
ภาคภาษาอังกฤษ

ENGLISH SECTION

RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION IN THE THAI CIVIL SERVICE

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Recruitment, the process of enlisting the interest of qualified persons in entering government employment, is the first step in the process of personnel procurement. The importance of recruitment cannot be overstressed because the talents and achievements of the people who work for government cannot be superior to the best of those who are attracted to present themselves for examination. Although examinations are given to test the ability and merit of applicants, the best they can do is to assist in screening out unqualified applicants; they cannot improve their quality. Unless candidates of capacity, character, and intelligence are persuaded to present themselves for examination, no amount of subsequent management will produce a high-grade public service.

The failure or success of a recruitment program depends upon many factors over which public agencies have little control. These include social attitudes toward government employment, the educational system, business conditions within the area of selection, and the state of the labor market at any particular time. These factors should be considered before turning to methods of recruitment.

Without much deliberate effort on the part of the Thai Government, a great number of young people have chosen to enter the public service and made it their life careers. For decades, the Thai civil service has been an "open" institution. A young man of ordinary status and income can enter the civil service after completion of his education and look forward to promotion to the highest ranks of the civil service. This favorable situation is a consequence of many combined factors.

First, Thailand is fortunate in the fact that posts in the civil service command high prestige. The origin of the high prestige of the Thai public service can be traced to the early development of the Thai bureaucracy. During the absolute monarchy period, officials who were commoners were given royal titles which defined their duties and privileges. This system conferred prestige upon public servants since it brought them closer to the monarchy. Despite the abolition of official titles and royal names, civil servants continue to enjoy great prestige among

the general public which they acquired under the absolute monarchy. In Thailand, a public servant, or *karajakurn*, is "one who serves the king's business." Traditionally, Thai kings, in both the absolute monarchy and constitutional monarchy periods, have been deeply revered by the people. The respect shown to the monarchy carries with it the respect to the "king's men." The democratic concept that the public service is responsible to and a servant of the people is not yet widely accepted. In the minds of many people the King remains the supreme temporal ruler, and to the villager those persons, civil and military, engaged in the practice of public administration, are still "the king's men."

The prestige of the public service is further enhanced by the common belief that it is the occupation of the educated elite. The tradition that those with good education enter the public service has been established since King Chulalongkorn's reign. He was the King who initiated the program of sending young Thai to study abroad. His policy, and that of his successors, was to educate not only royalty but also promising commoners. Almost without exception, those sent abroad were absorbed into the government service upon their return home. A school for training young men for the civil service was also set up during his reign. This civil service school evolved to become Chulalongkorn University.

It is important to note, also, that the civil service has provided the principal route to high social position. Classes in the western sense do not exist in Thailand. There is no enduring aristocracy, no landed estates, no great families. Even in the former days, titles were not hereditary. Each generation has to establish itself anew. Thus the most ordinary and humble of persons can rise to the highest civil service posts. Since the civil service still remains the primary ladder to higher social position, it is the occupation to which most young people aspire.

Comparatively high compensation before the second world war contributed much to the making of the Thai public service as an occupation of prestige. However, inadequate salaries in the postwar years have affected the morale of public servants and caused many young men to shun government employment. Only the long-standing prestige of government service enables it to attract and hold as many good persons as it does.

The second factor that has helped to make the career service attractive is the existing system of recruitment which emphasizes formal educational attainment. The system of Thai higher education is geared to the specialized careers in the civil service. In the major universities,

the various schools prepare students for careers in various ministries. Young people are recruited directly from schools and universities at early ages. The entrance examinations correspond with school and college curricula. Successful candidates start their careers in the civil service in the lower grades, and the more promising ones are provided with prospects of regular advancement. This system enables young people to make public employment their careers directly upon graduation.

The third important factor that encourages young people to enter the public service is that of security. The Civil Service Act provides that the Thai public servant can be removed only for cause. In Thailand, therefore, security of tenure is regarded as an important feature of government employment and as one of the main inducements for recruitment.

Lastly, most young men and women want to join the government service because business and industry have not, to date, offered much opportunity for them. Until recently, large corporations and big industries were few in number and posed no serious problem for the public recruiting program. However, recent developments in the industrial and business fields has begun to deprive the government of that advantageous position. Since 1958, the government has started a new economic development program which aims at building a balanced industrial-agricultural economy in place of the long-standing dominantly rural economy. This new development program calls for more private investment, both domestic and foreign, in industry. At some point in the future the government will find it increasingly difficult to attract competent personnel in the face of competition from private enterprise. This will be particularly true in the technical and scientific fields, such as chemistry and engineering.

In Thailand, most government employees have civil service status. Included in the permanent civil service are officials from clerk to under-secretary.¹ Their rights and privileges are guaranteed by law. Methods of recruitment, selection, promotion, dismissal, and retirement are standardized. These officials can work without political interference. In the following sections, methods of recruitment, examination, appointment, promotion, and transfer of these permanent officials will be examined.

Recruitment

The Thai civil service is a "closed" system. Initial recruitment is generally limited to the

¹ Outside this permanent civil servant group are political officials, temporary employees, and officials of semi autonomous public corporations.

two lower ranks, the fourth and third classes, preserving the three upper ranks for those already in the service.² Although no maximum age limit is set by the Civil Service Act, the Thai system of recruitment is designed for young people of school and college ages. As a consequence, civil service examinations correspond to college and school curricula. The system of limiting the entrance levels to only third and fourth classes also discourages older people from entering the public service.

Within the service two career pyramids are differentiated by educational requirements. University graduates, including those in the professional classes, normally enter the service as third class officials, and may be promoted to the highest permanent posts in the service. Those having only secondary school educations begin as fourth class officials and have more narrowly limited advancement prospects.

Candidates for an ordinary civil service post must take a competitive examination. They must also: (1) have Thai nationality; (2) have reached eighteen years of age; (3) sincerely believe in the constitutional form of government; (4) be free from physical and mental defects as well as from those diseases specified in the civil service regulations;³ (5) be of high moral standing; (6) not be insolvent; (7) not have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment by a final judgment of the court except for petty offenses; and (8) not have been retired from the government service because of a violation of civil service discipline, and not have been suspended, discharged, dismissed or expelled from government service.⁴

It is obvious that the Thai civil service law defines the essential qualifications of civil servants largely in negative terms. The law emphasizes "keeping the rascals out" rather than how to secure the best available men for government service. The only positive qualifications are the requirements of Thai nationality, a minimum age of eighteen years; and a sincere belief in the constitutional form of government. The minimum age of eighteen corresponds to the average age of graduation from high school. As noted earlier, the Thai recruitment system encourages young people to start their careers in the civil service at an early age.

² Until 1959, the intake levels were limited to the third and fourth classes. Most employees still enter through these two classes. Those with advanced degrees, however, usually master's and doctor's degrees, may enter the service as second class officials.

³ Civil Service by-laws disqualifies persons who are afflicted with leprosy, tuberculosis (in the advanced stage), drug addiction, and chronic alcoholism.

⁴ See *Civil Service Act (1954)*, Article 44.

The qualifications mentioned above are the basic requirements of all civil servants regardless of position. The Civil Service Act leaves to the Civil Service Commission the establishment of appropriate qualifications for the filling of each position. To be eligible to take the entrance examination, a candidate must meet the minimum academic requirements, or have served in the service for a specified period of time. An applicant for a fourth class position must hold a secondary school certificate or other certificate evaluated by the Ministry of Education to be equivalent to that given by a secondary school.⁵ For a third class position, the candidate must meet one of the following requirements: (1) hold at least a bachelor's degree or its equivalent; or (2) have been a fourth class official for at least five years. The requirement of five years is reduced to two years for any fourth class official whose salary step is not lower than Grade 3, or 650 baht. Furthermore, for a great number of positions, the Civil Service Commission specifies the type of degree that an applicant must hold.

From the above, it is clear that the Thai civil service has adopted the policy of recruitment from schools and universities. There is heavy emphasis upon pre-service education as a basis for establishing eligibility to enter the service. A college certificate or degree is a general prerequisite for entrance into the service at the third class, and ten years of elementary and secondary education are required for entrance into the fourth class. At these intake levels, no value is placed on work experience or technical skills. Government agencies needing technically trained people request in terms of university degrees, not in terms of functions to be performed. As a result, it is not surprising that a large proportion of Thai trained abroad end up in positions for which they are either unqualified, over qualified, or completely unsuited.⁶

The system of specifying particular degrees for particular positions has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it enables government agencies to fill certain positions with men academically trained in particular fields of study. On the other hand, the system excludes many candidates who may be qualified but cannot apply because they hold the academic degrees not specified by civil service by-laws. This disadvantage would not be too serious if the system limited the specification only to technical or scientific degrees. To date, however, no such limit

⁵ The Thai educational system consists of four years of primary education and six years of secondary education. Before entering a university, however, one must have another two years of pre-university education.

⁶ International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *A Public Development Program for Thailand* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959), p. 222.

has been made. For instance, an announcement for an opening in the Public Relations Department specifies that the applicant must have one of the following degrees: law, economics, arts, social work, or journalism.⁷ This bars many equally qualified persons who hold other degrees, such as political science and public administration, from applying for the positions. In a few extreme cases, the requirement as a master's degree or a doctor's degree in a specified field of liberal arts is made. Although education in certain fields may be a necessary qualification, such a strict requirement impairs the principle of equality of opportunity.

One favorable aspect of the policy of recruiting direct from the universities should be noted. In Thailand, the public service is staffed with well-educated individuals. In high official posts, a large number of well-trained, capable, and devoted civil servants are found. Commenting on the Thai civil service, Professor Shor says:

The resources of the civil service, particularly in middle and higher echelons, are impressive. The long independence and steady development of the bureaucracy has provided the nation with an experienced and remarkably skillful corps of native administrators.⁸

As pointed out earlier, in the Thai civil service there is no centralized recruitment and selection; this is done at departmental level. Openings are announced by the civil service sub-commissions of individual departments. Civil service by-laws require that in announcing an examination at least fifteen days must be provided for eligible persons to submit applications. The standard practice is that subcommission issues a dull and uninteresting announcement sheet to be posted on the department bulletin board for fifteen days. The announcement is short and full of legal terms with frequent references to articles of the Civil Service Act. An example is: "the candidate must have the qualifications as specified in Article 44 of the Civil Service Act." The interested person must consult the Act himself for the detailed provisions. The examination is usually announced once over the government radio. No announcements appear in the newspapers. In short, there is no particular effort to attract candidates.

It is obvious that this method of announcing openings is ineffective in drawing the interest and attention of qualified persons. Anyone who is interested in applying for a position in a government agency must listen to the radio every day. Since the announcement is made only

⁷ *Civil Officials' Magazine*, No. 2 (February, 1960), p. 9.

⁸ Edgar L. Shor, "The Thai Bureaucracy," *Administrative Sciences Quarterly*, V (June 1960), p. 72.

once, the chance of missing the announcement is great. Thus unless he visits government agencies very often the chances are that he will not know of job openings.

As stated, recruitment in the Thai civil service is conceived in negative terms. The objective is "to keep out the unfit rather than to encourage the best to enter." This negative recruitment policy derives from the belief that there is no need for any special effort to attract candidates. This view is expressed by the incumbent Secretary-General of the National Civil Service Commission himself. In his speech to a group of trainees at Thammasat University, he stated:

In Thailand, there is no need to employ such a complex recruiting process (as that used in the United States) because people are always looking for jobs. This is especially true for public employment because to be a public servant is the national trait of the Thai. There are many special characteristics attached to public employment which make it preferable to private employment. Such characteristics of the Thai public service are, for instance, the ranks, grades, uniforms, authority, high honor, retirement system, and security... Therefore, it is adequate just to post an announcement for an examination in the bulletin board of the department where the opening occurs. Also, in the radio announcement, it is more than enough just to mention that, without any detail, there is an opening. Through these very simple media, an enormous number of applications will be submitted...⁹

It is true that, up to now, there has been little difficulty in finding enough candidates for examinations. However, there is no assurance that those who apply are the best that can be found.

It is increasingly evident that the Thailand predominantly rural economy is, in the near future, to be replaced by a balanced industrial-agricultural economy. As private enterprise expands and positions in the private sector become more attractive it will become increasingly difficult to attract the best people to the public service. Unless government agencies discard the present old and outworn methods of recruitment and make special efforts to attract qualified persons to the public service, they will find it difficult to compete with private agencies for the limited number of competent personnel in the labor market.

Examination

In the Thai civil service, recruitment for positions at the intake levels is by open

⁹ Luang Sukhum Nayapradit, "Personnel Administration in Thailand," a lecture given to a group of trainees at Thammasat University on September 5, 1958, reprinted in *The Civil Officials' Magazine*, (October, 1958), pp. 33-39.

competitive examination. As was noted in the preceding section, the Thai civil service relies chiefly on the schools and universities for its personnel, and candidates are selected mostly on the basis of general education rather than on experience, skill, or qualification for specific jobs.

Although the Civil Service Act provides that the National Civil Service Commission arrange open competitive examinations for third and fourth class positions, in actual practice this function is delegated to the departmental civil service subcommissions. Usually, whenever there is need for new employees, the departmental civil service subcommission sets up a committee of three to five officials to hold a competitive examination.¹⁰ The examination is arranged in accordance with the syllabus and procedure prescribed by the Civil Service Commission. The duties of the committee are to write the examination and act as examiners in the oral test. If the examination is held in Bangkok, a representative from the Civil Service Commission is assigned to sit with each committee. The presence of the Civil Service Commission representative does not, however, ensure uniformity or equality of examination standards among the departments, and there are some complaints that standards vary from department to department.

The examination for fourth class positions consists of three parts, a written test, a performance test and an oral examination.

Written Test

1. General Knowledge

Section I

- a) Civil Service Act.
- b) Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand.

(There must be 6 questions on "a" and 4 questions on "b." Each question has a value of 10 points, making the total value of this section 100 points. Two hours are provided for this part.)

Section II

- a) History and geography of Thailand and neighboring countries.
- b) Ministerial and Departmental Organization Acts.
- c) Administrative Acts.

(There must be 4 questions on "a," 3 questions on "b," and 3 questions on "c." The total value of this section is 100 points. A period of two hours is provided.)

¹⁰ An announcement of an examination will be made only when there is an opening. See C.S.C. Circular No. 12/2502, July 10, 1959.

2. *Culture*

- a) General knowledge of Thai cultures.
- b) Responsibilities of public servants to the public in a democratic government.
- c) Citizen's responsibilities.

(There must be 4 questions on "a," 2 questions on "b," and 4 questions on "c." A period of three hours is provided. The total value of this part is 150 points.)

3. *Thai Language*

Writing an essay on a specified topic.

(A period of two hours is allotted for this part. Its value is 100 points.)

4. *English Language*

Translation from English into Thai and from Thai into English. The standard of secondary school English is observed. Another language may be substituted for English with permission from the Civil Service Commission.

(Time: 2 hours; points: 100.)

Performance Test

1. Rules and procedures of official correspondence, writing of memorandum; filing.

(Time: 2 hours; points: 100.)

2. Typing—English or Thai.

(Time: 15 minutes; points: 60.)

3. Longhand writing.

(Time: 30 minutes; points: 40.)

Oral Test

Testing the candidate's personality, intelligence, and general knowledge. (100 points.)

The committee may give an examination on one other subject which has direct relation to the work of the position to be filled. Permission from the Civil Service Commission is required in this case.

Civil service regulations require that the candidate must get a rating of at least 60 per

cent on Thai language and at least 50 per cent on culture. The passing grade of the examination is determined by the average of the total points, with 60 per cent considered passing.

The above examination is designed for those who have secondary school educations. Many subjects prescribed in the syllabus correspond to those of the secondary school curriculum. The candidate, however, must possess certain practical clerical skills as well as some knowledge of the important acts.

It should be noted that the above syllabus must be followed in all examinations for fourth class officials regardless of the duties of the positions to be filled. As a result, it is sometimes difficult to select the candidate who seems to be best qualified for a particular position. For example, when the department needs an experienced typist, a skillful typist may not be able to pass the examination if he lacks knowledge of other subjects specified in the written part. To solve this problem, duties of clerical employees should be classified into different broad categories and examinations should be designed to suit the positions in each category.

The subject matter in examinations for third class positions is similar to that of the fourth class. The level of difficulty, however, is greater.

What has been said above applies to open competitive examinations for all positions in the fourth class and general supervisory positions in the third class. There are a great number of positions in the third class however, which require special knowledge in particular fields of study. In such cases, the Civil Service Commission specifies the type of degree that the applicants must hold. The examination is open only to those holding the degree specified. It consists of two parts: written and oral. The written part tests the knowledge of applicants in the relevant field. The oral part tests the personality, intelligence, and general knowledge of the candidate. Points are divided equally between the written and oral tests.

The conduct of oral examinations requires some special comment. Oral examinations cannot help but be invalid and unreliable, in the technical sense of those terms. This is due in large part, to the fact that examiners are not trained in the art of conducting competitive interviews. They are line officials of the department appointed for the purpose of holding the examination, charged with the enormously difficult task of evaluating the candidates' "personality, intelligence, and general knowledge." In spite of the difficulties involved in evaluating these charac-

teristics, there is usually no preparation or planning prior to the interview. Any question can be asked. In fact, the examiners ask any questions that come to their minds at the moment. Rating depends almost entirely on the whim of each examiner. Very often, the examiners are unduly impressed by superficial appearances of the candidates that have nothing to do with their fitness for the jobs. All these defects are the result of the complete lack of planning and standardization of the oral interview.

An even more serious problem however, is the possibility that favoritism may be shown in the oral examination. In Thailand, no reviewable record on an oral test is kept. Criticism of favorable treatment given to a favored candidate is often heard. While the Civil Service Commission can review the written test by requiring the examining committee to forward examination papers, it cannot review the oral test because no record is taken.

Probation and Appointment

Upon completion of each examination, an eligible list is prepared. Successful candidates are ranked in the order of their relative standing, from the highest to the lowest. This list is used until a new examination takes place. As a rule, competitive examinations take place once a year, must be held within two years. The "rule of one" is used. Candidates obtaining higher marks in the examination are entitled to be selected for the service before candidates of lower marks.

In the Thai civil service, newly appointed persons are classified as "special temporary civil servants." They must serve in this classification for a period of not less than six months nor not more than one year before being instated as ordinary or permanent civil servants. This constitutes a probationary period for new appointees. A probationer does not have regular civil service status and can be dismissed without cause. If, at the end of the six-month period, "it appears that his conduct, knowledge, and ability warrant instatement,"¹¹ he is appointed to the permanent civil service. However, if it appears that he "has bad conduct, no knowledge, or inefficient ability to carry out the duties of the post to which he shall be appointed,"¹² he may be required to remain in a probationary status longer or discharged. Once he is appointed a permanent civil servant, his probationary period is counted as a part of his years in the service for purposes of

¹¹ *The Civil Service Act of 1957*, Article 52.

¹² *Ibid.*

promotion and retirement. In the central government, appointments are made by the under-secretary of the ministry or the director-general of the department. In the provinces, the provincial governor makes the appointments.

Almost without exception, however, instatement becomes automatic at the end of the trial period, although a new formal appointment order must be issued by the department. In the Thai civil service, the probationary period is hardly thought of as part of a testing program. Any observation that the supervisor may have to make before the appointment becomes final is perfunctory. Unless the probationer does something very wrong and a disciplinary or criminal action is brought against him, it is certain that he will be instated.

Promotion and Transfer

No less important than recruitment is promotion. In a career service, where most of the higher positions are filled by promotion, the system of promotion is one of the most important phases of personnel administration. In promotion, one must be concerned with the morale of the employee group which comprises the organization. Stagnation in promotion leads usually to resignation or to stagnation of ambition and activity. Therefore, as much attention must be given to promotion as to recruitment.

Practically all positions in the Thai Civil Service above the fourth and third grades are filled by promotion. The policy of filling higher positions by promotion has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that higher positions are filled by persons who are familiar with the organization and the work to be done, and whose abilities have been tested and are known. The disadvantages are that employees come to feel that they have vested rights in the higher positions in their units, even if they do not have the necessary abilities to fill them, and when the best interests of the government require that the position be filled by an outsider. This is particularly true in Thailand where there is little promotion between departments, and practically none between ministries. The absence of promotion between departments and ministries results in an inequity in opportunity for promotion among personnel of different departments or ministries. In new or expanding departments, such as Irrigation and Public Welfare, promotion is quick and often without much competition. In the well-established departments where positions have long been filled, promotion is slow and competition is keen. The difference in opportunity

tends to lower the morale of personnel in the older departments. When these differences occur among departments in the same ministries, the effect is even greater.

Promotion from the fourth to the third class is by competitive examination, with one exception. Fourth class officials who have served for not less than fifteen years and have for four years been at the highest salary step of the fourth class may be promoted on recommendation of their superiors to the third class, but no higher.¹³ This exception benefits officials who cannot pass the examination. Although the exception is granted by the Civil Service Act, the practice is not common and is reserved only for exceptional cases.

Promotion of third class civil servants to second class is also made by examination. The undersecretary or the director-general of the department selects suitable candidates who have had at least three years of service as third class officials and submits their names for the promotion examination. If the employee has a bachelor's degree, the requirement of three years may be reduced to one year. Promotion is not automatic, the employee must wait until there is a vacancy in the higher grade.

Promotion from second to first class follows the same procedure as from third to second class. To be eligible for the promotion examination, the official must have served for not less than three years in the second class. The recommendation of his superior is also needed. No reduction of three-year service as second class official is allowed for an academic degree.

Promotion of first class officials to the special class, the highest rank in the permanent civil service, is made by recommendation of the minister and approval by the cabinet. The only requirement is that the selected officials must have served for at least fifteen years in the civil service, and not less than three years in the first class. Appointment to special class positions are made by a Royal Decree.

One aspect of the Thai promotion procedure merits special comment. As just noted, promotion from third to second class and second to first class requires both the recommendation of superiors and a qualifying examination. The latter can be perfunctory since each ministry fixes its own syllabus and procedure. The requirement of recommendation of superiors affords broad

¹³ *The Civil Service Act of 1957*, Article 57.

discretionary opportunities for political and personal preference. Writing about the Thai bureaucracy, Shor observes:

For lower-and middle-echelon advancement, the decisive requirement is the support of the director-general of the department or the undersecretary of the ministry. Sponsorship by the minister and confirmation by the cabinet is necessary for attainment of the highest rank. Enforcement of the merit principle in promotions is handicapped not only by the usual political influences, but frequently by the poor condition of personnel records . . .¹⁴

The Thai national trait of "informality" enhances the possibility of using favoritism in promotion. Siffin, in his article, "The Civil Service System in the Kingdom of Thailand," makes the following observation:

. . . management in the Thai civil service system is "personal" to a far greater degree than in American national government or European bureaucracies. The number of persons involved is small enough to make personal operations possible . . . In the background there is also a complex network of family connections and associations, particularly among higher level personnel in the civil service. "Connections" are vital, and family connections are often of much significance. Rewards in the Thai system are heavily not based upon positive program accomplishment, although a gross and glaring failure can sometimes lead to sanctions. To a great degree, rewards are based upon one's relations with his superiors, as expressed in terms of deference, support, avoidance of trouble, compliance with Thai ideals, and similar matters.¹⁵

The Thai civil service law provides that civil servants may be transferred from one ministry or department to another in the class, grade and salary step equivalent to the one occupied at the time of transfer. The law, however, does not allow the transfer of special or temporary civil servants. Furthermore, no political officials may be transferred to fill civil service posts. The latter provision prevents a person from evading the competitive examination by having himself appointed as a political official and then transferred to a permanent civil service position.

¹⁴ Shor, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

¹⁵ Siffin, *op. cit.*, p. 265. See also Malai Huvanandana and W.J. Siffin, *Public Administration in Thailand* (Bangkok: Institute of Public Administration, Thammasat University, 1960), p. 42.

In practice, except in higher positions, transfers of personnel from one department to another within the same ministry are limited. Likewise, transfers between ministries are rare. Transfers between departments occur frequently at division-head and director-general levels. At these levels, transfers are made by the order of the minister in charge. This occurs, for example, when the director-general of two departments are ordered to exchange positions. Both, however, retain directorships. Sometimes, a transfer is used to provide an opening for a new person while a former incumbent is moved to a less responsible position in the same class.

A change of government is often followed by a number of transfers of personnel at the top levels of the civil service. Some of these transfers are made for administrative purposes, but many are made for political reasons. Transfers for administrative purposes often occur in those departments with well-known records of inefficiency or failure in their programs. Transfers for political reasons are made in strategically placed departments, Police and Public Relations, the incumbents of which must be men whom the government can trust. Sometimes, the former incumbents are transferred to other comparable positions. Very often, however, they are transferred and "attached" to departments or ministries without assignment but with full pay.¹⁶

Transfers at lower levels usually occur at the request of the employee. The most common transfers at these levels occur when female civil servants ask to be transferred so that they can be in the same province in which their husbands are working.¹⁷ Some officials ask for transfers in order to be in their home towns.

The transfer is sometimes used as a disciplinary measure. An employee who is not entirely satisfactory in one position, but whose conduct is still not bad enough to justify dismissal, may be transferred to another location. This may be a "hardship" post where living conditions are not pleasant. Provincial governors and district officers are often transferred to less preferable provinces or districts when their work is not satisfactory. In some instances, the transfer is resorted to as a means of forcing the employee to resign. Instead of invoking the dismissal procedure, the superior proposes a transfer which he knows the employee will not accept.

¹⁶ Shor, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

¹⁷ In Circular No. 82/2500, issued by the Cabinet Office, government agencies are instructed to give special consideration to transfer requests which enable a wife to be with her husband.

The transfer, used as a form of discipline, is made in the hope that the change will have a good effect on the employee's work and conduct. Experience everywhere has shown that punishment of this type does not produce the desired effect. The employee is resentful of such castigation and, instead of improving, is apt to lose his spirit of cooperation completely. The same result is obtained when the transfer is used as a way of eliminating an employee. Although most employees who are confronted with this choice resign, some, particularly those who have no private resources and cannot expect to find employment elsewhere, comply with the transfer orders. It is as Felix Nigro calls it, "a cruel subterfuge."

In spite of the fact that the Thai system of rank classification facilitates the transfer of personnel between departments and ministries, mobility of personnel is relatively limited. An official tends to spend his working life with a given ministry, and usually a particular department of that ministry, although, as noted earlier, top level officials have often transcended this limitation on mobility. As a result of limited mobility of personnel, coupled with the system of promotion from within, most government agencies in Thailand are conservative, tradition-bound, and lacking in vitality and imagination.
