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Southeast Asia Studies Program

**Remarks by Dr. Karl D. Jackson
Southeast Asia Studies Program
The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced international Studies (SAIS)
at the Public Announcement of the Prem Tinsulanonda Fellowship Program at SAIS**

For more than a century and a half the Kingdom of Thailand and the United States of America have shared warm and cordial relationships. We stood shoulder to shoulder in the major conflicts in Korea and Vietnam and we currently work together to contain forces of terrorism. In addition, the last fifty years have witnessed a remarkable flowering of our commercial relationship, with Thai products now commonly found in America as well as American products in Thailand.

But there is far more to the relationship between Thailand and America than just security and commerce, as important as these may be. In many ways the most lasting, and personally satisfying bonds, are people-to-people ties that have grown as a result of Thais and Americans meeting as co-equals in classrooms here in Thailand and in the United States. Since the end of World War II an increasing number of Thai citizens have taken part of their university and professional training at American universities. Americans, in turn, have learned the Thai language and have studied and worked here in Thailand, at universities, in the Peace Corps and as diplomats, lawyers and businessmen.

Over the last 15 years, Thai and American contributions have made it possible for nineteen Thais to receive graduate degrees from the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University. Generous American contributions have been made by CalTex Corporation, the Starr Foundation, and the Freeman Foundation. In addition, Jeb Kanchanalak of the Thailand-U.S. Business Council, proved instrumental in facilitating this entire process.

We are gathered today to make these arrangements permanent, to ensure that these positive trends in people-to-people relations will become stronger and more permanent as a result of establishing an endowed fellowship, named in the honor of H.E. Prem Tinsulanonda, President of the Privy Council of His Majesty the King of Thailand, distinguished statesman, and former Prime Minister of Thailand.



Because of his support, and the generosity of the Bangkok Bank, the CP Group, Siam Cement, and the T.C.C. Group, twenty or even fifty years from now there will be Prem Fellows studying at the School of Advanced International Studies in Washington. What we are doing here today is nearly unique in the annals of Thai-U.S. relations. We are using private contributions to build a permanent bridge to the future, in the name of a man whose life has already contributed so much to the relationship between our two great countries. The Prem Fellows program has now reached \$1 million and additional matching contributions are being sought to bring the permanent endowment to \$2 million.

In a few moments we will announce the names of the first two Prem Fellows. They will enroll as graduate students at SAIS in September 2007. These students are highly qualified as individuals, but in addition, they will assume a position in the front rank of what will be a long and distinguished line of Prem Fellows stretching from this day forward into a nearly infinite future.

As a foreigner who has traveled to Thailand many times over the past three decades, I take pride in representing Johns Hopkins University in this celebration of the inauguration of the first Prem Fellows.

Thank you.

Bangkok
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