not interfered with. These three projects were maintained almost exclusively by special funds allocated yearly. Eventually, the Ten-Year Compulsory Extention Plan at Phuket was reduced to five years spanning 1966-1970. This Project finally terminated at the same time as the Samut Songkram Project in 1970.

After the proclamation for extending the period of compulsory education from Prathom 4 to 7 was made in 1963, the Department of Elementary and Adult Education started a pilot project at Samut Songkram; the object of the project aimed at studying problems emerging in the areas of project planning, administration, teaching and learning situations, and financing. The Phuket Pilot Project was launched two years later. It was expected that all 32 districts in Samut Songkram and 17 districts in Phuket would enforce the extension of compulsory education by 1970, the end date of the project; all children aged 8 years would be eligible for seven years of education.

Standards set for the pilot projects were delineated by the Department of Elementary and Adult Education and included the following:

i) Physical facilities--a school building, a workshop, a library, a laboratory room, and classrooms furnished with equipment (estimated 45,000 baht for each class).

ii) Instructional materials for manual work, home

economics, elementary science (estimated 47,000 baht per school).

iii) Expenses on educational equipment and supplies.

iv) Expenses on educational supervision approximately 1 percent out of teachers' salaries plus the costs for maintenance of school.

v) Each classroom containing 35 pupils; and a student-teacher ratio 25:1 (the difference being made up by special subject teachers).

vi) Provision of in-service training for the principals and teachers of various subjects.

To launch the pilot projects, two United Nations Organizations provided assistance; UNESCO experts were sent to launch the projects during the first three years; UNICEF provided instructional materials and in-service training throughout the programs. Upon the completion of the pilot projects at Samut Songkram and Phuket, the Department of Elementary and Adult Education made an appraisal of these projects. The Department concluded that the pilot programs had been successful; education for all children ages 8 to 15 was available in every district. (See Table 12.)

In selecting other districts for the extension of compulsory education, a number of criteria were considered:

i) First, districts to be selected for the ex-

TABLE 12

RESULTS OF THE PILOT PROJECTS ON THE EXTENSION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION AT SAMUT SONGKRAM AND PHUKET AT THE END OF THE PROGRAMS (1970)

Items	Samut Songkram	Phuket
Number of Districts	35	17
Number of Districts to Launch the Projects	35	15[a]
Number of Schools to be Enforced the Extension of Compulsory Education	54	30
Percentage of Students Being Enforced	85-115[b]	99-115[c]

SOURCE: Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub (The Accomplishment in Compulsory Education) (Bankok: Karn Sasana Press, 1973), p. 127

[a]Two districts are under the municipalities; they are not under the extension compulsory project.

[b]Eight year difference; students from other districts moved in.

[c]Five year difference; students from other districts moved in.

tension plan had to be those that already had resources such as school buildings, teaching staff, and parental co-operation available. Such districts were to be chosen prior to those located in the municipal areas or in densely populated districts. On the other hand, the compulsory extension plan would start from outlying areas and extend towards urban centers.

ii) Districts with more than one upper primary school must be chosen first for the extension plan. Such upper primary schools should be centrally located in order that they be able to accommodate the greatest number of pupils from that district.

iii) In selecting the districts, educational authorities must keep in mind that the plan should not effect the existence of private schools since these schools are established to ease the government's burden in providing universal primary education.

iv) In the case of districts without upper primary classes, priority was given to the districts which had the fewest barriers to contend with; districts in which residents offered resources such as land, buildings, and materials were the most favorable. The districts had to be located in the center of a group of schools or a group of districts, and finally, student accessibility was a prime criterion.

In extending compulsory education, educational authorities in the provinces followed a set procedure.

First, they made a list of districts for possible compulsory extension and submitted it to the Ministry of Education. Information attached to the list included: statistical figures of population, number of public primary schools, number of private schools, number of teachers, number of students, maps showing the location of existing schools and of schools targeted to extend compulsory education. When the Ministry of Education approved the list, it was published in the Royal Gazette. After the transfer of responsibility for public primary schools, the Changwad Administrative Organization submitted the list of districts (in which compulsory extension projects were to be implemented) to the Division of Rural Primary Education of the Department of Local Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. After having been accepted, the list was then given to the Bureau of the Budget for approval before presenting it to the Ministry of Education which took the final legal step--publishing the list of districts in the Royal Gazette.

Second, when any district was chosen for the extension of compulsory education, it was the educational administrators' responsibility to inform the teachers, commune headman, village headman, and parents or guardians

of the children. The principal provisions of the law for enrolling school children were as follows:

i) When a decree of the extension of compulsory education is made, every child must attend school from the age of eight to fifteen, with the exception of those children who finished their upper primary course (according to the curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of Education or its equivalent).

ii) The enforcement of the extension of compulsory education will become effective when the decree of the Ministry of Education is published in the Royal Gazette.

iii) There are no exemptions for school-aged children from attending school unless (a) he/she is physically or mentally handicapped or suffers from a chronic or contagious disease; (b) his/her residence is far from a primary school with free education (a distance of more than 2,000 meters) or circumstances make it impossible for the child to reach any school; (c) he/she is the sole support of physically-handicapped parents or guardians who are unable to make their own living or to be taken care of by anyone else; (d) he/she is not financially able to attend primary schools. Such exemptions have to be applied for in writing and submitted to a district officer for his approval. During the months of December and January of each year, every eight-year old child's parents or guardians were required to register the child's name at the district office.

Inspectors were appointed to make sure that parents and guardians fulfilled this obligation.

Since the extension of compulsory primary education had to be gradual because of limited human and material resources, guidelines were set up for educational authorities by the central government. The procedure was as follows:

(a) Post the Ministry of Education's official notice of the proclamation of the extension of compulsory education in a public place and hold a meeting to inform the commune headman, the village headman, teachers, parents and guardians about the extension of compulsory education.

(b) Extend compulsory education one grade at a time, for example, the fifth grade would be made compulsory in the first year, but sixth grade would not be made compulsory until the second year of the extension program. One school was allowed to accommodate two upper primary classrooms each year. Those children who had just completed the fourth grade were given priority in attending fifth grade over those children who finished Grade 4 before the proclamation of the extension of compulsory schooling (children who finished Grade 4 before reaching 15 years of age were still legally required to be enrolled in an upper primary course) unless there were enough rooms to accommodate them. In the event that the number of students was greater than the number of classroom places available,

the Changwad Administrative Organization was instructed to take any measures which would lead to the accommodation of more children. If necessary, it could suggest to the Ministry of Education that more classrooms be opened.

(c) Children living at a distance of more than 2,000 meters from school could be excluded from attending school if they so desired.

(d) Children whose residence is in the district of enforcement of compulsory extension can attend schools in other districts.

(e) Before a proclamation of the extension of compulsory education can be made, the district officers must send an official notice to inform parents or guardians of their children's eligibility for compulsory extension classes; this notice must be given before the child completed Grade 4.

The Shared Responsibility of the Changwad Administrative Authorities in the Extension of Compulsory Education

As noted previously, the administration of public primary education was transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO) of the Ministry of the Interior in 1966. According to the "Transfer of Responsibility Act of 1966," (a) all schools erected by district officers (Amphur officers) with the exception of those located in the municipal areas must be

transferred to the Changwad Administrative Organization; (b) all primary schools with an upper primary course (under the Department of Elementary and Adult Education of the Ministry of Education) located in close proximity to local primary schools erected by district officers or those schools located in a district in which the extension of primary education is being enforced, must be transferred to the Changwad Administrative Organization with the exception of the schools for socio-economically deprived children; (c) all public primary schools located in provinces or municipal areas in which compulsory education was enforced had to be transferred to the Changwad Administrative Organization, effective on the date of the extension.

To carry out the extension of compulsory education the Ministry of Education, the Bureau of the Budget, and the Ministry of the Interior resolved to share responsibility for this action in the following ways:

(1) The Ministry of the Interior was responsible, in joint cooperation with and with the supervision of the Ministry of Education when needed, for drawing up the projects in detail and submitting them to the Bureau of the Budget for approval.

(2) It was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to decide which districts would be subject to the enforcement of the compulsory education law. After the

projects were approved by the Bureau of the Budget, the Ministry of Education then made a formal proclamation, stating which projects were approved.

After the transfer of responsibility for public primary schools, the Ministry of the Interior, following the principles and procedures of the plan set up by the Ministry of Education, expanded the number of upper primary courses in various districts; these yearly extensions did not include the two projects carried out at Samut Songkram and Phuket (which remained under separate jurisdiction). Approximately 35 percent of fourth grade graduates continued their primary education. If the extension of compulsory education from four to seven years was to be a gradual process dependent upon the funds allocated, it was anticipated that it might take fifty to sixty years to reach this goal.[17] Consequently, in 1970 the Ministry of the Interior launched an emergency project for the extension of compulsory education which required that, according to the Third Five-Year Educational Development Plan 1972-1976, 50 percent of all Grade 4 graduates must be enrolled in upper primary schools in 1976; it was roughly estimated that the increase in the percentage of students in upper primary classes would average 12.2 percent each year.[18] Conse-

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[17]Ministry of Education, Phan Putthana Karn Suksa Chabub Thi Sam, 2515-2519, p. 5.

[18]Ibid., p. 49.

quently, by 1976, the number of fourth grade graduates enrolled in upper primary courses would increase to 50 percent; and full enforcement of seven-year compulsory education would be achieved by 1990 at the latest.[19]

Problems of the Extension of Compulsory Education

In 1960, the revolutionary government endorsed the "Karachi Plan" which recommended that Asian countries develop a long-term plan for the extension of compulsory education to at least seven years by 1980. The government decided to adopt the plan of extending compulsory education from the fourth to the seventh primary grade, but wished to achieve this goal as soon as possible. As a result, it was decided that seven years of compulsory primary education must be the standard by 1970. Consequently, problems which confronted the public primary education system became greater as well as more difficult to deal with, while resources remained limited. It soon became apparent that inadequate financing was the most pressing problem facing the school system's attempt at extending compulsory primary education; limited funds made immediate enforcement of the extension impossible. It was decided that upper primary courses had to be gradually introduced into district schools, and the target date was extended to 1990.

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[19] Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub, p. 126.

Due to a deficiency of educational funds, the extension of compulsory education had to be delayed. As a result, by 1973 only 30 percent of all districts in the entire country were implementing the compulsory education act, despite the fact that the plan had been in existence for ten years.[20] The allocation of educational expenditures was determined by the number of upper primary students, with an additional allowance for a 10 percent increase; as a result, provinces which had a large number of fourth-grade graduates, but only a small number of students who continued on to Grade 5, received comparatively meager funding. Such provinces found it difficult to implement the compulsory extension plan. The end result of this practice was and continues to be an inequality of educational opportunity.

The application of the law is another problem involved in the extension of compulsory education. In theory, the task of enlisting and checking attendance of school-aged children is the responsibility of district officers, but in reality many school principals and teachers are assigned to perform this task. Although the task is time consuming and frequently interferes with teachers' prime

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[20]The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Suksa Phue Cheevit Lae Sungkom (Education for Life and Society), Report to the Minister of Education for Submission to the Cabinet, Bangkok, Thailand, December 4, 1974 (Bangkok: Thailand Association of School Administrators, 1975), p. 59.

responsibilities, it poses another problem: if the teacher discovers that parent has not sent a child to school, the teacher must bring legal action against the parent. As a result, the teacher bears the full brunt of the parents' hostility. In addition, census lists of school-aged children are often inaccurate since many villagers move without notifying the district officers. Furthermore, a great number of school-aged children, especially those in the slum areas and the rural districts are not even registered at the district office; their parents or guardians, therefore, are not informed that they must send their children to school. Efforts have been made by the government to cope with the problem of enlisting school-aged children and checking their school attendance; according to the Third Five-Year Educational Development Plan 1972-1976, funds were allocated for the position of "inspector" (an individual with Grade 10 education) to be responsible for this task.[21]

The absence of an adequate number of fully trained teachers, especially in remote rural areas, has become increasingly acute in the Thai primary education system; this problem became even more evident when attempts were made to carry out the compulsory education plan. A study of the conditions of the extension of compulsory primary education shows that the shortage of teachers of specific subjects

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[21]Ministry of Education, Phan Putthana Karn Suksa Chabub Thi Sam, 2515-2519, p. 272.

such as art studies and handicrafts is significant; in some schools there are four upper primary classes with only one teacher; no trained teachers applied for vacant positions since the schools are located in remote areas.[22] In addition, inadequate educational funding for school buildings and equipment, teaching materials, and textbooks exists throughout the entire system of public primary education.

The government has been concerned with the aforementioned problems and has made a number of attempts to reach solutions, but educational solutions can be achieved only if other problems are solved. The problem of a lack of trained teachers in remote rural areas, for example, has to be solved in cooperation with a rural development plan which would make such areas more accessible, and education more meaningful to local residents. The rapid growth of the school population is another problem which must be studied in conjunction with a broader issue--the rapid growth of the total Thai population (3.0-3.2 percent annually).

Though not clearly stated, the specific objective of the extension of compulsory primary schooling is to raise the standard of education and living of the Thai people; in concrete terms, benefits would include increased literacy and vocational training. Some questions have been raised

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[22]Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub, p. 178.

concerning the rationale for raising compulsory education to the seventh grade in light of the limited resources in existence. In the case of universal literacy, for example, literacy must be defined before it can be achieved. According to William Gray:

> A person is functionally literate when he has acquired the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enable him to engage effectively in all activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his culture or group.[23]

It appears that basic skills in reading and writing are already available through the four-year universal compulsory education system. Yet, a study conducted by the Department of Elementary and Adult Education reveals that three years after graduation, students begin to forget the basic skills which they have learned.[24] Obviously, one obstacle which hinders the education of children is the illiteracy of their parents. When a child lives in an atmosphere of ignorance at home, there is a chance that he will lapse into illiteracy through an absence of available reading materials. It is evident that out-of-school or non-formal education must be provided for those individuals who have graduated

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[23] Encyclopedia International, 11th ed., s.v. "Literacy," by Richard W. Cortright.

[24] Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Saparb Karn Rou Nangsue Khong Pu Chob Chun Prathom Pi Thi Si (A Study of Achievement Tests of Grade 4 Graduates) (Bangkok: Kurusapha Ladprao Press, 1969), p. 41.

from school; in this way, the community as a whole will support literacy.

With regard to the usual standard for adult functional literacy, Frank C. Laubach has suggested that in a highly complex modern society a better standard for literacy should be a sixth-grade level of education.[25] The National Scheme of Education of 1960 requires a period of seven years free and compulsory education. If the sixth-grade level of education is a minimum standard for literacy, one might ask whether or not it might be possible for the Thai primary education system to cover six years of compulsory education instead of seven years--a move which increases literacy, but puts less strain on limited educational resources. Another writer in the field of Thai education, Nicholas Bennett has suggested that since Thailand has a rather short school year (180 days) the school year could be lengthened to 210 days so that seven years of primary education could be gotten into a six-year period.[26]

Questions can be raised as to which educational level should be given greatest emphasis. Harbison has cautioned that in educational development local conditions must be taken into account before a decision as to

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[25] Encyclopedia International, p. 17.

[26] Bennett, "Commitments for Primary Education or Miseducation in Thailand--Some Alternative Strategies," p. 6.

what educational level should be stressed, can be made.[27] He, therefore, concludes that all educational levels cannot be regarded as equally important.[28] As for the case of Thailand, Mark Blaug suggests that Thailand should give more importance to primary schooling by allocating more funding to this educational level for the following reasons: (1) to fulfill economic objectives, Blaug's cost-benefit analysis reveals that the social rate of return found in four-year primary schooling is higher than other education levels;[29] (2) to achieve universal literacy, more attention should be paid to primary education in rural areas.[30]

Blaug's research maintains that private rates of return are considerably higher than social rates. The private costs of schooling are usually only a fraction of

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[27]F. Harbison, Educational Planning and Human Resource Development, trans. Nantasarn Seesalab (Bangkok: Ministry of Education, Kurusapha Press, 1972), p. 12.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Mark Blaug, "A Post-Mortem of Manpower Forcasts in Thailand," Journal of Development Studies 8 (October, 1971): 76. See also, Jasper J. Valenti, "An Analysis of the Planning Processes for Education in Thailand," paper presented to the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, August, 1977, p. 16. (Mimeographed.)

[30]Supachai Panitchpakdi, SEADAG, PAPERS: Human Resource Development and Foreign Aid: Financial Aid to Population Control, Education, and Public Health (New York: Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group, 1974), p. 18.

total resource costs. The highest marginal social rate of return is observed for the lower primary level and successively higher levels of schooling yield progressively lower rates of return. The proportionate share of the national budget going for primary educational expenditures has gone down and has then picked up slightly while the proportion going to higher education and vocational education has increased. This has happened despite the fact that secondary education normally costs three to five times more than primary schooling, and higher education five to seven times more than secondary.

Another question to be raised is whether or not upper primary courses will be of much benefit to those students who enter the work world in positions which require a minimal amount of education. A study of parental attitudes on the desirability of upper primary education for their children, revealed that 93 percent of the parents sampled viewed such education as crucial to higher education and consequently, as a means of social advancement.[31] Henry Holmes also conducted his study on attitudes of parents sampled in the Northeast of Thailand toward Thai primary education in general, and particularly to the extension of primary schooling; he concludes that the parents sampled saw no benefits from upper primary education in

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[31]Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Bungkub, p. 198.

assisting students to find a job, or even in preparing them for farming careers.[32] Again, the same study carried out by the Department of Elementary and Adult Education concludes that parents want their children to work after leaving school, therefore the upper primary courses should provide as much practical experience to serve parents' needs as well as prepare the child to work in a particular locality.[33]

The "Karachi Plan" in 1960 recommended that Asian countries develop a long-term plan for the achievement of universal compulsory education, reaching at least seven years of schooling by the end of a twenty-year period. But the Thai revolutionary government of 1959 wanted the expansion of upper primary enrollment to be achieved as rapidly as possible so that universal compulsory seven-year education could be attained within ten years. In practice, however, any accelerated plan for the extension of universal compulsory education will remain unachievable as long as the country's limited resources remain unsupplemented by large government expenditures. The school system continues to be plagued by problems which confronted it earlier: a lack of school buildings and equipment, a

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[32]Holmes, "School Beyond the Village: A Study of Education and Society in Northeastern Thailand," pp. 2532-2533 A.

[33]Department of Elementary and Adult Education, Sumrit Phol Karn Jud Karn Suksa Phak Bungkub, p. 198.

shortage of educational and instructional materials, and a paucity of textbooks. The shortage of trained teachers who are willing to be posted at upper primary classes in remote rural areas has become more acute, due in part to the absence of amenities available in those areas. In addition, district office personnel must take more responsibility for enrolling the school-aged population in compulsory primary schools. The following chapter will present the findings of a report for educational reform made by the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform.

CHAPTER V

MAJOR CHANGES AND REFORMS IN THAI PRIMARY EDUCATION

It is evident that educational development is, in large part, a product of the political climate of the time. Education by itself can never bring about social change; rather, its development reflects the political and social trends of the country concerned. The educational system in Thailand has been reorganized periodically, but each reorganization has been partial, rather than total, and directed at specific changes such as the 1966 transfer of administrative responsibility for public primary education, and the government's attempt to extend the period of compulsory education from four to seven grades. The year 1960 saw further changes in the national education scheme; emphasis was placed on improving educational opportunities and better defining the relationship between education and the social and economic development of the nation. The student movement of 1973 was a strong impetus to educational change and reform; criticism, directed at the entire educational system, has charged the system with a failure to respond to the needs of the people as well as current social realities. This chapter will examine the major changes and reforms which have come about in the Thai primary education system.

Work Plans for Reform in Thai Education

In response to the criticisms of those individuals interested in the educational system, in 1973 the Thai government, appointed a Committee responsible for establishing guidelines for the educational reform of formal as well as non-formal education systems. It was stated that recommendations for educational reform must be made only after the country's social and economic development, as well as everyday life situations, were taken into account. Accordingly, the following questions were to be asked: (1) What is desirable education?; (2) For what purposes should education be organized?; (3) For whom should education be organized?; (4) How should education be organized?[1]

Educational Equality

Before examining further the reform of compulsory primary education, it is necessary to examine a number of existing problems such as quality of education, diverse patterns of school attendance, and the unequal allocation of the educational budget. Only after such problems are critically analyzed can a desirable system of education be established. These problems, in greater detail, include the following:

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[1]The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Education for Life and Society, p. e.

1. Varied rates of attendance at the primary level.--At present, there is a pronounced difference in the number of children aged seven years or older attending lower primary schools in the urban areas versus the rural and provincial areas. The number of urban children attending school is higher than that in rural areas. Attendance in the Central province is proportionately higher than that in other regions, yet in terms of numbers, school-aged children in the Northeast exceed those in the South and the North. These differences in attendance show significant educational inequality in rural vs. urban areas, provincial areas vs. Bangkok, and the Central region vs. other regions. Moreover, in poverty-stricken slum areas it is apparent that a great number of school-aged children do not attend primary schools. One of the main reasons for the discrepancy in attendance rates in lower primary schools is due, in part, to poverty in certain areas; oftentimes parents are reluctant to let their young children walk a long distance to school. In addition, many children living in slum areas have not been accounted for in the district census and are not entitled to attend school. It is important, however, to point out that there is not a sufficient number of public primary schools to accommodate all school-aged children.

2. Differences in continuing on to Grade 5 (Prathom 5).--This issue is another indication of educational inequality. Apparently, the number of children continuing

in upper primary schools varied a great deal; this variance is due to the fact that the majority of such schools are located in densely-populated areas; thus children in urban areas have greater access to upper primary schools than children in rural areas. At regional levels the ratio of children continuing in Prathom 5 (Grade 5) also appears markedly different; the ratio of attendance in Prathom 5 is high in the Central as well as in the Southern region, but low in the Northeastern region despite the fact that the number of children completing lower primary education (Prathom 4) is higher than in the other regions.

As noted previously, the significant difference in the ratio of attendance in Prathom 5 is due to a combination of factors. The government itself is not well prepared for the expansion of seven year compulsory schooling because of insufficient funds. As far as the students are concerned, the realities of poverty (and a need for immediate employment) make "higher" education inaccessible.

3. Differences in quality of education.--The quality of primary education varies between urban and rural schools, and also between schools in provinces and in regions. As can be expected, the quality of education in urban schools is much better than in rural areas, thus Grade 4 graduates particularly in the rural areas tend to relapse into illiteracy. Moreover, it is also apparent that school achievement of primary students in the Northeast is lower than that

in all other regions, despite the fact that the Northeastern region has the lowest percentage of repeaters and the highest percentage of Grade 4 graduates. The factors which contribute to this discrepancy in the quality of education at the primary level are as follows:

a) Teacher qualifications: Most well-trained teachers are posted in primary schools located in urban areas while the majority of unqualified teachers have to teach in small rural areas. Often, principals are also required to assume teaching tasks. Since principals must frequently attend meetings at district offices, classes are often left without a teacher. In addition, the educational authorities themselves fail to pay attention and to improve these schools. As a consequence, the quality of education in rural primary schools greatly suffers.

b) Instructional materials: A shortage of teaching aids makes it impossible to maintain high quality education. In rural primary schools, for example, a blackboard and chalk are the sole instructional materials available. In contrast, urban schools have more sophisticated "hardware" with which to work. If schools are examined region by region, the lack of teaching aids and equipment is particularly evident in the Northeastern region. In summary, it can be said that urban schools have a definite advantage over rural schools in terms of the type and quantity of instructional aids available to them.

c) Personnel management: This factor is crucial to educational quality, especially in local schools. In assessing teacher performance, quantity of work is regarded as a criterion: as a result, teachers in small schools located in remote areas are virtually ignored. To compensate for this system, local school teachers have to be transferred to large schools which are chiefly located in cities. But in essence, such a promotion system drains qualified teachers from small schools.

d) Pupil-teacher ratios: A look at pupil-teacher ratios reveal considerable variations by type of school: urban vs. rural areas, as well as geographical divisions. For example, the majority of teachers who are under the Department of Elementary and Adult Education have higher qualifications than local school teachers under the Changwad Administrative Organization; but the former is responsible for 23-35 pupils in each class while the latter is responsible for 31-32 pupils. The pupil-teacher ratio is highest in the Northeastern region.

e) The distribution of educational expenditures: Theoretically, the educational budget is based on number of students multiplied by a set expenditure for each student. In reality, however, more money is spent on urban school children.

f) Public vs. private schools: Since the government does not provide a sufficient number of primary schools for

school-aged children, private schools have become an important means of erasing this deficit, and aiding the government in its effort at compulsory education. Some private schools, however, are better able to hire qualified teachers and purchase educational materials and equipment while other private schools are forced to recruit unqualified teachers. Thus, the inequality of public primary education is duplicated on the private level.

g) Curriculum: It is apparent that the content of primary school curriculum is somewhat inconsistent with the socio-economic realities of rural society. Yet, emphasis is continually placed on subject matter rather than on students' interests and needs.

In conclusion, it can be noted that the aforementioned factors create an educational system which becomes increasingly unequal as its service area becomes more rural. To eradicate these factors, the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform identified a number of principles and methods for reform:[2]

1. Principles:

a) The standard set for the construction of public schools should view the needs of all localities, provinces and regions as equal.

b) The compulsory age as well as admission procedures

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[2]The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Karn Suksa Phue Cheevit Lae Sungkom, pp. 58-64.

should be made flexible, to fit the local needs of the locality.

c) At the earliest possible time, the State, under the provision of the law, will be solely responsible for compulsory education throughout the kingdom.

2. Methods to rectify educational inequality include the following:

a) It is required that the ground rules and plans for an increase in number of schools, and the enlistment and admission procedures be established at the provincial as well as the regional levels; equality of opportunity in education must be a prime concern of any such plan.

b) The revision of compulsory education legislation must allow local educational authorities the power to adjust the age of school entrance according to local conditions as well as the individual child's development.

c) Compulsory education legislation must be changed to enable the Thai government to assume total responsibility for the organization of the primary education system.

Problem: differences in quality of education.

1. Principles:

a) From an economical standpoint, small scattered schools should be consolidated into one large school in order to conserve resources, personnel, instructional materials, and to solve the problem of an unbalanced pupil-teacher ratio that affects the quality of education.

b) Changes in the technique of evaluation must be carried out: each school should be responsible for the assessment of student performance. At this level automatic promotion was to be used. Yet, before implementing such a technique, the school had to meet those standards set by the Provincial Education Committee.

c) To improve the quality of rural schools, qualified teachers should be posted in all primary schools both urban and rural and have the opportunity for equal promotion.

d) With the support and cooperation of the Provincial Education Committee and local people, the school should provide meal service for all children.

e) The State must equip all schools with a complete supply of learning and instructional materials. All schools to be constructed must conform to the needs of the locality; they must be large enough to accomodate all students as well as a full supply of educational equipment.

f) The Provincial Education Committee must be encouraged to develop courses of study in harmony with each locality as well as student interests.

g) To minimize inequality of education resulting from the current budget allocation system, the central government should subsidize needy localities and any locality with sufficient local resources should receive less assistance.

2. Methods to rectify educational inequality include:

a) Giving a number of localities the opportunity to consolidate small schools and entrusting them with full responsibility for maintaining these schools.

b) The Primary Education Act of 1935, Article 18 must be amended, (schools were previously authorized to carry out their own school-leaving examination). It was the responsibility of the Provincial Education Committee to consider which school could use automatic promotion.

c) The Provincial Education Committee should make a plan to encourage qualified teachers to accept positions in rural areas; incentives could include financial and moral support, as well as promotion. Moreover, the regulations regarding the promotion system set up by the Civil Service Commission must be revised. The distribution of qualified teachers in all schools should be based on pupil-teacher ratio.

d) A school lunch program should be provided with the cooperation of the Parent-Teacher Association, if such an association exists in the locality. Such cooperation could also be obtained from the temples if the schools are located in the Wat compound.

e) Budgeting procedures with regard to the purchase of educational materials and equipment should correspond to local needs.

f) The State and the regions should cooperate in

curriculum and textbook development by having the provincial and regional education offices as development centers, and providing resource persons to help with this task.

g) In order to provide educational appropriations without inequality, data and statistics are of prime importance in order that comparisons be made. It is essential that the Provincial Education Committee should be trained in techniques of collecting statistical data.

The Reform Structure of Primary Compulsory Education

Historically, Thailand continually worked at reorganizing and developing its educational system. Despite this fact, however, the system still fails to respond to the social and economic demands of Thai society and is unable to meet the demands of the labor market since education at each level does not fully prepare the student to enter the job market. Rather, education is viewed as preparation for higher education, with entry into the government civil service as an ultimate goal. In addition, the Thai educational structure itself was viewed as a closed system that required students to be in school for a certain period of time (for example, seven years in primary school and five years in secondary school). Because of financial conditions, students oftentimes had to drop out of school or to change their residence. When they wish to continue their education

afterwards, they were told that they were too old to attend school.

In terms of teaching-learning situations, the existing educational system did not take developmental stages of primary students into consideration. It failed to differentiate between children and adolescents; since school attendance was required for children between the ages of seven and fifteen, it was felt that all children in this age category could be regarded as one group. Such false assumptions, however, made teaching as well as administration difficult.

After all problems, social, economic and political, which effect the existing educational system, were thoroughly analyzed by the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, a new program of Thai education was proposed; it would shape the 7 (4 + 3) :3 :2 pattern of schooling to the 6:3:3 pattern (six years of elementary school, three years of lower secondary school, and three years of upper secondary school). (See Figure 4.)

With such educational reform, the new system of Thai primary education would require approximately six years of free and compulsory schooling. The age of entry into the school system would range between six and eight years. Students would be able to finish their primary education by the age of eleven but, they could spend six years or less in school depending upon individual ability; the period of

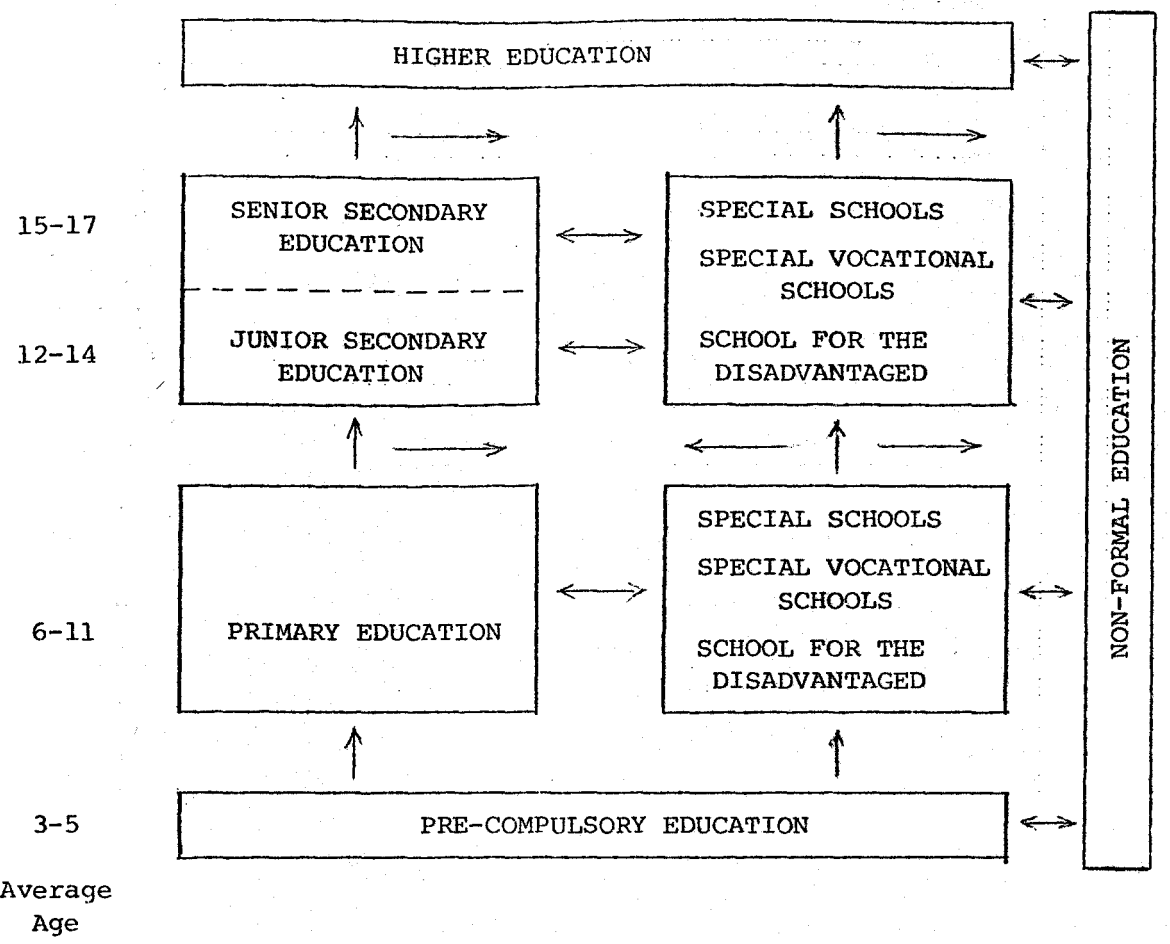

Fig. 4.--School System According to Educational Reform

SOURCE: The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Education for Life and Society. Report to the Minister of Education for Submission to the Cabinet, Bangkok, Thailand, December 4, 1974 (Bangkok: Office of the National Education Commission, 1976), Appendix 4/1.

schooling at this level however, should take at least five years (for the sake of socialization at an appropriate age level). Each local education authority is given the responsibility of deciding what the age of entry should be, but the child must not be compelled to enter school earlier than six years of age or later than the age of eight. Compulsory primary schooling would be considered to be completed in the event that the child finished his or her primary course or had reached fifteen years of age. If the children are not enlisted in the area census, efforts must be made to enroll them in school. In the event that they are too old to enter primary school, other types of schooling (non-formal education) must be provided.

The following section will present the proposal for a revised primary school system as set up by the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform:

1978	Year 1	New courses are introduced for grade P.1 Improved courses are introduced for grade P.2 to P.6 Existing courses for grade P.1 and P.7 are terminated.
1979	Year 2	New courses for grade P.1 to P.2 Improved courses for grade P.3 to P.6 Improved courses for grade P.1 to P.2 are terminated.
1980	Year 3	New courses for grade P.1 to P.3 Improved courses for grade P.4 to P.6 Termination of improved courses for grade P.1 to P.3.

1981 Year 4 New courses for grade P.1 to P.4
Improved courses for grade P.5 to P.6
Termination of improved courses for grade P.1 to P.4.

1982 Year 5 New courses for grade P.1 to P.5
Improved courses for grade P.6
Termination of improved courses for grade P.1 to P.5.

1983 Year 6 New courses for all primary grades
Termination of all improved courses for all primary grades.[3]

Reform of Educational Administration

It is important to note that there are still some major weaknesses in the administration of Thai public primary education despite the fact that the transfer of responsibility for primary education has taken place. The system appears to remain centralized. The following section will present the principles for administrative reform set by the Committee.

After reviewing the weaknesses and problems inherent in the system of Thai educational administration, the following reforms were proposed:

1. The Thai educational administration system must be decentralized, with localities assuming a large portion of responsibility for administration. The term "locality" refers to the community and local individuals who must be encouraged to participate in, and be responsible for, education.

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[3]The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, Education for Life and Society, pp.4-14, 4-15.

2. Educational administration at all levels must be under the control of one and the same unit in order to insure unified policy making and administration.

3. The central administration unit must control only higher education. The powers and duties of such a unit could be summed up as follows: to set up educational policy and plans at the national level; to allocate an educational budget at the national level; to be responsible for technical tasks such as curriculum development, choice of textbooks, research and so forth; to be responsible for other types of education, such as higher education; and communicate with other countries on educational matters.

4. Educational administration must be directed by the "education committee." At the local level, the committee should be those individuals interested in education; the committee should be given freedom to carry out educational plans and administration as they see fit.

It should be noted that educational reform must take place under the following conditions: (a) the decentralization of educational administration should be undertaken when the administration of local government is also decentralized; (b) the decentralization of educational administration would be considered to be complete if the 6:3:3 school system is implemented in every locality.

The reform of educational administration at the "central level"--the units to be responsible for various tasks

concerning educational affairs would answer to the Ministry of Educational Affairs (a new body); other changes which would take place under this Ministry would include:

1.1 Establishing a Ministry of Educational Affairs by consolidating the units formerly concerned with education; the Office of the National Education Commission (NEC); the former Ministry of Education; the State Universities Bureau; the Division of Rural Elementary Education of the Department of Local Administration; and the units concerned with education in the municipalities. The aforementioned units, responsible for different aspects of education, would be under the same unit--the Ministry of Educational Affairs--in order that education at all levels and of different types would be well-coordinated. The Ministry, as a central authority, would take responsibility for drawing up educational plans and policy at the national level and for promoting and coordinating educational activities.

1.2 Erecting an office responsible for educational planning and policies by amalgamating the Office of the National Education Commission and the Office of Educational Planning.

1.3 Establishing an office responsible for allocating educational budgets for all education levels with the exception of higher education.

1.4 Setting up an office responsible for the inspection of administration, both centrally and provin-

cially, of all units under the Ministry of Educational Affairs.

1.5 Establishing an Office of Educational Techniques by amalgamating all units formerly responsible for technical affairs under the Department of Educational Techniques at all education levels with the exception of higher education. This office would be charged with curriculum development, textbook approval, tests and measurements, educational research, guidance, supervision and the regulation of education of private institutions.

1.6 Erecting an office for the promotion of non-formal education; such an office would have the responsibility for all non-formal education, special education, public libraries, and educational radio.

1.7 Establishing a Regional Education Office for each region (a total of twelve regions). Each office would be regarded as a representative of the central government and as a coordinator to supervise and promote education within its locality.

1.8 Setting up an office for physical education and youth activities by consolidating the Department of Physical Education and the Office of National Youth.

1.9 Establishing the Department of Art and Culture to replace the former Department of Fine Arts.

1.10 Other units under the new Ministry of Educational Affairs would include: the Secretariat of the

Minister; the Office of the Under-Secretary of the State; and the Department of Religious Affairs.

1.11 Establishing the Bureau of Higher Education by consolidating the following units: the State Universities Bureau, the Department of Teacher Training, the Department of Vocational Education, the Department of Physical Education.

2. With regard to the reform of educational administration at the "local level," there are two units: the Bangkok Area Metropolis and the Provinces.

2.1 The Bangkok Area Metropolis is entrusted with the educational administration and organization of all primary, secondary, and vocational education, with the exception of higher education. For actual administrative tasks, an Education Committee, appointed (and dissolved) by the Governor of the Bangkok Metropolis with the consent of the Bangkok Metropolis Council must be appointed. This committee is responsible for educational administration and drawing up educational policies, and is independent from the Bangkok Metropolis Council and the Governor. The committee would be made up of a number of members equaling the number of counties set up for the Bangkok Metropolis. The membership of the "Education Committee" is divided into two groups: the first half would consist of the members of the Bangkok Metropolis Council; the second half would be those qualified individuals elected by the Council. The first group must

have one more member than the second group. Committee members would remain active for four years, the same term as the Metropolis Council and the Governor.

2.2 At the provincial level, the "Changwad (province) Educational Committee" would take responsibility for educational administration and policies in each province. The size of membership of each committee would be determined by provincial authorities, based on the size of the population in that province. The "Education Committee" would consist of two groups: one drawn from the Changwad Council and the Municipal Council--this group had to be elected by the two Councils. The other group must consist of those qualified persons selected by members of the two councils. This group must have one less member than the former group. The term of each Changwad Education Committee member would last four years.

Changes in Curriculum and Methods

As has been mentioned earlier, the curriculum for primary education was inadequate; reform in this area was another obvious educational need. Consequently, the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform set up guidelines for curriculum change. Emphasis was placed on developing the potential of individuals, localities, and the nation. These principles included the following:

1. Education that would help develop individual potential must aim at:

1.1 Providing children with a proper physical environment as well as the opportunity to learn at an appropriate age level.

1.2 Promoting and developing children's capacities for problem solving, creating and discovering useful knowledge corresponding to their age and environment.

1.3 Developing and forming character, good work habits, and the ability to work in a group.

1.4 Encouraging primary-school children to utilize what they have learned for their own benefit and the benefit of their family.

1.5 Strengthening the children's development both physically and mentally so that they would become productive individuals, with a sense of obligation to their fellow men.

1.6 Instilling in the children the value of life and humanity.

2. Education for the locality should emphasize the following:

2.1 Inculcating in the children a sense of duty and responsibility to society; they should be taught that their own good and the good of the community are one.

2.2 Instilling in the children the love of their own community. They should be taught that it is their duty to contribute to and conserve local resources.

2.3 Educating children to preserve, to transmit, and to improve customs and traditions in the locality.

2.4 Encouraging children to discover local needs and to apply what they have learned to improve their own life as well as the local economy.

3. Education for the nation should include the following:

3.1 Imparting upon the students as Thai citizens, a knowledge of rights, duties and responsibilities as defined by their constitutional monarchy.

3.2 Instilling in the students a pride in their nationality and a realization of the value of their freedom and sovereignty.

3.3 Inculcating in children an awareness of, and an interest in, politics and government.

3.4 Instilling in the children a love and appreciation of their nation's art and culture, and a sense of responsiblity for conserving and promoting their cultural heritage.

3.5 Inculcating children with a sense of honesty and justice, and a need to minimize social inequality.

Education at the primary level is believed to be a basic need for the masses; this need is expressed in and by the conditions outlined in the Compulsory Education Act. Therefore, it is essential to consider the curriculum content and the learning process in greater detail. In order

to provide mass education which would be beneficial to the individual, the locality and the nation, the following objectives were set up:

1. One part of the content must be compulsory for everyone, since they share the common element of Thai citizenship. Another part, however, must be flexible (and optional) and dependent upon an individual's aptitudes and interests as well as local needs.

2. The prescribed content must be compatible with the learners' age level--approximately between the ages of 6 and 12 years. Therefore, the scope of the content must not be too broad for primary school children, but rather, must be basic knowledge appropriate for their age.

3. The prescribed content should have two objectives: it should be designed for the learner's long-term benefit; and it should be useful to the student in his daily life (within the structure of a rapidly changing society).

The following are experiences that primary school children would gain from the reformed curriculum:

1. Basic skills including reading and writing must be viewed as essential for daily living;

2. Agricultural skills based on scientific and technological techniques, including experimentation, must be introduced since the majority of Thais are engaged in agriculture;

3. Knowledge regarding cooperative activities and marketing operations;

4. Knowledge concerning population, the conservation of natural resources, and individual hygiene and public health;

5. Knowledge regarding laws, rights and responsibilities of Thai citizens;

6. Desirable attitudes towards the nation, religion, and the King;

7. Thinking analytically and rationally and applying it to everyday situations;

8. A feeling of morality, based on acceptable beliefs;

9.A sense of appreciation of beauty and being able to express oneself constructively;

10. Knowledge concerning individual physical health and hygiene as well as public health;

Based on the aforementioned experiences, curriculum content could be categorized under the following four headings:

1. Academic experience including science and technology, geography, history, environment, population, health, education, law and civics;

2. Skill experience consisting of the Thai language and arithmetic;

3. Aesthetic and moral experiences encompassing art, music, literature and morals;

4. Manual experience suitable for school-aged children.

The Learning Process

With regard to the learning process, the committee considered various facets such as developmental psychology, flexibility of the content and environment, and subsequently drew up guidelines for the learning process:

1. The content must be assigned in topics and the topics must be related to one another rather than being divided into separate subjects (as they were previously) in order that such topics could simulate daily living situations.

2. No specific time-tables for subjects or activities were to be designated; the introduction of subject matter was to be dependent upon the topic being studied. The school year was to be at least 200 days long.

3. The students were free to learn according to their own individual ability; competition was discouraged.

4. The students were to study general topics together, but could study optional subjects individually depending upon their own interests.

5. The government should provide a good selection of textbooks, teaching and learning materials and equipment. A

small number of textbooks should be given to each student while a greater number of reference and comprehensive books should be available so that the learners could study individually.

6. The construction of school buildings should take place with two goals in mind: economy and the creation of a pleasant atmosphere for the learners.

7. Regulations and discipline are still essential to an academic atmosphere, but they must be meaningful, and accepted by the group.

8. A good role model for appropriate behavior is necessary; teachers should provide this model. In addition, they should guide the learners in problem solving and learning through discovery rather than presenting themselves as sources of absolute knowledge.

9. Learning should not be limited to a formal classroom situation, but should be viewed as taking place throughout an individual's lifetime.

Evaluation Techniques

Techniques of evaluation in Thai primary school system continued to be inappropriate. This inappropriateness was most apparent in the vast number of grade repeaters. In response to this problem, the following reforms were proposed:

1. Evaluation should be a part of the teaching-

learning situation, and should assist in the development of the learning process. There are two types of evaluation:

1.1 Formative assessment--for the improvement of the curriculum and to develop the learning situation.

1.2 Summative assessment--for the purpose of administration and the control of school standard.

2. Evaluation techniques should be geared to assess an individual's progress.

3. The assessment should be conducted by teachers. Standardized tests are to be used occasionally as a means of maintaining set standards.

4. Tests which measure content learning should not merely be based on memorization but should also assess the learners thinking and problem-solving abilities.

5. Techniques of evaluation should vary depending upon the nature of each subject.

6. The assessment must not be regarded as more important than the teaching-learning process, therefore courses of study should include a variety of activities as well as methods for assessment.

The following summarizes the suggested techniques for evaluation:

1. New evaluation systems must assess the topics taught. The end-of-the-year examinations must be abolished.

2. Standardized tests for the assessment of the

teaching-learning process must be constructed during the year so that the learning process can be improved.

3. More empahasis must be placed on the significance of the topics taught rather than the "certificates" earned.

4. At the primary level, an "automatic promotion" system should be widely used.

Educational Supervision

Teacher supervision, like other aspects of the Thai primary school system, remained inadequate. In order to make the supervision system more effective in terms of the development of the teaching-learning process, school supervision was divided into three different levels:

1. School level: An effective supervision of teaching must be conducted within the schools. School principals, teachers of each subject division, and teachers who specialize in certain subject areas (master teachers) must be trained to supervise teachers on all levels. In addition, help and cooperation could be procured outside the schools; resource persons from local educational authorities or from teacher training colleges could be recruited to help.

2. Local level: Local educational officials and supervisors must take responsibility for helping and supervising teachers with regard to the utilization of textbooks, reference books, and instructional materials. They should assist in the development of curriculum and teaching-learning process, and should work to coordinate their education

program with the program outlined by the regional education office.

3. Central level: Since the Ministry of Educational Affairs was to be responsible for controlling academic standards of education at the national level, it is essential that there be supervisors, specialized in different academic areas, charged with the development of curriculum, textbooks, and the teaching-learning process. In addition, those supervisors must coordinate the efforts of supervisors at the regional education offices.

Methods of carrying out educational supervision are as follows:

1. A number of local supervisors (the total being based on number of schools and nature of their tasks) must be stationed in close proximity to a group of local schools so that they could assist these schools and help coordinate regional education offices on academic matters. Specific subject area supervisors are not to be appointed.

2. In the beginning phase of the reform, supervisors at regional offices must work as mobile supervisory units to advise and work cooperatively with local schools in relation to the reform of curriculum, the teaching-learning process, and evaluation techniques including the follow-up of academic tasks.

3. Supervision of teaching and educational service should cut across primary, secondary, and non-formal levels

of education in order that mutual utilization of personnel, instructional materials and equipment could be made possible.

4. Rotation of personnel--between administrative and supervisory posts, the central offices and regional offices--should be encouraged. Supervisors must have some practical experience in a school setting.

5. Local supervisors must work hand-in-hand with local schools, teacher training institutions, and regional education offices. The responsibility for in-service training should be in the hands of teacher training institutions with a supervisor as a coordinator.

6. In organizing the supervision system centrally, regionally, and locally, the existing system (which is based on specific subject area supervision) must be changed to correspond with the new teaching-learning process as well as with the needs and real situations in schools.

7. Supervisors must be given academic freedom in order to become educational leaders.

Solutions to Problems in Educational Reform

In reforming the school system to the 6:3:3 pattern, and in undertaking the extension of compulsory education to six years, the existence of a number of problems concerning teachers, curriculum, school buildings and repetition of grades became inevitable. The Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform set up measures as

possible solutions to such problems. Since curriculum problems were presented earlier, the following section will examine other problems inherent in the reform program.

Teachers

a) Under the educational reform, primary compulsory education will require only six years of schooling; in areas where the extension of compulsory education is enforced (as mentioned in Chapter IV) seventh grade will no longer exist. Therefore, there will be a great number of seventh-grade teachers who will have no classes to take over. However, a number of seventh-grade teachers can be transferred to teach the first-grade students in junior secondary schools while others will be "loaned out" to teach Grade 5 (Prathom 5) children in areas where the extension of compulsory education from fourth to sixth grade will be enforced. Within four years all primary-school teachers could resume teaching in primary schools. Consequently, it is thought that there is no need to recruit new primary-school teachers in the new primary school system.

b) To keep teachers informed about the new educational system, training courses must be provided so that any new information could be widely disseminated. The training course should be carried out as follows: school principals and Changwad education officers must be in the first training group; they would be followed by teachers of Prathom 1

(Grade 1), and teachers of Mathayom 1 and 2 (Grades 7 and 8) in junior secondary schools, since both groups are involved in the preliminary stage of the reform.

c) To cope with the problem of a shortage of teachers in remote rural areas, and the problem of teachers leaving their home town, local adults who hold a certificate of secondary education could be given intensive training (with great emphasis on teacher training courses) so that these graduates could begin their teaching career in such localities. Those adults could then become temporary teachers or teacher aides.

School Buildings

During the first year of educational reform plan, there exists no need to recruit new primary school teachers. Therefore, the appropriations earmarked for hiring new teachers could be used for the construction of new school buildings; these funds could supplement the budget already allocated for this purpose.

Repetition of Grades

Under the existing school system, a number of students repeated primary grades. A problem is created, however, when these students have to study a new curriculum with new students. To solve this problem, the repeaters should receive their credits for the subjects they took

according to the old curriculum; only the subjects they did poorly in should be retaken.

Results Expected from Educational Reform

If the recommendations for educational reform made by the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform are followed, it is expected that the end result will be an increase in educational efficiency and productivity, and an acceleration of national development. In essence, the reform would benefit the total society.

In accordance with these goals, specific outcomes would include the following:

1. With the new educational reform, formal as well as non-formal education would be a life-long process stressing the learner's development as a well-rounded person, a good citizen with a moral conscience, and an agent working for the common good of society.

2. Under the new reform, the administrative system would be both centrally and locally unified through the participation of local people; there will be an increase of educational efficiency, and a minimization of costs; the duplication of work will be eradicated; people will feel more responsible for their own lives and for society as a whole.

3. A new method of allocating educational appropriations will promote social equality; the method will aim at

providing compulsory education and non-formal education for the majority of people in the country.

4. Since Thailand is an agrarian country, a new structure of primary, secondary, and non-formal education will support such a base for the Thai economy. Education under the new structure will stress agriculture, intermediate technology relevant to local conditions, and the creation of different kinds of skills. Accordingly, agriculture will be considerably improved and will give maximum crop yields.

5. Reform of the educational structure will promote democracy through a variety of means, including the decentralization of education and public participation in organizing education, curriculum, and the learning process. The reform is geared to create a genuine democratic society by emphasizing the concept of personal rights, as well as that of social responsibility.

The reform proposes to provide the following social benefits:

1. According to the educational reform, the new curriculum is geared towards training students to be able to work after leaving school, regardless of level completed; individual ability will be considered, but low ability will not force the student out of school. As a result, parents would not be pressured to find schools which would accept

their children; compulsory education will be provided for all students.

2. Adult citizens will be able to attend schools which fit their aptitudes and interests; attendance, admission and progress are flexible.

3. People will have an opportunity to further their education at a higher level by participating in a variety of types of non-formal education.

4. Public and private school teachers will have their status raised and their career made more secure through the formation of a new teachers' association to protect their rights and benefits. With the teaching profession, they will be given more freedom in deciding career goals.

5. The emphasis on equality will provide an educational system for the masses and create social justice since equal educational opportunities will be available to high as well as low socio-economic status individuals, and to those people in urban as well as rural areas.

The recommendations for the reform of the Thai educational system at all levels, made by the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, promise significant changes in Thai public primary education. Such changes include: the State's assumption of the responsibility for the provision of free compulsory education; the adoption of a 6:3:3 plan with a more open and flexible

system; a unified educational policy and administration undertaken centrally and regionally; decentralization of educational administration in the Bangkok Metropolis as well as the provinces carried out by the "Education Committee"; curriculum content changed to take into account the learner's developmental age, needs and experiences, as well as the changing society, science and technology; a learning process enabling the learner to develop his or her creativity, rational thinking, discovery of learning relevant to the learner's experiences and social conditions; and automatic promotion utilized as a technique of evaluation.

The final chapter will examine strengths and weaknesses in the reorganization and extension of Thai public elementary education.

CHAPTER VI

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUBLIC ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND THE EXTENSION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

During the last three decades the Thai primary education system had undergone vast organizational and functional changes. The 1966 transfer of the control of public elementary schools from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of the Interior, and the extension of the period of compulsory education from four to seven grades are among these changes. Since problems are almost inevitable when vast changes are undertaken, this section will examine the strengths and weaknesses of these changes.

Strengths and Weaknesses in the Transfer of Responsibility for Public Elementary Education

In assessing the transfer of responsibility for Thai primary education, it becomes apparent that there are positive outcomes in such a reorganization. The 1966 transfer of responsibility for Thai public elementary schools, characterized by delegating the control of public education to the local government, appears to be sound since this system

manifested a "democratic spirit." In other words, under the Constitution the local administrative bodies were given full responsibility to carry out all types of administration including education. Furthermore, by virtue of the democratic system, such decentralization could be a means for the promotion of local interest, participation and initiative in school affairs.

This reorganization was also expected to ease the burden of the central government in allocating educational appropriations for public primary education. After the transfer, for example, there was an increase in educational expenditure for public elementary schools since the Changwad Administrative Organization could supplement the budget with local taxes and private donations (see Table 6 and Figure 2 in Chapter III). Finally, the Changwad Administrative Organization is considered to be in a better position to assume the legal tasks of enrolling and checking attendance of school-aged children so that the application of the compulsory education law is more effective; district officers are able to take legal action against parents if they neglect to send their children to school.

After considering the strengths of the transfer of responsibility for public primary education, it is essential to further scrutinize some weaknesses that are evident in this reorganization. First, as noted previously, the responsibility for public primary schools was divided between the

Changwad Administrative Organization of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education, this division could cause problems of coordination between these two Ministries. When a lack of coordination exists, a chain of events might occur--a conflict of duties between the two Ministries or duplication of personnel leading to non-economical management are possible. Finally, it is impractical to have primary and secondary education controlled separately by two different government agencies (the former under the Changwad Administrative Organization and the latter under the Ministry of Education) since these two education levels are viewed as a cooperative venture.

Second, efforts had been made to decentralize the control of public primary schools to local units. But the system continues to remain centralized. The Changwad Administrative Organization, for example, which is responsible for the administration of local primary schools is still under the control of the Governor and his deputy. Even some major decisions regarding educational matters are usually made at this level and passed down to those below.

Third, the Changwad Administrative Organization with the Governor as its executive, is responsible for a number of various tasks including education at provincial and district levels. The Governor's other responsibilities plus his absence of expertise in the field of education, however,

make this task difficult.[1] Finally, with regard to the promotion of interest and participation in public education, it appears that the community or local residents frequently make monetary contributions rather than taking part in educational affairs despite the fact that the rationale for the transfer of responsibility for public primary education relied heavily on the need for citizen participation. Resource persons in each locality should be encouraged to suggest changes and assume responsibility for education at the local level. Perhaps, in addition to their poverty and their lower level of education,[2] a habit of acceptance of authority keeps many citizens from attempting to exert influences on their local schools.

Strengths and Weaknesses in the Extension of Compulsory Education

As already indicated, the Karachi Plan of 1960 was partly responsible for the extension of Thai compulsory education. A fourth-grade education is the average level attained by the majority of the Thai population. This level, however, is considered by the government to be incompatible with the rapidly changing society characteristic of post-war

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[1]Jasper J. Valenti, "Current Problems and Developments in Thai Education," International Review of Education 20 (1974): 77.

[2]Huvananda, "A Study of Certain Aspects of Public Primary Education Administration in Thailand: A Case of Public Primary Schools under the Responsibility of the Changwad Administrative Organization since the Transfer in 1966," p. 171.

Thailand. The adoption of the Karachi Plan in extending compulsory schooling to Grade 7 was another change in the primary education system which should be identified in terms of strengths and weaknesses. The strengths of the extension of compulsory primary education are as follows:

1. It increases the economic level of the nation. There is a significant relationship between the level of educational development and the nation's economic growth.[3] The government under the Sarit regime, realized that educational advancement could increase the productivity of the nation; Sarit stated that according to some economists interested in education, if primary compulsory education could be made accessible to all Thai people, then the increase of productivity could reach 44-50 percent.[4]

2. It promotes social and economic mobility. An enforcement of compulsory education in Thailand not only helps to promote economic growth of the nation, but also makes a significant contribution to the social and economic mobility of the population. The school itself deals with attitudes, life styles and the development of the total personality. In addition, the school also performs a significant function

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[3]Harold J. Noah and Max A. Eckstein, Toward a Science of Comparative Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1969), p. 131.

[4]Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal, "Kum Prasai Khong Jompol Sarit Thanarat" (Special Lecture of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat), Witthayajarn 8 (July 1962): 576.

by helping the individual develop skills in thinking--another requirement for mobility. In summary, the school could, through these functions, influence Thai social and economic systems.

3. An enlightened citizenry--With the advent of democracy in the 1930's, the political system assumed the birth of universal suffrage in Thailand. But it is not feasible to expect all Thai people to participate in and support the political system; social problems such as the urban-rural gap and the persistence of strong minority groups are complicated by individual difference to or ignorance of political realities. With the implementation of the extension of compulsory education from four to seven grades, however, it can be expected that political awareness will also increase.

The extension of compulsory primary education has had a great effect on Thai society as well as the educational system, yet, a number of problems persist. For example, the objectives of the extension of compulsory primary education do not correspond with the social and economic realities of the rural society in which the majority of Thais live. Examining the curriculum prescribed for upper primary education, it becomes apparent that students are not given sufficient training, skill and knowledge to meet career needs. As long as academic-oriented subject matter prevails, the primary education system will support the

expansion of education at the secondary and higher level despite the fact that the national economic development plan calls for agricultural education aimed at improvement of rural areas. A realistic system of primary education in Thailand is possible, but dependent upon the following factors: (1) sufficient funding, (2) a vocational component, and (3) a recognition of the fact that such a system must address itself to those students (the majority of the population) who will not continue on to secondary schools, and perhaps the university.

It can be said that the transfer of responsibility for public elementary education from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of the Interior in 1966 considerably signifies a "decentralized" system of education; it encourages local participation in organizing public education; and more educational outlays can be derived from local tax available. This transfer, however, calls for attention since it has fostered other problems: (1) a lack of coordination between the two Ministries responsible for the primary education level; (2) a duplication of work; (3) a lack of unified control of elementary and secondary education; (4) a shortage of experienced persons in the field of education. With regard to the extension of compulsory education from Prathom 4 to 7 (grades 4 to 7) as recommended by the Karachi Plan of 1960, it was difficult to implement the plan because of insufficient financial resources. As a

matter of fact, education at the primary level must be considered to be of prime importance as it significantly raises the social and economic levels of the country.

Major Conclusions

The major conclusions of this study, then, are:

1. Thailand has undergone significant changes in the reorganization of public elementary education between 1946 and 1974.

2. Since 1946 there has been a tremendous extension of elementary education to children and youth who previously would not have received the benefit. In this extension Thailand has evidenced a commitment to the Karachi Plan of 1960 which was agreed upon by many Asian nations.

3. With the official purpose of decentralizing education, the last decade has witnessed the transfer of the control of compulsory education to the Ministry of the Interior. This transfer has introduced many new problems as well as it has exacerbated older bureaucratic ones. Despite the shortcomings of the transfer action it appears that the arrangement will continue.

4. While educational expenditures at all levels have been increasing, the manpower planning approach followed by the National Ministry of Education has placed greater emphasis on secondary, vocational and higher education at the expense of primary education. Some economic research on

Thai development based on a cost benefit analysis approach shows greater social rate of return for the lower primary level and progressively lower rate of return for higher levels. The Ministry of Education has not accepted this argument for the shifting of emphasis to primary education.

5. In 1974 under a more democratically inclined constitutional and elected government, a reform plan was proposed which aims at the most extensive decentralization of control and policy making in education in Thai history. The plan is being re-examined by the regime which came into power in October 1976.

6. It is difficult to predict exactly what will happen to public elementary education in the future but it must be remembered that education has been a product of Thailand's political and social trends and hardly a force by itself for social change.

Implications

Since the strengths and weaknesses of the transfer of responsibility for public primary education and the extension of compulsory primary education in Thailand have been identified, the next step is to look for ways to alleviate these weaknesses. The guidelines of educational reform recommended by the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, as mentioned in the preceding chapter can serve as a framework for change:

1. To eradicate the conflict of coordination resulting from two Ministries sharing responsibility for primary education, a new Ministry of Edcuational Affairs, acting as a central unit, will be responsible for policy making and administration at the national level (such as the allocation of appropriations, and technical tasks).

2. In the Bangkok area, the Bangkok Metropolis will be responsible for educational administration and organization at all levels except higher education, with an "Education Committee" being independently responsible for tasks of educational administration and policy making; the "Changwad (Province) Educational Committee" is responsible for such tasks at the provincial level. It should be noted that an "Education Committee" must include some qualified individuals elected by the Council to participate in educational affairs in the locality.

3. With the new reform, compulsory primary education will consist of a six-year course. In addition, the new pattern of the Thai educational system will become 6:3:3. Eventually, the State will be solely responsible for compulsory primary education throughout the country in order to assure equality of opportunity in education.

4. The reformed curriculum must include reading, writing, and agricultural skills based on scientific and technological techniques; experimentation also will be emphasized.

The guidelines for Thai educational reform, made by the Committee for Establishing the Framework for Educational Reform, will be successfully implemented if they are supported by a state political and social system as well as a receptive educational system. Administrators, educators, teachers and citizens must work together for the advancement of Thai education to ensure that education actually reaches the greatest possible number of Thai people.

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