

# New Thai Junta Purges Civilian and Military Ranks

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BANGKOK, Thailand, Oct. 11—Thailand's new military junta today ordered a series of purges of civilian ministries and the military establishment itself. The purges are expected to have far-reaching consequences for the way Thailand is governed.

At the same time, the head of the junta, known as the Administrative Reform Committee, Adm. Sa-ngad Chaloryu, announced the formation of a 13-member commission to begin drafting a new constitution for the country.

Among those purged by the 24-member junta were senior members of the Ministry of Communications, including the ranking under secretary, Dr. Gun Nagemati; members of the military-backed Channel 9 television station; and the second in command in the Army, Gen. Chalard Hiranyasiri, leading to widespread rumors of a contemplated "coup within coup."

Admiral Sa-ngad, clearly concerned about the spreading of such rumors, went on nationwide television and radio tonight to appeal for everyone to "remain calm and we will do the best for the country's sake." Radio Thailand has repeatedly been broadcasting bulletins that the Admiral has toured the city and found everything "quiet and orderly."

The national radio, the only official information organ of the new military government, also announced tonight that one major national newspaper, Dao Siam, which had received permission to resume publication, had been suddenly banned again after publishing an article and headline that might "mislead the public to distrust the policy of the administrative reform committee."

The headline and article reportedly said that a return to democratic rule could be four years off.

It was also learned today that heavy censorship would be carried out on a variety of foreign publications being imported into Thailand, including Time, Newsweek, The Far Eastern Economic Review, The International Herald Tribune, The Asian Wall Street Journal, and several Southeast Asian newspapers published in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

An official in supreme command headquarters said that all such publications must be submitted to the five-man censorship committee before circulation in the country and that if any articles were found to violate a seven-part censorship code, the offending articles would be ordered cut from the publication or the entire publication banned.

## Designed to Quiet Fears

The purges of the government ministries and the military are clearly designed to stifle criticism of the new junta from within the military and at the same time the new Government, like most previous military regimes, will simply fuel the rampant corruption in the armed services while turning a blind eye to corruption in the traditional civil service ranks.

The Communications Ministry, which

oversees the airlines and buses in Thailand, has been a traditional source of corruption, particularly with regard to the lucrative purchase of aircraft for the Thai international and domestic airline carriers.

The purge of General Chalard came as more of a surprise. It had been known in some circles virtually from the inception of the coup last Wednesday that some generals had not been included in the original inner circle, which expanded rapidly in the early days of the rule of the new junta last week.

It was thought at first that nearly every major power base in the armed services

would be brought into the new junta organization. Now, however, it is clear that there are some elements, particularly in the powerful but fragmented army organization, that could not be brought in and that the leadership feared could serve as a focus of a coup within a coup.

The 13-member commission to draft a new constitution for the country consisted of a mixture of general officers and civilians, all virtually unknown to even the most knowledgeable Thais, although all were described as "legal experts." The former constitution, drafted three years ago by a national assembly, was canceled by the military junta.