

Southeast Asia by Our Bangkok Bureau

Kissinger on the hot seat in Thailand

General Kriangsak is publicly citing EIR's charge that Kissinger ordered his "judicial murder."

On the eve of Henry Kissinger's Nov. 21 arrival in Bangkok, the press corps and political elite of Thailand was buzzing with speculation about the former secretary of state's role in the jailing of Thailand's former prime minister and general, Kriangsak Chamonan. Kriangsak is currently awaiting trial for his alleged role in the aborted coup of Sept. 9.

Asia Week magazine went so far as to hint that Kissinger may be called in for official questioning, on charges—leveled by *EIR* in its Oct. 25, 1985 issue and widely reported in the Thai press—that he ordered the "judicial murder" of the former prime minister. *EIR* reported that during a luncheon in New York City, Kissinger told Thailand's current prime minister, Prem Tinsulamond, that General Kriangsak "is dangerous and should be eliminated."

Kriangsak, currently a parliamentarian, is one of the most highly respected political leaders in Thailand, and was in a position to take the point in a growing battle against the International Monetary Fund, begun by another former prime minister, Kukrit Pramoj of the Socialist Action Party.

Asia Week published an exclusive interview with Kriangsak in mid-November, during which the general passed reporter Anthony Pauls "a news clipping from a U.S.-based newsletter [*EIR*] alleging that Henry Kissinger has called for Kriangsak's 'judicial murder.'" Kriangsak further told the reporter that he is concerned about

"remarks he thinks were made about him to Prem in Jakarta by U.S. Ambassador John Holdridge on the morning of the coup."

Holdridge is a Kissinger flunkey who helped arrange Kissinger's 1971 trip to China.

On Nov. 19, Pauls' interview was published in its entirety in the prestigious *Bangkok Post*, the day before Kissinger's arrival for talks with Prem and Foreign Minister Siddhi Savestila. The paper also reported that Thai National Security Council Secretary-General Prasong Soonsiri had refused to confirm the *EIR* story.

Kissinger has made it clear that he will accept no interviews with Thai television, although he was scheduled for a live interview from Bangkok with ABC-TV.

EIR's charge has spread like wildfire throughout leading media and political institutions in Thailand, as the outlines of the U.S. State Department's plan to withdraw U.S. influence from the Asian theater becomes clear. Given Kriangsak's attempts to forge an independent course for Thailand amid the manipulations of Moscow, Peking, and Washington, it comes as no surprise that Kissinger would want to make Kriangsak into another "horrible example," as he did with former Pakistani President Ali Bhutto.

Earlier in November, the weekly *Chatatipatai (National Sovereignty)*, began running a series of articles on Kissinger's stand on defense matters,

and quoting *EIR* Contributing Editor Lyndon LaRouche that "Kissinger is a Soviet agent of influence."

By now, Bangkok's radio stations are abuzz with Kissinger-Kriangsak story. Media representatives are taking bets on who will be the first one to ask some nasty questions to Kissinger at his press conference at the Oriental Hotel.

On Nov. 21, the *Bangkok Post* reported that Kissinger himself had denied *EIR's* charges: "Kissinger described the report by the *EIR* which was widely quoted in local publications here as 'an absolute lie.' Kissinger told reporters on arrival here from Peking that he had never discussed this issue with any Thai official or anybody else." Prime Minister Prem also denied the report, as did U.S. Ambassador William Brown, who greeted Kissinger at the airport along with Thai Foreign Minister Siddhi Savestila.

The *Post* also stressed that Prime Minister Prem has announced that there will be no amnesty for Kriangsak and other senior generals.

According to the *Bangkok Post*, Kissinger said: "The *EIR* is well known for its obsessive hostility towards me and its inaccuracies. . . . I never discussed this issue with any Thai official or with anybody else. It is an absolutely internal Thai matter. I have no recommendation with respect to it. It is an absolute lie, an invention. And it has not even the slightest element of truth."

But such denials will not hold much water, given increasingly widespread knowledge of what Kissinger's policy represents. Paisal Thawatchainan, president of the Thai Trade Union Confederation (TTUC), reportedly used the *EIR* report on Kissinger in his speech before the Rhamkhamhaeng University student body in Bangkok on Nov. 16.