

Thailand: Uprooting Wall Street's Proxy Regime

By [Tony Cartalucci](#)

Region: [Asia](#)

Global Research, November 28, 2013

[Land Destroyer Report](#)

[Unprecedented protests](#) have taken to the streets in Bangkok, now for weeks, where at times, hundreds of thousands of protesters have appeared. Estimates range from 100-400 thousand people at peak points, making them the largest protests in recent Thai history.





Images: Scenes taken from across Bangkok showing masses of people protesting the current government in Thailand. Unlike the government's mobs of "red shirts" centrally directed by Thaksin

Shinawatra himself, these rallies are led by a myriad of leaders and interest groups, from unions to political parties and media personalities. The numbers now present dwarf any effort by Thaksin and his political machine to fill the streets with supporters. Currently, the “red shirts” have failed to fill even a quarter of a nearby stadium, after two earlier abortive attempts to raise a counter-rally.

....

The protests aim at ousting the current government after it ignored a recent court ruling finding their attempts to rewrite the constitution illegal.

The current government of Thailand is being openly run by a convicted criminal, Thaksin Shinawatra, who is hiding abroad and running the country through his own sister, Yingluck Shinawatra and his vast political machine, the “Peua Thai Party” (PTP). PTP is augmented by street mobs donning bright red shirts, earning them the title, the “red shirts,” as well as a myriad of foreign-funded NGOs and propaganda fronts.

While it would seem like an open and shut case, regarding the illegitimacy of the current government, Western nations have urged protesters to observe the “rule of law” and have condemned protesters taking over government ministry buildings. Why is the West now seemingly defending the current Thai government, after nearly 3 years of backing protests around the world against other governments it claimed were overtly corrupt and despotic?

It is very simple. Unlike in Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Russia, Yemen, Libya, Malaysia, and elsewhere where the West has backed protests, the current government in Thailand is a creation of and a servant to the corporate financier interests of Wall Street and London. Regardless of the cartoonish nepotism of a nation run by the sister of a ousted dictator, media in the West continues to portray the current Thai government as legitimate, “elected,” and “democratic.” Thaksin Shinawatra’s egregious crimes while in office are buried in articles, or worse yet, never mentioned at all.

Before the protests get any bigger, and the conflict more widespread, readers may want to ask and have answered the following questions...



Image: As mentioned [in a myriad of foreign media publications](#), Thaksin’s proxy party ran with the slogan, “Thaksin thinks, Peua Thai does.” As Peua Thai faces charges that a convicted criminal was directly involved in their election campaign, many of the exhibits used against them in court will be of their own design and impossible to deny.

....

1. Who Really Leads Thailand’s Current Government?

Thaksin had been prime minister from 2001-2006. Long before Thaksin Shinwatra would become prime minister in Thailand, he was already working his way up the Wall Street-London ladder of opportunity, while simultaneously working his way up in Thai politics. He was [appointed by the Carlyle Group as an adviser](#) while holding public office, and attempted to use his connections to boost his political image. Thanong Khanthong of Thailand’s English newspaper “the Nation,” [wrote in 2001](#):

“In April 1998, while Thailand was still mired in a deep economic morass, Thaksin tried to use his American connections to boost his political image just as he was forming his Thai Rak Thai Party. He invited Bush senior to visit Bangkok and his home, saying his own mission was to act as a “national matchmaker” between the US equity fund and Thai businesses. In March, he also played host to James Baker III, the US secretary of state in the senior Bush administration, on his sojourn in Thailand.”

Upon becoming prime minister in 2001, Thaksin would begin paying back the support he received from his Western sponsors. In 2003, he would [commit Thai troops to the US invasion of Iraq](#), despite widespread protests from both the Thai military and the public. Thaksin would also [allow the CIA to use Thailand for its abhorrent rendition program](#).

Also in 2003, starting in February and over the course of 3 months, some 2,800 people (approximately 30 a day) would be extra-judicially murdered in the cities and countrysides of Thailand as part of Thaksin's "War on Drugs."

Accused of being "drug dealers," victims were systematically exterminated based on "hit lists" compiled by police given carte blanche by Thaksin. It would later be determined by official investigations that over half of those killed had nothing to do with the drug trade in any way. Human Rights Watch (HRW) would confirm this in their 2008 report titled, "[Thailand's 'war on drugs'](#)," a follow up to the much more extensive 2004 report, "[Not Enough Graves](#)."



Image: "The Thai Gov'ts War on Drugs: Dead Wrong. Stop the Murder of Thai Drug Users." During Thaksin Shinwatra's 2003 "War on Drugs" it wasn't only drug users who were brutally, extra-judicially murdered in the streets, but over 50% of the 2,800 killed during the course of 3 months, were completely innocent, involved in no way with either drug use or trade.

....

In 2004, Thaksin attempted to ramrod through a [US-Thailand Free-Trade Agreement](#) (FTA) without parliamentary approval, backed by the [US-ASEAN Business Council](#) who just before last year's 2011 elections that saw Thaksin's sister Yingluck Shinawatra brought into power, hosted the leaders of [Thaksin's "red shirt" "United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship" \(UDD\)](#).



ABOUT THE US-ASEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL



Image: The [US-ASEAN Business Council](#), a who's-who of corporate fascism in the US, had been approached by leaders of Thaksin Shinwatra's "red shirt" street mobs. (click image to enlarge)

....

The [council in 2004 included](#) 3M, war profiteering Bechtel, Boeing, Cargill, Citigroup, General Electric, IBM, the notorious Monsanto, [and currently also includes](#) banking houses Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Chevron, Exxon, BP, Glaxo Smith Kline, Merck, Northrop Grumman, Monsanto's GMO doppelganger Syngenta, as well as Phillip Morris.



Photo: Deposed autocrat, Thaksin Shinawatra [before the CFR](#) on the even of the 2006 military coup that would oust him from power. Since 2006 he has had the full, unflinching support of Washington,

Wall Street and their immense propaganda machine in his bid to seize back power.

....

Thaksin would remain in office until September of 2006. On the eve of the military coup that ousted him from power, Thaksin was literally standing before the [Fortune 500-funded](#) Council on Foreign Relations [giving a progress report in New York City](#).

Since the 2006 coup that toppled his regime, Thaksin has been represented by US corporate-financier elites via their lobbying firms including, [Kenneth Adelman](#) of the [Edelman PR firm](#) ([Freedom House](#), [International Crisis Group](#), [PNAC](#)), James Baker of [Baker Botts](#) (CFR), [Robert Blackwill](#) of [Barbour Griffith & Rogers](#) (CFR), [Kobre & Kim](#), and currently [Robert Amsterdam](#) of [Amsterdam & Peroff](#) ([Chatham House](#)).

Robert Amsterdam of Amsterdam & Peroff, would also simultaneously represent Thaksin's "red shirt" UDD movement, and was present for the inaugural meeting of the [so-called "academic" Nitirat group](#), attended mostly by pro-Thaksin red shirts (who literally wore their red shirts to the meeting). Additional support for Thaksin and his UDD street-front is provided by the US State Department via National Endowment for Democracy-funded "NGO" [Prachatai](#).

2. How Did Thaksin Shinawatra Get Back into Power?

Almost as soon as Thaksin was ousted from power in 2006, both his political party in Thailand and his Western backers abroad began a campaign to demonize and destroy the Thai establishment. Kenneth Adelman, working under Edelman created the "[USA for Innovation](#)" front to slander the prevailing Thai establishment after ousting Thaksin. Adelman did this in 2007, the same year [Edelman registered Thaksin Shinawatra](#) as a lobbying client, under the guise of defending "intellectual property."

Video: Almost satirical in nature, US Neo-Conservative Kenneth Adelman attacks the Thai government, accusing it of "slouching toward Burma" after his PR firm Edelman took on the ousted despot Thaksin Shinawatra as a lobbying client in 2007.

....

A myriad of loaded news stories and op-eds in habitually biased publications including the Economist, Time, and Newsweek targeted Thailand for what was called a slide backwards from democracy – all the while Thaksin was praised for his policies aimed at Thailand's "marginalized poor."

The next year, elections would be held and easily won by Thaksin's unassailable populist-built voting bloc. The prime minister very publicly ran as "Thaksin's nominee" as was described in Time's article "[Thailand's PM Proxy: Samak](#)." However, both he and his successor Somchai Wongsawat (Thaksin's brother-in-law) would be quickly ushered out of power through a combination of corruption charges and "counter-color revolutions" staged by elements within Thailand's indigenous establishment.

Beginning in 2009, Thaksin's political front began a campaign of increasingly violent confrontations with the prevailing Thai establishment. During April of 2009, protests staged by Thaksin's UDD "red shirts" would leave widespread property damage and [2 dead bystanders gunned down](#) while trying defend their property from looting protesters. The Thai

military was successful at dispersing the riot without killing a single protester. Thaksin's political lieutenants would flee to Cambodia after making calls for a "people's war" that went unheeded by the vast majority of the Thai population.



Image: A freeze frame [featured in the Bangkok Post](#), showing clearly the front sight posts of an M16A2. M-16s were used by opposition militants for the explicit purpose of blaming resulting injuries and deaths on the Thai Army, who used the weapon and the rounds it fired as its primary infantry weapon. As in other Western-backed destabilizations, from Yemen to Syria, shadowy gunmen were brought in to create violence to be pinned on the government while their presence was denied for as long as possible.

....

In 2010, intent on generating enough domestic and international outrage to topple the Thai establishment, [some 300 covert militants](#) were brought in to trigger deadly violence that would last weeks, turning parts of Thailand's capital of Bangkok into a war zone. Over 90 people would die, including soldiers, police, innocent by-standers, as well as protesters themselves cut down by both crossfire between militants and soldiers, and smoke inhalation while looting buildings fellow protesters had lit ablaze.

While the Thai military succeeded in restoring order across the city, Thaksin and his Western backers had the momentum they needed to continue radicalizing the UDD "red shirts" as well as turn international opinion against Thailand – bringing us to the 2011 elections.

[Running on a campaign](#) of promising cheap houses and cars, free computers, the eradication of both flooding *and* droughts, as well as guaranteed prices for rice grown by Thailand's many rice farmers, Peua Thai easily won yet another election – providing a perfect example of how Western-backed client regimes are more than glad to use populism to co-opt large segments of a targeted nation's population, if national leaders themselves are not willing to first (e.g. [Argentina](#), [Venezuela](#)).

With an accused mass-murderer, convicted criminal hiding abroad to evade multiple arrest warrants, openly running the government through his own sister, and none of his Peua Thai campaign promises being kept after over 2 years in power, Thailand's establishment may feel the timing is right to begin apply pressure that will ultimately oust Thaksin from power once again – perhaps once and for all.

3. What Does the West Want With Thailand?

For over two decades the United States has expressed throughout a library of policy papers the need to develop and implement an effective “containment” strategy versus China. In 1997, US policy author Robert Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute and the Brookings Institution penned, [“What China Knows That We Don’t: The Case for a New Strategy of Containment,”](#) where he literally states (emphasis added):

The present world order serves the needs of the United States and its allies, which constructed it. And it is poorly suited to the needs of a Chinese dictatorship trying to maintain power at home and increase its clout abroad. Chinese leaders chafe at the constraints on them and worry that they must change the rules of the international system before the international system changes them.

He would continue by saying:

The changes in the external and internal behavior of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s resulted at least in part from an American strategy that might be called “integration through containment and pressure for change.”

Such a strategy needs to be applied to China today. As long as China maintains its present form of government, it cannot be peacefully integrated into the international order. For China's current leaders, it is too risky to play by our rules — yet our unwillingness to force them to play by our rules is too risky for the health of the international order. The United States cannot and should not be willing to upset the international order in the mistaken belief that accommodation is the best way to avoid a confrontation with China.

We should hold the line instead and work for political change in Beijing. That means strengthening our military capabilities in the region, improving our security ties with friends and allies, and making clear that we will respond, with force if necessary, when China uses military intimidation or aggression to achieve its regional ambitions. It also means not trading with the Chinese military or doing business with firms the military owns or operates. And it means imposing stiff sanctions when we catch China engaging in nuclear proliferation.

A successful containment strategy will require increasing, not decreasing, our overall defense capabilities. Eyre Crowe warned in 1907 that “the more we talk of the necessity of economising on our armaments, the more firmly will the Germans believe that we are tiring of the struggle, and that they will win by going on.” Today, the perception of our military decline is already shaping Chinese calculations. In 1992, an internal Chinese government document said that America's “strength is in relative decline and that there are limits to what it can do.” This perception needs to be dispelled as quickly as possible.



Image: Figure 1. From SSI's [2006 "String of Pearls" report](#) detailing a strategy of containment for China. While "democracy," "freedom," and "human rights" will mask the ascension of Western aligned client regimes into power, it is part of a region-wide campaign to overthrow nationalist elements and install client regimes in order [to encircle and contain China](#). Violence in areas like Sittwe, Rakhine Myanmar, or Gwadar Baluchistan Pakistan, are not coincidences and documented evidence indicates immense Western backing for armed opposition groups.

....

This would be further expanded on in the Strategic Studies Institute's [2006 "String of Pearls" report](#) where specific areas of Chinese expansion were identified for disruption and containment. This included the now [destabilized Baluchistan region in Pakistan](#) where China's Gwadar port sits, as well as the [destabilized state of Rakhine in Myanmar](#).

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton would reiterate this commitment to containing China, as well as touch upon another point made by Kagan in 1997 – that Southeast Asian nations would need to be aligned with the US against China as part of any viable containment strategy – in her 2011 op-ed in Foreign Policy titled, "[The American Pacific Century](#)."

Leading a Thailand fully complicit with the United States and its neo-imperial ambition to sustain another century of American hegemony across Asia is a role Thaksin Shinawatra was groomed for decades to fulfill, and it is precisely for this reason that so much money, time, and effort has been poured into both propping him up, while tearing down Thailand's existing indigenous institutions.

4. Who is Protesting the Current Government?

Undoubtedly opposition political parties will benefit from any protest and are most likely involved to one degree or another. Additionally, Thai business conglomerates, Thai media moguls, and the military at the very least tacitly approve the current demonstrations. Many

across the silent majority are opposed to the disruptive street demonstrations conducted by both Thaksin and his Western backers, as well as his opponents in Thailand and support neither political party – but find Thaksin and the acute instability and division he has created unacceptable.



Image: October 28, 2012, an initial gathering of anti-government protesters assembled in a stadium to call on PTP to step down from power. Despite the “spring” theme of 2011-2012, the rally failed to make any international headlines – most likely because this movement seeks to unseat a Western client-regime, not install one.

....

The rank and file of the protests themselves may include political opposition party supporters, groups aligned to media mogul Sondhi Limthongkul’s “People’s Alliance for Democracy” (PAD), as well as many from across the silent majority, both lower and middle working class, who would like to see an end to Thaksin’s corrosive influence on the country once and for all.

Similar protests in 2007 were initiated by Sondhi’s PAD movement, but later joined by labor unions who cooperated in closing down Thailand’s airports in an act of noncompliance against Thaksin’s proxy government, succeeding in finally collapsing the regime.

While it is claimed that there is a distinct divide between the middle class and poor in Thailand, and that the latter fully support Thaksin Shinawatra and his populist policies, in reality his party won the 2011 elections [with a mere 32% of all eligible voters](#), and failed to achieve even a popular majority of those who did bother to vote – this even with fantastical campaign promises, rampant vote buying, and organized transportation provided on polling day by Peua Thai’s vast upcountry political machine.

Ultimately, the Thais who come out to protest Wall Street-proxy Thaksin Shinawatra are not protesting him because they approve of the alternative. On the contrary – whoever takes his

and his political machine's place will have an equally indefensible mandate to do as they will with the nation, its resources, and its people as Thaksin has. If and when Thaksin and the cancerous political machine he has created with foreign funding and expertise is excised from Thailand's political landscape, something entirely new will have to be put in its place if progress is to be made.

Fortunately, the silent majority already understands this and are slowly progressing toward various, more pragmatic alternatives, and even more fortunately, many people on both sides of the political bickering are beginning to realize this as well.

The original source of this article is [Land Destroyer Report](#)
Copyright © [Tony Cartalucci](#), [Land Destroyer Report](#), 2013

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Tony Cartalucci](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long as the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca