

w. post  
6-10-75

***Thais Won't 'Discard'  
Allies, Premier Says***

KUALA LUMPUR, June 9 (UPI) — Thai Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj said today that Thailand is seeking to adjust to new realities in Asia to avoid conflicts, but will not abandon old friends in a blind rush to embrace new ones.

Speaking at a dinner given in his honor by Malaysian Premier Iun Abdul Razak, Kukrit sought to dispel fears that Thailand is moving toward accommodation with the Communist countries of Indochina at the expense of its old allies.

The Thai leader was earlier given a red-carpet welcome on his arrival for a three-day

visit, his first foreign trip since becoming prime minister.

"Some have voiced their concern that in the face of recent events in Indochina, Thailand too will change, but in a way that would confirm their worst suspicions about the strength of Thailand's conviction," Kukrit said.

This was a blunt reference to fears voiced by some Southeast Asian leaders that, judging from its past, Thailand will "bend with the winds," and align itself with Communist countries at the expense of its non-Communist allies.

"If our seeking to overcome old obstacles and to renew dormant ties with our neighbors is perceived as a 'change' on our part, then change we must. This change is not founded on fear or weakness, but on courage and strength with dignity," Kukrit said.

He added, "It does not dictate that we discard the old and rush in blindly to embrace the new, where friendship is concerned. However, it does dictate that we must not keep alive old fears at the expense of new realities."