

Thesis Title Underlying Causes of the October 14, 1973 Event.
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ABSTRACT

The study of underlying causes of the political change on October 14, 1973 is not only the study of political phenomenon of special case but also the search for historical information to be used in political analysis. This study takes political science framework to describe underlying causes of event, origin, process and development of the event into political change in order to explain these political phenomena in Thai political history. This method may yield fruitful result when applied to other events. It might as well as able to predict the events in the future.

The political change of October 14, 1973 is the most important political phenomenon of Thai political history in the sense that it is the change from authoritarian regime to democratic one as a result of the pressure and the uprising of the mass to overthrow the military government.

Underlying causes of the October 14, 1973 event are accumulation of seeds of the political change originating since the seizure of power by the military junta on October 20, 1958. The causes can be identified as follows:

1. The seizure of power by the military junta of 1958 reverses the tide of democratic thinking imported from the West which is put into use since 1932 by abrogating all principles and mechanism

of Western democracy, be it parliament, election, political party, local government. Since believers in western style democracy still contributes active groups within the society and they are against the idea of formulating the so-called "democracy Thai style", pressures do build up within the society. Conflicts of ideas in the ruling group and concerned citizens lead to political change.

2. National development along the line of the military with emphasis on industrialization causes several significant changes within the society. New group with its own hope and aspiration emerges, especially the intellectual who come across political blockade form of anti popular participation in politics. This plus awareness of the failure development and economic crisis at the time, prompts strong discontent and conflicts spread through all sections within the society serving as fundamental causes of political upheaval on October 14, 1973.

3. Monopoly of power and interest of the Kittikachorn-Jarusthian families contributes to dissension within the ruling group. This situation paves way to the idea that Thanon and Prapas must be dispensed with. This leads to the political change.

4. Arbitrary utilization of power in solving the political problems of military government's leaders, especially coup d'etat on November 17, 1971 brings about the military dictatorship regime after Thai democracy one. Moreover, the political behavior of military government's elites which is the arbitrary utilization of power in solving the political problems, particularly the political violence in the case of the demand for constitution, leads to strong discontent to the ruling group. Coupled with activists of the students who are encouraged by some sections within the centre of power, and

support from mass media which contributes to the student movement,
it is possible to muster all efforts from all groups within the
society to cause the downfall of the government.