

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the findings, (3) discussion of Thai people's opinion about foreign ownership of land in Thailand, (4) conclusions, and (5) recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This section summarizes as follows:

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to find out Thai people's opinions about foreign ownership of land in Thailand relevant to issues of economy and industry, society and security, and laws and policies and to indicate whether Thailand's laws and policies regarding foreign ownership of land should be strengthened or liberalized.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures

Subjects were 120 Thai people who were lawyers or worked in the legal fields, civil servants and people who worked in private sectors. The research instruments in the study were 120 questionnaires which were distributed to populations in three major groups as mentioned. This study is a cross-sectional study which was commenced from November 1, 2008 and was completed in March 31, 2009.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Personal Information

From 120 respondents, the majority of the population in this study was female (62.5%). The dominant age range of respondents was 31-35 (37.5%). The majority of the respondents (49.2%) held Bachelor's degrees, followed by 43.3% who held Master's degrees. 48.3% had studied law and 21.7% had studied business administration. The majority of the respondents (36.7%) were civil servants; 18.3% were lawyers. 35% of the respondents earned 10,000-20,000 baht per month. 20%

earned over 55,000 baht per month. Eighty percent of the respondents lived in Bangkok or areas surrounding Bangkok.

5.2.2 Understanding and Knowledge of the Foreign Ownership of Land.

The majority of respondents had never been involved in the real estate or property development industries (77.5%). Approximately 62.5% of the respondents occasionally followed news and issues regarding foreign ownership of land; while 32.5% never followed it. The understanding or knowledge about foreign ownership of land of respondents were poor (49.2%), and only 4.2 % of respondents understood foreign ownership of land well.

5.2.3 Opinion of Foreign Ownership of Land in Thailand.

5.2.3.1 The overall opinions

It was found that the overall opinions of the respondents to the survey of Thai people's opinion about foreign ownership of land in Thailand were "undecided" with the score of 3.22. For opinions relevant to particular issues of the society and security; the respondents agreed with score of 3.66, and opinions relevant to issues of the economy and industry were "undecided" with the score of 3.27. Lastly, overall opinions on issues of laws and policies by the respondents were found to be "undecided" with score of 2.90.

5.2.3.2 Opinions on the issues of economic and industrial effects

The overall opinions on issues relevant to economy and industry resulting from foreign ownership of land were "undecided" as mentioned in 5.2.3.1. However, 53.3% of the respondents agreed with "increasing taxability and government revenues" and 54.2 % of the respondents agreed with "Increasing employment opportunities and personal incomes", while 30% of the respondents disagreed with "promotion of hyper supermarket industry" (30%).

5.2.3.3 Opinions on the issues of society and security

The overall opinions of the respondents about the issues regarding the effects of foreign ownership of land on society and security in Thailand were "agree". 47.5% of the respondents agreed with "Driving up and increasing price of lands" followed by 44.2 % agreed with "Risk to the national security" and 43.3 % agreed with "Affect on agriculture activities and farmlands". However, the

percentages between undecided and agreed on “Feeling as a stranger in our own country” were the same at 24.2%.

5.2.3.4 Opinions on the issues of laws and policies

The overall opinions on the issues of laws and policies related to foreign ownership of land in Thailand were “undecided” with the score of 2.90. 43 % of the respondents agreed with “Relevant laws and regulations should be strengthened” and 42.5 % agreed with “The policy of the country on the foreign ownership of land should be liberalized more”. On the other hand, 40.8% of the respondents disagreed with “Relevant laws and regulations should be liberalized more” and 37.5% disagreed with “The policy of the country on the foreign ownership of land should be strengthened more”.

5.3 DISCUSSION

This section concerns

5.3.1 Opinions towards Foreign Ownership of Land on Issues of Economy and Industry, Society and Security, and Laws and Policies

5.3.1.1 Opinions on issues of economy and industry

According to the study, it was found that Thai people were overall “undecided” regarding issues relevant to economy and industry. For example, on the issues of “Supporting development of the country” (35%), “Strengthening of real estate industry” (39.2%), “Enhancing of ability in the international trade competitions” (30.8%) and “Boosting economic growth and investments”(21.7%). It can be explained that the respondents were not sure that foreign ownership of land would directly support economy and industry. Nevertheless, on the topics of “increasing of taxability and government revenues” and “Increasing employment opportunities and personal incomes”; the majority of respondents agreed with them, It can be assumed that the respondents believed that foreign ownership of land would mainly increase work opportunities in the country and generate taxable incomes for individual and the government; however, it did not ensure that it would support the whole economy and industry of the country, which corresponded with Dr.Sophon’s comment (ดร.โสภณ พรโชคชัย, 2551).

5.3.1.2 Opinions on the issues of society and security

The study determined that Thai people were largely in agreement regarding the effects of foreign ownership of land in Thailand on issues of society and security. They agreed that it increased the price of land (47.5%) and posed a threat to national security (44.2%). They also agreed that it affects agricultural activities and farmland (43.3%) which is consistent with a report by the Panel of Experts on the Development of Policy on the Regulation of Ownership of Land in South Africa. (Report by the Panel of Experts on the Development of Policy on the Regulation of Ownership of Land in South Africa by Foreigners, 2006).

5.3.1.3 Opinions on the issues of laws and policies

According to the study, the overall opinions on issues of laws and policies related to foreign ownership of land in Thailand were “undecided”. However, 43.3 % of the respondents agreed that “Relevant laws and regulations should be strengthened more” and 42.5% agreed that “The policy of the country on the foreign ownership of land should be liberalized more”. There was contradiction in the results between opinions in laws and policies related to foreign ownership of land in Thailand. The respondents agreed that laws and regulations should be strengthened more; however, they disagreed that the policy of the country on the foreign ownership of land should be strengthened more or policy of the country on the foreign ownership of land should be liberalized more.

5.3.2 Thailand’s Laws and Policies Relevant to Foreign of Ownership of Land

As explained in chapters one and two, although Thailand has laws and policies to restrict foreign of ownership of land, foreigners may acquire land under certain conditions, such as a resident areas not over than one rai and Board of Investment’s approval for specific purpose; however, there are many ways that foreigners avoid such regulations.

From the study, it was found that there were 42.5 % of the respondents who thought that the country policy on the foreign ownership of land should be more liberalized. Nevertheless, the respondents answered each question such as “Do you agree to allow foreign ownership of land for commercial purposes e.g. real estate industry and resort and hotel industry?” and “Do you agree to allow foreigners to

lease lands for more than 30 years?"; the majority of respondents disagreed with these questions at 34.2% and 35.8% respectively. Therefore, it could be explained that the respondents agreed on the issues that policies relevant to the foreign ownership of land should be more liberalized, because they initially considered the overall policies and benefits in particular areas such as trades and overseas investments. Respondents agreed that foreign ownership of land would increase work opportunity and generate taxable incomes for individuals and the government in 5.3.1.1. However, consideration of details of particular items yielded the opposite response; for example, the respondents agreed to allow foreign ownership of land for residential purpose under certain conditions e.g. limited not over than one rai (42.5%) or the majority of respondents disagreed with Do you agree to allow foreigner to lease lands more than 30 years; which means they did not agree to liberalize policy regarding foreign ownership in this particular area.

Regarding whether laws on the foreign ownership of land should be liberalized, **40.8 %** respondents **disagreed**; on the other hand, **43.3 %** of respondents **agreed** that laws on the foreign ownership of land should be strengthened. This can be supported by several factors. There were many ways that foreigners avoid the existing legal requirements in order to acquire and own lands, such as using a Thai person or Thai shareholders as nominees, which can be seen in many tourist and major cities (วรรณท์ อัสวพิริยานนท์, 2550). Therefore, Thai people's opinions on "laws and regulations on the foreign ownership of land should be more strengthened" was very obvious that laws and regulations should be more strengthened. ("ผ่าแผนคุมเข้มแก้ไปมนอมีนี่", 2550).

5.4 CONCLUSION

The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above.

5.4.1 The respondents believed that foreign ownership of land would increase taxability and government revenues, increase employment opportunities and personal

incomes, generate revenue for the country, boost economic growth and promote investments and promote the tourist industry.

5.4.2 The respondents thought that foreign ownership of land would risk national security, affect agriculture activities and farmlands, drive up the price of land, cause difficulty for Thais to afford land for housing, degrade natural resources and environment and result in loss of national sovereignty.

5.4.3 The respondents thought that the country's policy on the foreign ownership of land should be more liberalized. However, on consideration of particular items, such as "allowing foreigners to own land for commercial purposes for real estate industry, resort and hotel and allowing foreigners to lease lands for more than 30 years," they disagreed.

5.4.4. Thai people's opinion is that laws and regulations on the foreign ownership of land should be strengthened more.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for further research.

5.5.1 For more reliable results, future research should extend to various groups of Thai people and numbers of distributed questionnaires should be increased in order to support and validate the findings.

5.5.2 This survey collected data by distributed questionnaires only, similar future study should conduct interviews of relevant people to gain more useful information.