

THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE OFFICE  
OF THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE COUNCIL  
OF MINISTERS, B.E. 2502-3

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The two years following the bloodless revolution of October 20, 1958, have been a time of great change in Thai government and public administration. These brief months have witnessed the promulgation of an interim Constitution, the establishment of a Constituent Assembly, major developments in governmental policy regarding economic development, stern efforts to suppress opium, improvements in the governmental accounting system, enactment of a new budget law and important amendments to the revenue and customs laws, a number of significant changes within the ministries, a shift to a five day work week, some improvement of the retirement system of the public service and some simplification of civil service salary provisions. One of the important developments has been a basic reorganization of the Office of the President of the Council of Ministers (hereafter referred to as the Prime Minister's Office).

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*The Prime Minister of Thailand must rely upon a large and complicated administrative system. He is responsible for seeing that the parts of the system are reasonably well coordinated, and he must indicated very clearly what basic standards and values are to be followed within the administrative system.*

The responsibilities of the government -- and its Prime Minister -- have grown larger with every passing year, as the country has grown larger in population and productivity, as living standards have risen, and as new needs have emerged to be met by the government. The burdens of the Prime Ministership have grown, as they will continue to grow in the future. The organization of the Prime Minister's Office is thus a very important matter. Let us therefore examine the recent developments in the organization of this Office, and try to find answers to these questions:

1. What changes have taken place in the Office of the Prime Minister?
2. What general effects do these appear to have had upon government and administration in Thailand?
3. To the limited extent that it is possible to comment from afar, what effects have these changes had upon the powers of the Prime Minister and the effectiveness of his Office?

### Developments in the Organization of the Office of the Prime Minister

October 20, 1958 - February 9, 1959.

#### First Phase - Reorganization of the Office

The first phase of the Prime Ministership of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat actually ended with his appointment as President of the Council of Ministers, on February 9, 1959. Between October 20, 1958 and that time he was the head of a Revolu-

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tionary Government. There were no Ministers, no Prime Minister, and no formal legal government until after the promulgation of the Interim Constitution of January 28, 1959.

During this three month period of revolutionary government Field Marshal Sarit consolidated his control of the government. During this time also there was a great burst of planning activity at the center of the government. Dozens, and perhaps hundreds of officials were summoned to Government House and put to work on special studies and assignments, much of this effort being aimed at a broad review of governmental policy and activity in a variety of fields.

This feverish effort led to significant developments in national policy, many of them effected after the reestablishment of the official government early in 1959. One example was a redirection and intensification of efforts in the broad field of economic planning and economic development.

During this time also plans were made for a reorganization of the Office of the Prime Minister, and first steps to implement these plans were announced one day before the promulgation of the Interim Constitution. On January 27, 1959 Proclamation No. 57 of the Revolutionary Group<sup>1</sup> was issued, providing that:

1. In all laws, rules and regulations, the phrase "Office of the Council of Ministers" is hereby replaced by the words "Office of the President of the Council of Ministers."

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1. Royal Thai Government Gazette (all citations are to the English language version International Translations, Bangkok, Vol. 2, B.E. 2502 A.D. 1959), p. 98. In the body of the text, all dates are given according to the Christian calendar. In footnotes, official acts are dated according to the Buddhist Era. To convert B.E. to A.D., subtract 543.

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2. A new office was established within the Office of the Prime Minister, the "Executive Office of the President of the Council of Ministers," with the Prime Minister or his delegate as responsible head. Provision was also made for an executive secretary to head up this office, and for such other deputies and assistants as might be deemed necessary, all of these to be political officials rather than ordinary civil servants.

3. The former Office of the Secretary General of the President of the Council of Ministers was dissolved, and its activities, officials, and budget transferred to the new Executive Office.

4. The Prime Minister explicitly asserted the power to organize his executive office as he might see fit, and the power to make appointments and fix compensation.

This move suggested that the Premier Minister recognized the need for strengthening his administrative staff services, an indication borne out by many of the following developments in the Office of the Prime Minister.

#### Second Phase - Statutory Establishment of the Office

The first phase ended with the issuance of Proclamation No. 57.

This second phase consisted of the statutory establishment of the Office under the new Constitution. Later in phase three, this basic structure was further refined and developed on the basis of new needs and increased experience.

The provisions of the Interim Constitution promulgated on January 28, 1959 concerning the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers were brief and general: Until the formation of a Council of Ministers, the Leader of the Revolutionary Party, Field Marshal Sarit, was to discharge the duties both of Prime Minister and Council

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of Ministers.<sup>1</sup> In keeping with established practice, the Interim Constitution provided that "The King appoints a Prime Minister and an appropriate number of Ministers forming the Council of Ministers responsible for the national administration;<sup>2</sup> and that "The Council of Ministers exercises the executive power...in the name of the King."<sup>3</sup>

It also stated that.

*During the enforcement of the present Constitution, wherever the Prime Minister deems appropriate for the purpose of repressing or suppressing actions whether of internal or external origin which jeopardize the national security or the Throne or subvert or threaten law and order, the Prime Minister, by resolution of the Council of Minister, is empowered to issue orders to take steps accordingly. Such orders or steps shall be considered legal...and ..shall be made known to the National Assembly.<sup>4</sup>*

The Interim Constitution implied the power of the Prime Minister, but did not clearly assert it. Constitutional responsibility for the national administration and for the executive power was placed in the hands of the Council of Ministers. Thus, the political supremacy of the Prime Minister depends not upon an abstract constitutional base, but upon the real power of the Prime Minister to control the Council of Ministers. This appears to be a sound and logical arrangement which is consistent with established practice and compatible with the contemporary structure of political power in Thailand.

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1. RTGG, Vol. 2, The Interim Constitution of 28 January, pp. 83-85; section 16.
  2. Section 14
  3. Section 5
  4. Section 17
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On February 10, 1959, appointment of a Council of Ministers was announced, including two vice presidents of the Council, (Deputy Prime Ministers), General Thanom Kittikhachorn, former Prime Minister, and H.R.H. Krom Muen Naradhippongprabhand (Prince Wan), former Minister of Foreign Affairs. General Thanom was also appointed Minister of Defense. Eleven other Ministers were appointed, and the previous practice of establishing Deputy Ministers and in some cases Ministers Without Portfolio was not followed.<sup>1</sup>

Four days later, on February 14, a basic enabling act was issued prescribing the organization of the Office of the Prime Minister.<sup>2</sup> In effect this Act superseded Proclamation No. 57. It did these things:

*Broadly defined the powers of the Office to include for practical purposes, all powers and duties relevant to the functions of the Prime Minister and the Council of Minister not specifically within the jurisdiction of an existing Minister,*<sup>3</sup>

Prescribed the formal structure of organization of the Office, stated the specific changes to be made from the structure which had existed before the Revolution, and provided for the establishment of appropriate positions and the reassignment of personnel.<sup>4</sup>

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1. RTGG, Vol. 2, Notification of 10 February, pp. 117-118.
  2. RTGG, Vol. 2, Act on the Organization of the Office of the President of the Council of Ministers, 14 February, B.E. 2502, pp. 123-126.
  3. Section 4.
  4. Section 6,8,9—22
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Created a Budget Office within the Office of the Prime Minister, to be headed by a Director, a permanent official with a rank equivalent to undersecretary of a ministry, and transferred the business, the officials, and the funds of the Budget Service of the Central Accounting Department of the Ministry of Finance to the new Budget Office.<sup>1</sup>

Provided for a National Education Council to replace the former National University Council, and granted the new National Education Council the powers and duties specified under the National University Council Act of 1956.<sup>3</sup>

Placed the Prime Minister in full command of the Office, through broad grants of authority including:

1. designation of the Prime Minister as the responsible head of the Office, with authority to establish deputy presidents of the Council of Ministers, deputy ministers of the Office of the President of the Council of Ministers or Ministers in Charge of the Office of the President of the Council of Ministers, and with authority to authorize a deputy president of the Council of Ministers to act in his stead, or to appoint any Minister to do so.<sup>4</sup>

2. power to prescribe the organization structure of the Office and of its components through the issuance of Notifications of the Office of the

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1. Sections 4, 6, 11, 13, 21.

2. Section 22.

3. Section 5. Also, provision was made for the Council of Ministers to designate and authorize a Minister to act for the P.M. in the event that he is unable to act on has not authorized another person to act in his place.

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President of the Council of Ministers, such notifications being effective upon publication in the Royal Thai Government Gazette.<sup>1</sup>

3. broad powers over personnel, including the right to appoint as political officials a director (assistant), and deputy or assistant directors in the Prime Minister's Office with full control over the assignment of duties and powers to such officials;<sup>2</sup> including the authority to serve as chairman of the Civil Service Subcommission of the Office;<sup>3</sup> including the power to appoint persons to perform government service in his office, to fix their perquisites and compensation, and to order civil servants to serve in his Office with or without official transfer from their regular posts.<sup>4</sup>

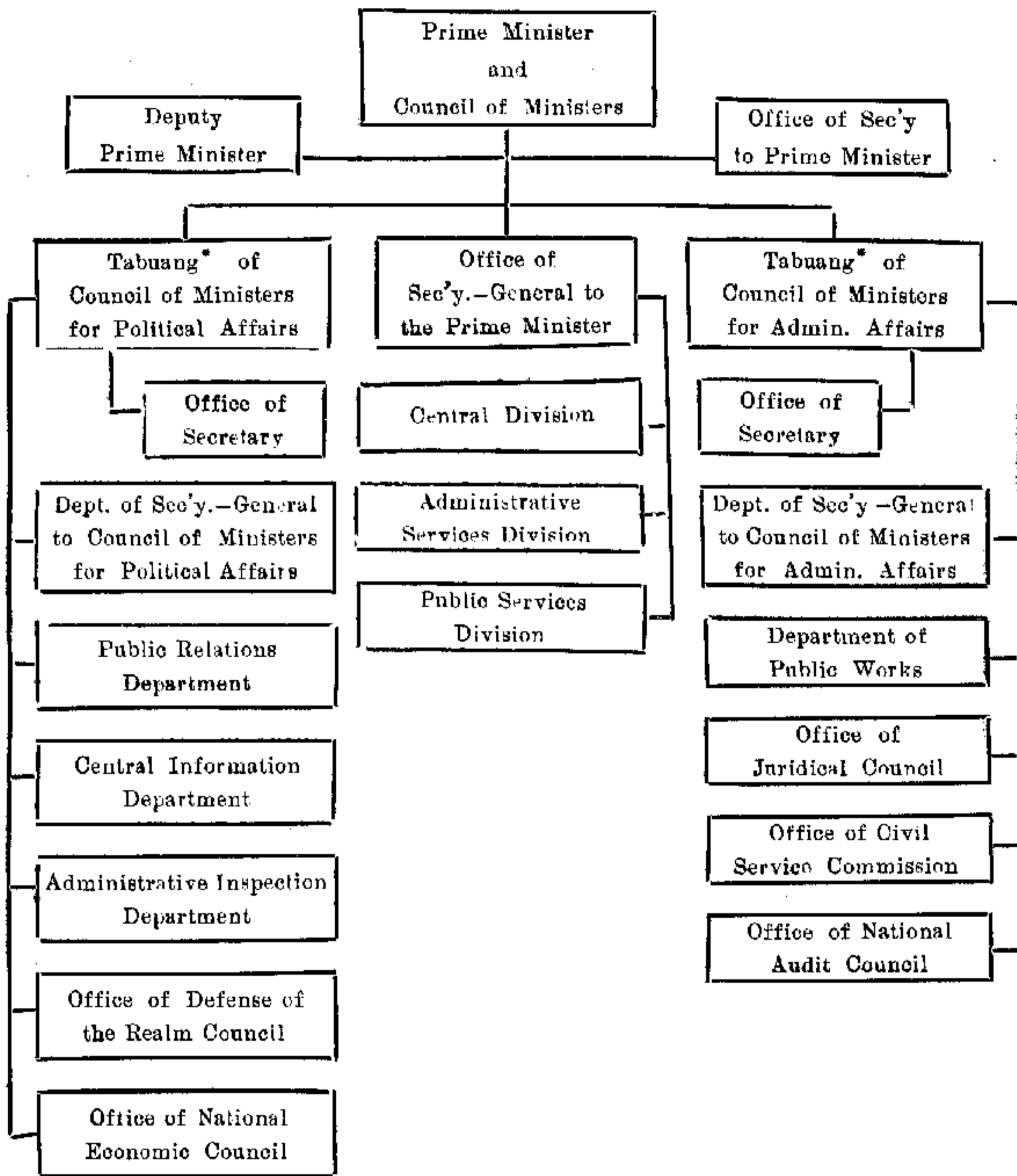
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1. Section 7.
  2. Section 8. Under this power, the Prime Minister appointed an assistant to himself, with broad authority to act for him.
  3. Section 14. Section 14 also provided that this Civil Service Subcommission "shall have the duty to assist the Civil Service Commission in its lawful functions," which could be interpreted as a broad grant of authority whose meaning would depend primarily upon its actual application.
  4. Sections 17, 18. Section 9 also granted the Prime Minister power to establish any political office within Government House "as he sees fit." Under Section 10, the Prime Minister also had authority to create additional posts in the Executive Office of the Prime Minister; Section 12 authorized establishment of deputies or assistants in the Office of the Secretary General to the Council of Ministers.
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The Act of 14 February established the basic organization structure of the Prime Minister's Office, a structure which has been modified and expanded in a number of ways since that time. The following two charts, showing the organization of the Office of the Prime Minister as it existed on January 1, 1956, during the administration of Field Marshal Phibulsonggram, and the organization structure as of February 14, 1959, present a broad picture of the nature of the changes which had taken place. The 1956 organization chart is generally representative of a pattern of organization which existed for several years (although some changes occurred after January 1, 1956 which are not shown). The February 14, 1959, chart portrays the basic structure of the new Office. A comparison of the two charts indicates some of the basic ways in which the Office has changed. The second chart is also useful in tracing the developments which have taken place since February 14, 1959, particularly when compared with Chart 3, describing the Office as of July, 1960.

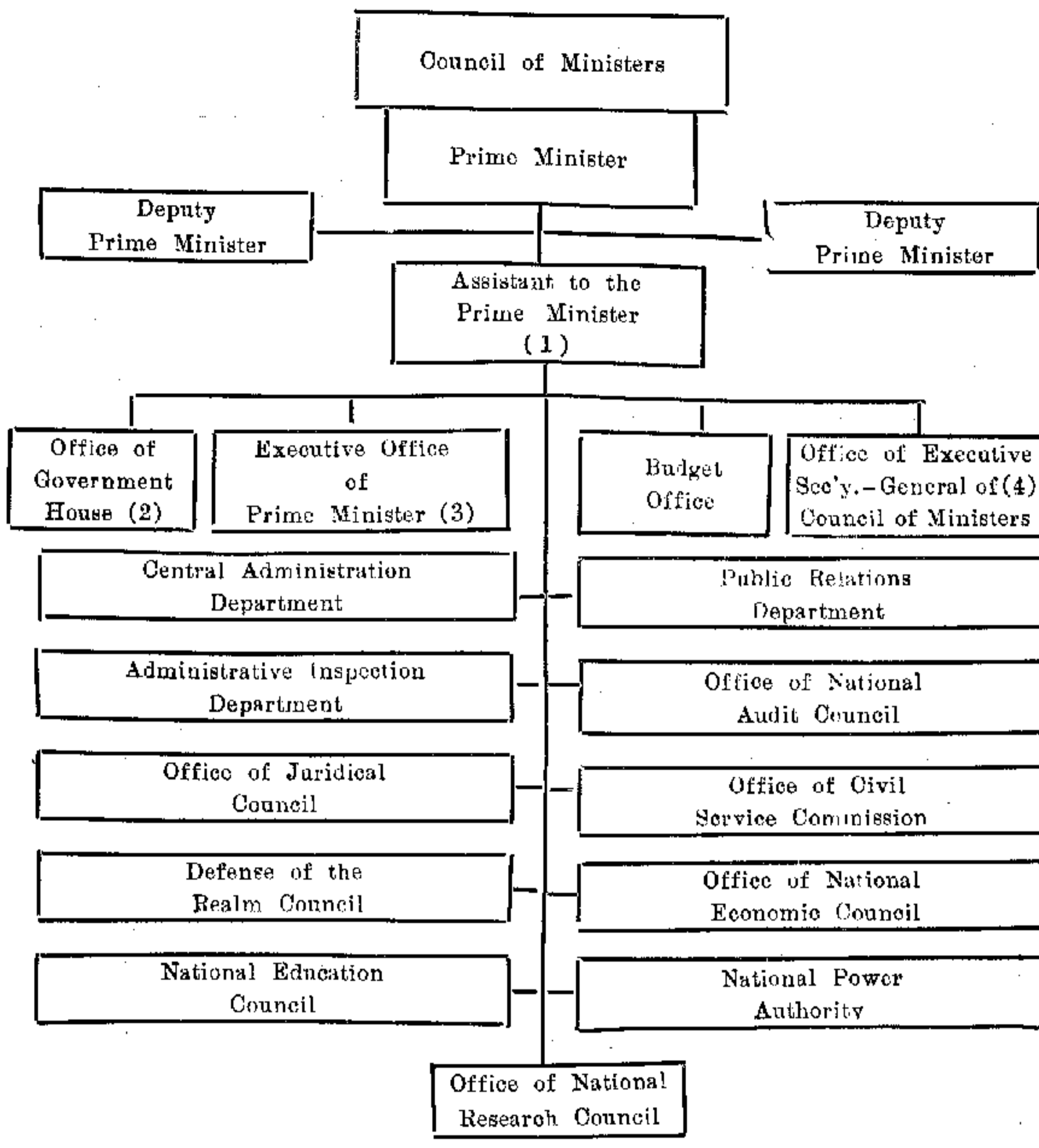
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Chart 1  
 ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
 as of January, 1956



\* Tabuang, a public body or organization with a status higher than that of a Krom (department), but distinguished from a Grasuang (Ministry). The only actual Tabuang level staff was in the office of the Secretary. Source: Adapted from Organization Charts, Institute of Public Administration, Thammasat University, 1956.

Chart 2  
 ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
 as of 14 February 1959



- (1) The Assistant to the Prime Minister, authorized in the Act of 14 February, to perform duties delegated by the Prime Minister and in effect to act for him in helping exercise his powers over his office.
- (2) Government House largely absorbed the expanded functions of the former office of Secretary General to the Prime Minister. It handles the paper going to and from the Prime Minister, among other things.
- (3) This became the personal staff office of the Prime Minister, and to this office have been attached a variety of committees assigned to study policy problems.
- (4) Essentially responsible for housekeeping and secretariat services; headed by a permanent official.

Source: Act on the Organization of the Office of the Prime Minister, 14

No organization chart ever presents a full picture of the structure of an organization; but a comparison of the charts one and two does suggest some things about the development of the Prime Minister's Office. Eleven existing department-level bodies were retained, but placed directly under the control of the Prime Minister and his assistant instead of under the two tabuang of the Council of Ministers, which ceased to exist.<sup>1</sup>

The developments shown by a comparison of the charts are (1) the expansion of the staff facilities of the Prime Minister's Office, including the creation of an assistant to the Prime Minister, and a Budget Office as a major device for administrative planning and control; and (2) the formal provision for direct control over all the elements of the Prime Minister's Office by the Prime Minister and his assistant, rather than by the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers jointly. In addition (3) the Public Works Department was transferred out of the Prime Minister's Office and assigned to the Ministry of Interior, to become part of the Department of Public and Municipal Works. The net effect of the Act of 14 February was to simplify, strengthen and expand the powers and duties of the Office of the Prime Minister, and to create a series of organizations directly and clearly subordinate to the Prime Minister himself.

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1. The eleven agencies, not all shown on Chart 1, existed prior to the Revolution. They were: departments of Central Administration, Administrative Inspection, and Public Relations, along with offices of Juridical Council, National Audit Council, Civil Service Commission, National Economic Council, and National Research Council, plus the Defense of the Realm Council, National Power Authority, and National Education Council.
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With the issuance of notifications defining the organization structure of Government House, the Executive Office of the Prime Minister, the Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, and the Budget Office<sup>1</sup>, and the formal appointment of officials to head up the established organizations,<sup>2</sup> phase two in the development of the Prime Minister's Office came to a close. The basic structure of the Office was officially established, and the organization was largely in active operation.

### Third Phase - Strengthening and Expansion of the Office

Between February, 1959 and July, 1960, a series of changes and developments occurred in the Office of the Prime Minister.

In July 1959, a new National Economic Development Council was established to replace the National Economic Council in the Prime Minister's Office, the

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1. To some extent, Phases two and three actually overlapped. The organization of Government House, of the Executive Office of Secretary General to the Council of Ministers was prescribed effective 16 February in a Notification dated 21 February, 2502. (RTGG, Vol. 2 pp. 135-136). The structure of the Budget Office was not actually prescribed until 13 April. (RTGG, Vol. 2 p. 201)
  2. Notifications of the appointment of nine key officials were issued 16 February. (RTGG, Vol. 2 p. 151). Col. Luang Vichitravatakarn was appointed Assistant to the Prime Minister, with equivalent rank of Undersecretary.
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Prime Minister serving as ex-officio chairman of the NEDC.<sup>1</sup> On September 6 the organization units including the National Census Agency, which had been under the old National Economic Council were officially transferred to the NEDC.<sup>2</sup> These units became part of an office under the NEDC, with broad responsibilities for economic studies and collection of basic statistical information, for the coordination of Thailand's participation in various foreign aid programs, and for studying, and establishing an order of priorities for the economic development plans and projects of governmental agencies and enterprises. The original NEDC law also provided for prior approval by the National Economic Development Council of budget requests for expenditures for economic development projects.<sup>3</sup> The 45 member Council and its 9 man executive committee were appointed 24 July. Interestingly enough, this Council is a very large body, containing highly diverse representation. The manner in which such a group can function effectively in economic planning is some what difficult to understand, although the executive committee is small enough to be rather focused and cohesive. However, the full time head of the Office of the Council has only the rank of a departmental director general. In some other countries a similar person possesses Ministerial rank, and no use is made of such a large body as the Council.

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1. See: RTGG, Vol. 2; National Economic Development Act, 3 July, pp 347-350; Act on Organization of Prime Minister's Office (No. 2.), 3 July; and Notice Re-Appointment of Members of National Economic Development Council, pp. 393-394.
  2. RTGG, Vol. 2, pp. 470-471.
  3. In June, 2503, the NEDC Act was amended to eliminate this broad grant of authority and responsibility.
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In August a significant reorganization of the universities occurred, along with a replacement of the National University Council Act of 1956. All major institutions of higher education with the exception of the College of Education were transferred to the Office of the Prime Minister.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the existing National Education Council was given broad new powers in relation to higher education and education generally, and an Office of the National Education Council headed by a Secretary General was established.<sup>2</sup> The Prime Minister serves as ex-officio chairman of the Council, whose members also include a Deputy Prime Minister, the rectors of the universities, the Director of the Budget Office, the Secretary General of the Office of the Council, and others as appointed by the Council of Ministers.<sup>3</sup> Duties of the council include review of the annual budgets of the various universities and consideration of needs for founding, dissolving or amalgamating various universities, as a basis for recommendations to the Council of Ministers. Direct power of the Council includes review and approval of university curricula, and the establishment, amalgamation or

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1. The schools transferred: The Agricultural University, Chulalongkorn University, Thammasat (University of Moral Science), the Medical University, and The Fine Arts University. (Act of 23 August, 2502; RTGG, Vol. 2 p. 456) See also Act on the Organization of the Prime Minister's Office (No. 3), 28 August, which officially prescribes the universities as parts of the Office of Prime Minister, assigning them the status of departments; RTGG. Vol. 2, pp. 456, 458.
  2. National Council of Education Act, 28 August, RTGG, Vol. 2, pp. 453-454.
  3. Ibid., Section 4.
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dissolution of university faculties. Further, under the act transferring the universities, the Prime Minister was authorized to issue ministerial regulations pursuant to such matters as salaries, appointments, transfers, discipline, enrollment of students, and the termination of university officials.<sup>1</sup>

Jointly, these two acts established a possible basis for integrated planning and control in the field of higher education, a mandate for broad educational policy planning not limited to higher education, and a broad grant of authority to the Prime Minister to direct and regulate university personnel administration and enrollment practices.

On 9 September the Prime Minister, by Royal Command, was also appointed Acting Director of the Police Department, Ministry of Interior.<sup>2</sup> This did not directly affect the organization of the Prime Minister's Office,<sup>3</sup> but it did represent a significant expansion of the responsibilities of the Prime Minister.

In September also the National Security Council Act of B.E. 2502 was adopted, abolishing the previous Defense of the Realm Council, creating a new National Security Council to advise in the coordination of policies concerning the security of the nation, and establishing an Office under the Council headed by a Secretary General.<sup>3</sup> The new NSC consists of the Prime Minister as chairman, a Deputy Prime Minister as vice-chairman, plus the ministers of Defense, Finance, Foreign Affairs,

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1. Act transferring the Universities, Sections 8 and 9.

2. RTGG, Vol 2, p. 471

3. National Security Council Act, 23 September 2502, RTGG, p. 477. See also: Organization of Office of Prime Minister Act (No. 4), 23 September, p. 478.

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Interior, and Communications, and the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces (Field Marshal Sarit). The Secretary General of the NSC Office is also member and secretary.

The Act appears to be a strengthening of an existing element of the Prime Minister's Office, rather than a major expansion.

On 27 October a new Budget Procedure Act was adopted, containing a broad and comprehensive statement of the powers and duties of the Director of the Office of the Budget, defining the basic budget process, and improving budget procedure in a number of ways.<sup>1</sup>

On 30 October Act No. 5 on the Organization of the Office of the Prime Minister was promulgated, adjusting salaries of personnel of the Office to conform with provisions of Civil Service Act No. 5 of the same day, which combined the previous base salaries and cost of living allowances into one single salary rate.<sup>2</sup> This act had no substantive effect upon the organization or operations of the Office.

A few days earlier, on 28 October, a new National Research Council Act had been passed, to replace the NRC Act of 1956.<sup>3</sup> The new Council, with the Prime Minister as chairman, was given broad powers and duties to promote and coordinate research in a far-ranging group of fields including physical and natural sciences, philosophy, engineering, industry and agriculture, law, economics, the social sciences and public administration. An Office was also established under the Council, headed by a Secretary-General aided by two deputies.

1. Budget Procedure Act of B.E. 2502, 27 October, RTGG, pp. 515-519
  2. Act on the Organization of the Prime Minister's Office (No. 5), B.E. 2502, RTGG, p. 571.
  3. NRC Act of 2502, RTGG, pp. 589-591.
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On November 24, a slight change was made in nomenclature, the official title of the Central Administration Department being replaced by a more descriptive term, Central Intelligence Department.<sup>1</sup>

On April 12, 1960, Act No. 7 on the Organization of the Prime Minister's Office was adopted, making a number of significant substantive changes:

1. New provisions were added to the basic legislation governing the Office of Prime Minister, clarifying somewhat the powers of the Prime Minister's Assistant "to assist in the direction or performance of official acts in place of the President of the Council of Ministers," in conformity with his directions.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, a provision was added for an "Office of the Undersecretary of the Office of the President of the Council of Ministers."<sup>3</sup> This new Office of Undersecretary of the Office of the Prime Minister was assigned powers and duties equivalent to those of the office of an undersecretary of a Ministry.<sup>4</sup> Further, the revised act, Section 6, reiterated the departmental status of the other elements of the Office of Prime Minister, thus placing them under the Undersecretary.

2. A second major change consisted of the abolition of the Department of Administrative Inspection, and the transfer of its business, property, budget,

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1. Act of the Organization of the Prime Minister's Office (No 6), B.E. 2502, RTGG, p. 617.

2. Act on the Organization of the Prime Minister's Office (No. 7) 12 April, B.E. 2503, Section 5, RTGG, pages

3. Section 6, as amended in the Act of 12 April, 2503

4. Section 8 bis, as added in the Act of 12 April, 2503

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and personnel to the Office of the Undersecretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, where it was organized as (a) the Government Inspection Service, plus (b) the Office of the Complaint Committee.<sup>1</sup> The Administrative Inspection Department, created during the administration of Marshal Phibulsonggram as an agency for maintaining surveillance over the conduct of public officials, had been subject to some previous criticism; one result of this reorganization was to lower its status somewhat.

3. Two new organizations were added to the Office of Prime Minister, having been created by specific legislation: the Office of the Commission for Investigation of Performance Relative to Taxes (better known as the Board of Taxation Supervisors), and the Office of the Export Promotion Commission.<sup>2</sup>

The Board of Taxation Supervisors and the Office attached to it represented a major addition to the Prime Minister's Office. The head of the Office, a Secretary-General, is a political official with the status of a departmental director-general, directly subject to the Board and to the Prime Minister. (A similar provision applies to the head of the Office of the Export Promotion Commission.) The Board of Taxation Supervisors has broad powers to study and investigate tax collection, tax evasion, and the conduct of tax collection officials.

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1. Section 8, ibid., plus the Notification on Organization of the Prime Minister's Office, effective 19 May, 2503, RTGG, June 14, 1960.

2. Section 6 and sections 12 bis and 12 ter of the Act on the organization of the Prime Minister's Office, as amended 12 April, 2503; also, Act for the Investigation of Performance Relative to Taxes and Other Revenue of the State, 12 April 2503, RTGG, May 14, 2503 and the Act Creating Export Promotion Commission.

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It has powers of subpoena and arrest, as well as authority to "study and do research in appropriate systems and methods of tax collection convenient and fair to taxpayers....."<sup>1</sup> The Prime Minister is authorized to appoint the Board and its Secretary-General, and to issue ministerial regulations under the Act.

Under this new act, in June, 1960, Colonel Luang Vichitravatakarn was officially appointed to the position of Assistant to the Prime Minister, which he had in effect helped from the time of the initial organization of the Prime Minister's Office. The major effect of the change in the top structure of the Office was the appointment of Luang Vichitravatakarn's assistant, Luang Athakaiwanwati, as Undersecretary in the Office, whereas Luang Vichitravatakarn is actually assistant in command (Palad Banchargan), the subordinate position of Undersecretary is actually that of Palad Samnak Navok, which resembles that of undersecretary of a ministry, responsible for administration, but not policy.

The following chart shows the structure of organization of the Prime Minister's Office as of July, 1960. It serves as a basis for an interesting comparison with Chart No. 2, which showed the organization of the Office as of February, 1959, 16 months earlier.

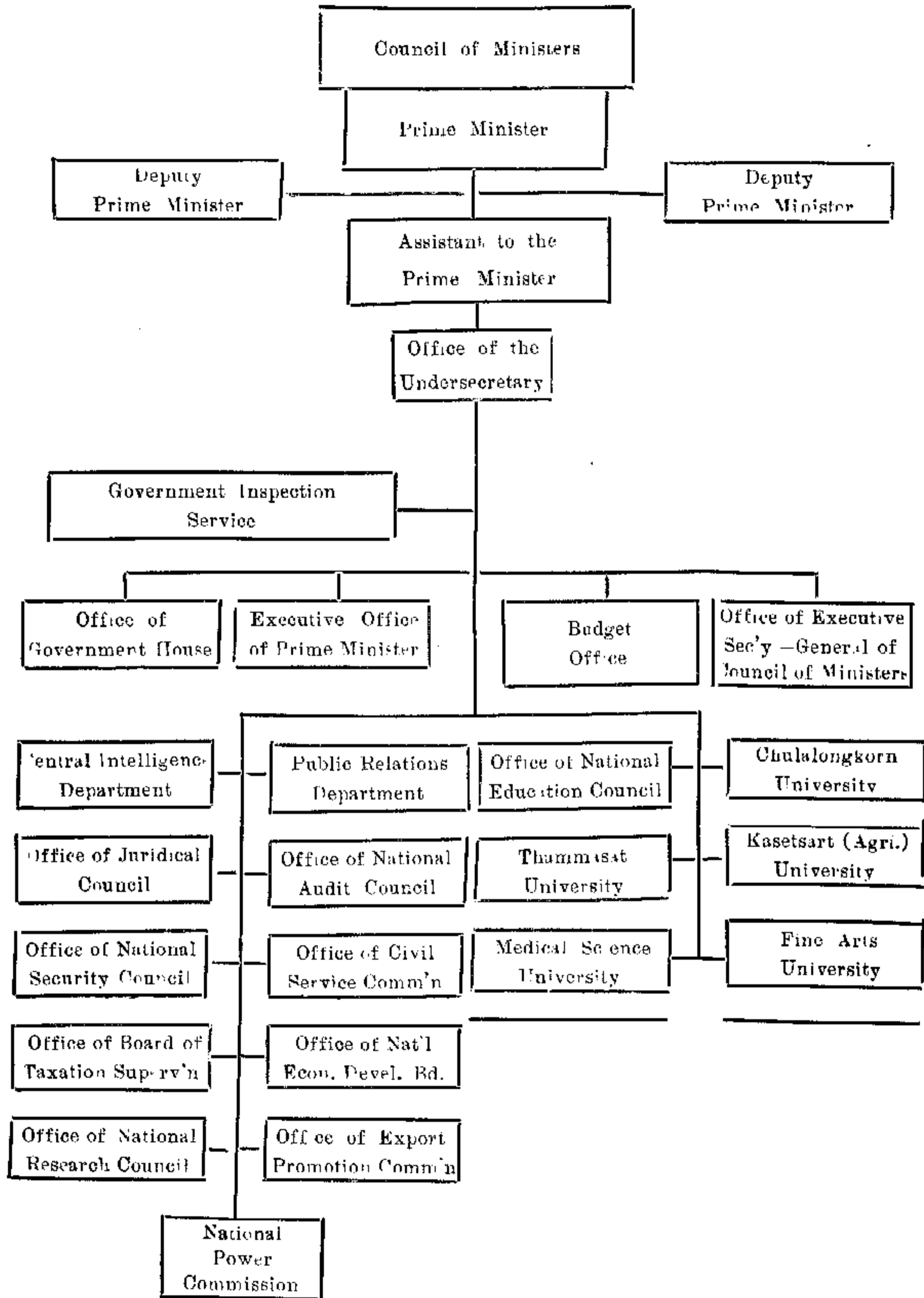
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1. Act for the Investigation of Performance, etc., Section 5.

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ORGANIZATION OF OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER

as of July, 1960



On July 4, 1960, it was announced that an Atomic Energy Organization will be established in the Office of the Prime Minister, an outgrowth of the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy headed by Air Marshal Phra Vejjayant Rangsarit.<sup>1</sup> The same report indicates that a plan is under consideration to establish an Office for Promotion of Tobacco Production, also within the Prime Minister's Office. The arguments in favor of establishing this Office at the highest level of the government are two: the need for developing tobacco production, and the need of this Office to be in a position to coordinate activities of such ministries as Agriculture, Finance, and Economic Affairs, all of which have responsibilities affecting tobacco production and use. At the time of this writing it is not known whether these proposals will be implemented. It seems clear, however, that there may be some danger in such a line of development: unrestrained expansion of the Prime Minister's Office to include a clutter of coordination agencies could conceivably defeat the basic aim of the development of the Office, which is simply to give broad and effective control over policy development and implementation to the Prime Minister. As fully as possible, interdepartmental and inter-Ministerial coordination of specific projects should be handled through "normal channels", including the budget process and the economic planning agency.

Further developments affecting the Organization of the Prime Minister's Office are quite likely, for this is the vital center of a dynamic government in which changes are rapid and frequent, and in which there is a strong and steady trend toward expansion. At this point, however, we return briefly to the second and third questions raised at the introduction to this paper, in an effort to assess the consequences of the developments which have so far occurred in the organization of the Office of the Prime Minister since the Revolution of October 20, 1958.

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1. Bangkok Post, July 4, 1960

### An Evaluation

During each of the three phases in the development of the Prime Minister's Office there has been a definite strengthening and expansion of the powers and responsibilities of that Office. As noted, the organizations we have been examining constitute the Office of the President of the Council of Ministers, and not the Office of the Council of Ministers, as they largely did during some earlier administrations. The Prime Minister's Office probably possesses more power than at any previous time.

The expansion of the Prime Minister's Office has been a movement in several directions. On one hand, there has been an enlargement of the "personal staff services" available to the Prime Minister, thus enabling him to do his work more effectively because of increased help available to him. The most important developments have been the establishment of an Assistant to the Prime Minister, and the later creation of an Undersecretary. Here many administrative services are performed, and many more or less routine "public services" are performed in behalf of the Prime Minister, including various welfare activities. In the Executive Office of the Prime Minister, one finds both foreign and domestic policy staffs and advisory groups, working directly upon assignments of concern to the Prime Minister. In the Office of the Undersecretary one again finds staff functions being performed, including the drafting of regulations and the collection of certain types of information for the Prime Minister. In addition, through the Administrative Inspection Service of the Undersecretary's Office, the Prime Minister is able to keep his finger on the pulse of the public service, in a manner of speaking, on the basis of reports obtained through continuing surveillance and investigation of the conduct of governmental officials.

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The Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers performs the essential secretariat functions connected with the work of the Council of Ministers, preparing agendas and minutes, drafting orders, furnishing legal information, issuing official documents in the Government Gazette, and performing various other functions.

The Juridical Council Office furnishes technical staff assistance in relation to bill drafting and related matters, and the Public Relations Department appears to combine two important functions: handling the technical and administrative work of public relations, and furnishing advice and assistance in matters of strategy and tactics of public relations.

Finally, the Assistant to the Prime Minister (Palad Banchargan) occupies a role somewhat similar to that held in the United States by Sherman Adams before his resignation, or by James Byrnes or Harry Hopkins during other administrations of U.S. Presidents. In a sense, the incumbent of this position is an extension of the personality of the Prime Minister himself, and represents the highest type of aide or assistant found in administrative organizations.

Not occupying administrative staff positions, but performing important executive and ceremonial functions, are the Deputy Prime Ministers. They likewise help bear what would otherwise be the overwhelming burdens of the Office.

In addition there has been an important growth of policy planning and policy control devices within the Prime Minister's Office. In some cases it is difficult to draw the line between personal staff and policy planning, but the establishment of the Budget Office, and the strengthening of economic planning apparatus through the creation of the National Economic Development Council are examples.<sup>1</sup>

1. As a result of an amendment to the NEDC Act in June, 2503, the actual power to coordinate economic planning has been considerably reduced, although the organization continues to possess general planning responsibilities.
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Depending upon the manner in which they actually function, the National Power Commission, National Research Council, National Security Council, and National Education Council may also serve as highly valuable devices for the development--and for the effective coordination--of governmental policy, along with the budget Office and National Economic Development Council.

In view of the relentless growth in the scope of governmental activity, and the prospect of continued growth in the years to come, the need for coordination of policy (and for coordination of the administration of policy) has become one of the most important needs to be met by the Government of Thailand. Devices established or strengthened during the present administration which help meet this need make an important contribution to the Nation and its Government. Such coordination requires functioning councils and competent secretariats for those councils at the level of the Prime Minister's Office, for this is the level at which coordination is essential. Unless top policies are coordinated, there can be no coordination of either policy or administration at lower levels. A prime responsibility of the National Education Council, for example, is the coordination of policies and programs in higher education.

Another line of development within the expanded Office of the Prime Minister has been some increase or strengthening in the facilities available for the collection and evaluation of information necessary to effective policy decision-making. Some of this has long been the responsibility of the Central Intelligence Department. Conceivably the National Research Council may grow to provide useful information in various areas, as well as to help stimulate and coordinate research generally.

Another pattern of development, marked especially by the establishment of the Board of Taxation Supervision, has been what might be called "*high level trouble-shooting*", the creation of an agency with special power to study, investigate, recommend,

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and also actually help enforce laws and regulations in a field of great importance and considerable concern to the government. For its status and authority this organization must depend both upon its independence of the administrative agencies actually engaged in tax collection and tax enforcement, and upon its attachment to the very top level of the government. Conceivably the need for this agency might gradually diminish over a period of time, as the problems it faces are solved. Somewhat similar is the Export Promotion Commission, although it is not an investigatory or police-power agency, but rather a high level promotional body which derives its perspective and its prestige from its position in the governmental hierarchy, and which should also be able to help coordinate the plans and activities of administrative agencies because of its high position.

Finally, one notes the continued presence of long established "*overhead-staff-and-control*" agencies, the National Audit Council and Civil Service Commission. They are logically as well as traditionally parts of the top structure of the government because of the nature of their functions.

So far we have said that the development of the Prime Minister's Office has increased the power and effectiveness of the Nation's chief executive, and at the same time has established a basis for improved coordination of policy and administrative activity within the government generally. One question remains: Has the Prime Minister's Office grown too large?

If there are so many officials that nobody has enough work to do, then we might say that the Office is too large. If the duties performed in the Office merely duplicate work already done somewhere else, without any changes or improvements, we might again say, "*too large.*" If many different units of the Office have to review a piece of paper, and there is great and unnecessary delay in making decisions, or if it

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costs more money to run the Office than is available to the Government-in such cases we might say that of Office is too large.

In practice, however, it appears that policy decisions are in many cases being made more swiftly and more systematically. Sound policy leadership and sound policy decisions are the basic obligations of the Prime Minister and his Office. And one of the important developments in the Office has been the strengthening of policy planning services.

There are admittedly many serious problems of policy coordination and administrative coordination in Thai government, as in other governments. But again, it appears that recent developments in the organization of the Office have been designed to increase coordination--particularly of basic policy in such vital areas as economic development, public finance, national defense, and education. There is always a danger that the establishment of new organizations to coordinate things will create a new problem of coordinating the new organizations, and this could become a very real problem. But to this point it seems that one of the major developments in the Office has been the establishment of a promising basis for needed improvements in the coordination of plans, policies and administrative activities within the Thai public service.

Another fundamental need of the Prime Minister is for a variety of staff services which can help him to be effective in his work. Staff services can do such things as take care of some of the ceremonial and public relations responsibilities, prepare objective studies of problems and proposals as a basis for decision-making, collect a continuing flow of information on the operations of the government, and in some cases actually serve as an extension of the Prime Minister's power and personality, acting for him on the basis of trust, competence, and directly delegated authority. The growing complexity of the nation and the increased power and responsibility of

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the Prime Minister have made such staff services essential. The job has simply become much too big for any one man, unless he has a considerable quantity of effective staff help. The expansion of staff services has been one of the major developments in the Office. This appears to have strengthened the Office, rather than making it "too large."

One further comment: the growth in the size of the Prime Minister's Office is easily overstated. Looking back over the years, it is surprising how many of the agencies in the Prime Minister's Office have been there for a long time. The Office of the Export Promotion Commission, and the Office of the Board of Taxation Supervision, are new. On the other hand, the Public Works Department has been transferred out of the Office, and the Administrative Inspection Department has been reduced to the level of a Service under the Undersecretary of the Prime Minister's Office.

The major innovations have been five: (1) creation of a personal Assistant to the Prime Minister; (2) establishment of an Undersecretary, presumably to coordinate the administrative work of the Office; (3) transfer of the Budget Office from the Ministry of Finance and its strengthening by an increased staff headed by a distinguished expert and by an improved budget law; (4) the reorganization and expansion of the staff services of the Prime Minister himself--notably in Government House, and the Executive Office; and (5) the transfer of the five universities to the Office, which results in a considerable increase in the size of the organization Chart of the Office of the Prime Minister.

Actually, the universities represent little added drain upon the time and energy of the Prime Minister. The shifting of the universities plus the strengthening of the National University Council could provide an opportunity for improved planning and coordination; yet the actual amount of supervision, discussion, and decision-making

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required of the Prime Minister is probably no more than in the past. Important questions affecting the universities have usually been referred to the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers - - along with some that have been not - very - important. Now at least there is a basis for careful planning and consideration of matters before they are referred to the Prime Minister; and further there is a direct delegation of responsibility to the National Education Council for control over the establishment or reorganization of faculties, and the modification of curricula.

In conclusion, it is not correct to assert that the Office of the Prime Minister has grown "too large." It has grown more powerful and effective than it once was. And there will be continued pressures to make it still larger and more powerful in the future - - pressures which can only be offset by expansion of management resources and by increased decentralization of responsibility within the system of public administration.

### ย่อเรื่อง

รองศาสตราจารย์ คัมบริง. เจ. ซีฟฟิน ซึ่งองค์การบริหารวิเทศกิจได้จัดตั้งมาเป็นที่ปรึกษาคณะรัฐประศาสนศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์ ภายใต้สัญญาความร่วมมือระหว่างมหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์ - อินเดียนา ได้ศึกษาการเปลี่ยนแปลงและการปรับปรุงสำนักนายกรัฐมนตรีในสมัยจอมพล ศฤงค์ ชนวรรค์ ซึ่งเริ่มเข้าดำรงตำแหน่งนายกรัฐมนตรี ตั้งแต่วันที่ ๘ กุมภาพันธ์ ๒๕๐๒ หลังจากได้มีพระบรมราชโองการประกาศใช้รัฐธรรมนูญชั่วคราวฉบับที่ ๒๕ เด็ดกันอยู่

รองศาสตราจารย์ซีฟฟินได้พบว่า นับแต่จอมพลศฤงค์ ชนวรรค์ ได้เข้าดำรงตำแหน่งนายกรัฐมนตรี ได้พยายามปรับปรุงหน่วยงานต่าง ๆ ในสังกัดสำนักนายกรัฐมนตรี ให้เป็นมีกแผ่น เพื่อให้การควบคุมการบริหารราชการได้เป็นไปโดยใกล้ชิด ได้ตั้งหน่วยงานที่

ลักษณะเป็นที่ปรึกษาให้ความเห็นแก่นายกรัฐมนตรีในด้านต่าง ๆ ทดสอบกิจการด้วยกัน เช่น  
 สภาพัฒนาการเศรษฐกิจแห่งชาติ สภาการศึกษาแห่งชาติ และสภาวิจัยแห่งชาติ ในด้าน  
 การควบคุมและประสานงานตามโครงการและการใช้จ่ายงบประมาณ ก็ได้จัดตั้งสำนักงานประมาณ  
 ขึ้นเป็นหน่วยงานในสังกัดสำนักนายกรัฐมนตรี ทำหน้าที่ประสานงานตามโครงการทั้งหลายและ  
 จัดสรรงบประมาณให้ได้ส่วนสมดุลงานตามโครงการต่าง ๆ และให้สอดคล้องกัน ได้รับ  
 โอนสถาบันการศึกษาชั้นสูงระดับมหาวิทยาลัย ทุกแห่งของชาติมารวมอยู่ภายใต้การควบคุมของ  
 ก.ม. ซึ่งมีนายกรัฐมนตรีเป็นประธาน เพื่อให้งานด้านการศึกษาได้ก้าวหน้าและมีประสิทธิภาพยิ่งขึ้น  
 ได้ตั้งสำนักนายกรัฐมนตรีโดยมีปลัดสำนักนายกรัฐมนตรีเป็นผู้รับผิดชอบ และตั้งปลัดบัญชาการ  
 เป็นผู้ช่วยเหตืองานด้านบริหารของนายกรัฐมนตรีโดยใกล้ชิด ทำหน้าที่ ร้องคำสดทราจารย์  
 ชีพพื้นได้สรุปผลการศึกษาว่า โดยทั่วไปการเปลี่ยนแปลงและปรับปรุงดังกล่าวมา ช่วยให้การ  
 บริหารงานของนายกรัฐมนตรีและสำนักนายกรัฐมนตรีมีประสิทธิภาพยิ่งขึ้นกว่าแต่ก่อน และ  
 เป็นผลดีแก่ชาติไทยเป็นอันรวม

“ถ้าการที่มีความรู้กว้างขวางในเรื่องทั่ว ๆ ไปมีประโยชน์แล้วไซ้ ความรู้ในเรื่องคนยัง  
 มีค่ามากกว่าหลายเท่า ฉะนั้น ข้าราชการหนุ่มจึงอย่าเก็บตัวอยู่กับบ้านหรือในห้องสมุดเมื่อเลิกงาน  
 แล้ว จงใช้เวลาไปพบปะสนทนากับคนทั้งหลาย ท่านจะได้ความรู้ต่าง ๆ จากพวกนี้มาก--เป็นความรู้  
 ชนิดที่ท่านจะไม่มีวันพบในที่ทำงานหรือในสมุดบันทึกของท่านเลย วันหนึ่งไม่ช้าหรือเร็ว ถ้าท่านได้  
 เลื่อนตำแหน่งสูงขึ้นท่านจะได้มีโอกาสช่วยรัฐมนตรีของท่านคัดเลือกบุคคลเข้าทำงานได้ถูกต้อง ยังมี  
 ความรู้ในเรื่องคนมากเท่าใด คำแนะนำของท่านจะมีค่ามากขึ้นเท่านั้น.”

จาก “Your Obedient Servant”

ของ Sir Harold Scott.