

CHAPTER 5

OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

Bringing about development and the innovation of change involves altering the way people see the world as much if not more than the "objective" viability of particular techniques of coffee cultivation or sanitation. The failure of many efforts or components of projects in the northern Thai hills has often been due to the developer giving too much attention to details like crop variety or livestock vaccination while almost ignoring changing people's worldview or basic outlook which in fact is the key to making them open to change. People, not individual methodologies, are the essential component of bringing about change.

Anthropologists who have studied highlanders in northern Thailand have been quick to criticize the failings of developers in this regard. When anthropologists say that developers are unaware of tribal customs or their traditional agrarian calendar and that changes the developers seek to implement are bound to fail because of this unawareness, the anthropologists are really saying that developers have paid insufficient attention to the people who are to be "developed".

Not surprisingly, there have been confrontations between anthropologists who see themselves as representing the rights of the people and developers who see themselves working for the future benefits of those same people. Often the latter also say that they have been given a job to do and that implementing this or that development project must be completed within a specified

time frame. Anthropologists, however, who aim to describe individual small societal groups almost as if they exist outside of time, often find it difficult to accept change or to agree with advocates of change in those societies.

A third group, Christian missionaries, has also been involved in development work in the northern Thai hills. Missionaries, sometimes acting as anthropologists, sometimes acting as developers, represent a third kind of Western presence in the hills, dedicated primarily to converting to Christianity. However, as a part of their work, they often conduct serious studies of hill tribe peoples or participate in many of the same types of activities as do developers. Both anthropologists and developers, though (at least those among them that are not dedicated Christians) have criticized missionaries for a variety of reasons, but usually involving the missionaries desire to make the people Christian. In their critical attitude towards missionaries, however, developers (anthropologists are rather less interested in bringing about change per se) frequently forget that missionaries are sometimes able to effect change where no one else can bring it about.

Those critical of missionaries usually base their displeasure on the missionaries message rather than their techniques. From a practical point of view, this is unfortunate since missionaries, who have been generally dealing with tribal peoples longer than have developers, usually know those peoples quite well. Missionaries have compiled dictionaries, learned tribal folklore, and established contacts with hill tribes throughout northern Thailand and beyond. This awareness has

often been the key to their being able to bring about change where others have failed.

Bringing about change in the northern Thai hills has become essential, though, since 1959 when opium cultivation has been declared illegal. Regardless of how much benefit in economic terms opium sales brings to villages, the Thai government has outlawed its cultivation and sale necessitating change to alternate lifestyles. Development projects are charged with bringing about these changes and in creating self-reliance on the part of the hill tribes in as painless a manner as possible.

Besides the Thai government changing various other regulations related to clearing forests, the growth of population in the hills of northern Thailand also makes change necessary for highlanders who do not grow opium. The changes necessitated, both by law and by population dynamics, for both those who cultivated opium and for those who did not are profound and difficult to implement. They are made more difficult when anthropologists or other students of hill tribe peoples are suspicious all change and when developers look upon their role as purely (or almost purely) a task-oriented job of finding, for example, new cash crops or better means of keeping livestock healthy. Change is occurring. Without a cooperative inter-agency inter-disciplinary approach to improving conditions in the hills, the situation will surely worsen.

Because of the present necessity for change in the Doi Inthanon Range and elsewhere in the northern Thai hills, and the desire to bring it about as painlessly as possible, it might be a good idea for developers to examine the techniques of the

missionaries in effecting change. Just as the missionaries to the Karens in Burma during the 19th century made use of the story of the White Younger Brother's Golden Book, so too can developers today utilize traditional poems and other conventional tribal modes in suggesting the adoption of new practices. James Conklin, an American Baptist missionary to the Karens in northern Thailand for many years, wrote in his dissertation on worldview evangelism that when he used a most appropriate "package" a traditional Karen poem in propagating the gospel, he was "astonished" by his listeners' reaction: "They sat bolt upright from their half-reclining positions. Their faces broke into smiles. They...sat listening intently to what was being said" (Conklin 1984, p. 144). Conklin noted that since the message was being presented in a framework ("package") that the Karen listeners readily understood, communication was greatly facilitated as was receptivity to the message. Payap University's Christian Communications Institute, which uses the "package" of Thai folk drama (ligay) in propagating the gospel has achieved much more success than have many more Western-style approaches.

Very likely, few developers have used traditional modes of communication to present their messages. Most commonly, when development presentations are made, they are done so in a Thai-centric "package": in Thai, using Thai thought patterns, and putting the message in an official Thai context. Not surprisingly, when such presentations are made, very few positive reactions similar to that encountered by Conklin are forthcoming. All too often, those making the presentations do so as if they were the unquestionable authority imparting "THE TRUTH" to the

denighted unwashed. In the worst cases, they will stand above sitting listeners, use a domineering tone of voice that Thais use with servants or those considered inferior to them, and otherwise indicate to the audience that the speaker is superior and they are inferior. Obviously these "packages" will not evoke a satisfactory response among the listeners. In the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project, unsatisfactory reactions were uncommon, partly because the station staffs were often younger than the village leaders they were addressing. This situation of younger teaching elders could be a problem but since the younger TN-HDP staff are perceived as representatives of the Project, their age does not necessarily impede communication. Condescending attitudes do cause problems however.

The problem is more critical with line agency staff who lack training TN-HDP provides to acquaint its workers to hill tribe needs. Because most line agency staff lack sensitivity to many hill tribe needs (to say nothing of differences between Karens and Hmongs), they often fail to utilize the most suitable techniques for presenting their message. Just as in talking to people from a different country, one's remarks may be misunderstood, in delivering messages to Karen and Hmong, a Thai speaker who does not understand the correct "package" may fail to communicate as effectively as desired. In the worst cases, the hill tribes may come to actually resent those conducting the training or extension activity.

One part of this failure is a frequent (but not necessarily typical) trait of Thai government officials in positions of

authority that they believe they have wisdom and that it must be taught to less-advantaged peoples who do not have this wisdom. This is a relic of conventional 19th century "modern" educational programs adapted to and integrated into the secular educational institutions established in Thailand in the last century. It also fits in easily to Thai society which is hierarchical in many ways. This often has resulted in Thai trainers talking down to hill tribe villagers. However, since hill tribe society (both Karen and Hmong), is much less hierarchical than Thai society, results are often not what was intended. A very popular picture in Hmong households is of His Majesty the King talking to a Hmong headman as an equal. The Hmong, who truly respect the Thai King, make the conclusion that if His Majesty can talk to them on an equal basis, development workers ought to do the same. That they often do not has resulted in desired activities not being accepted as readily as the developers wish.

The study team found (as have other researchers) that Karens tend to be less receptive to change than Hmong. Because of centuries of living in the northern Thai hills and adjoining areas of Burma, where it was always possible to flee to a more remote, more secure location, Karens have not developed the pragmatic approach to innovation and varying conditions as the Hmong have. This means that whenever a presentation advocating the adoption of particular techniques or attitudes is given, the Hmong have an automatic advantage over the Karens.

Within the last decade, however, many development projects operating in the hills of northern Thailand have come to understand the importance of people's attitudes and beliefs. In

the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project, for example, considerable emphasis has been placed on building community consciousness, local participatory groups, and self-help projects such as building roads to previously inaccessible locations. Other projects, too, have come to the same realization: the Thai director of the Thai-German Highland Development Programme, who works for the Office of Narcotics Control Board, believes that development involves people and that they should be the focus of all that Project's work. Even though some projects, such as the Highland Area Social Development Project, remain primarily task oriented, highland development projects now essentially understand the role people's attitudes and consciousness play in development.

At the same time, there is so much change, so many "packages" of change that innovation is occurring continually in the hills. In the study area, the Doi Inthanon Range in Chiang Mai Province, change has been pervasive and of longstanding. Evangelists, tin mines, roads, and tourists have caused so many changes that evaluating the impact of just one "package", even a big one like the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project, is a formidable task.

The great opportunity of course for big operations like the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project - is that they can channel inputs and help to mold changes while they are occurring. This is particularly so because many of the individual changes, such as new varieties of crops, would have come to the study villages regardless of the Project or government agency. Viable crop varieties and other useful

changes spread inexorably across the hills just like previous desired innovations such as corn or chili pepper (and indeed, tobacco) did in years past. Fear of spirits notwithstanding, useful innovations are accepted--slowly perhaps--but accepted nonetheless even by conservative Karens because they are too appealing to be ignored.

A big project, however, has additional advantages. It can provide extension assistance, advice in marketing, and pesticides to control disease and insects. Furthermore, a big project can facilitate exchanges between different groups of hill peoples. Hmong from Samoeng can learn what Hmong in Chom Thong or Yao in Lampang are growing or how they are dealing with cultivation obstacles. Many useful results have occurred because of such an exchange. It is still true, though, that there a gap between most members of development teams and most residents of the typical highland village community. This gap has led to problems, but not problems that cultural sensitivity can overcome.

Suggestions

1. Use Indigenous Forms and Methodologies

In dealing with the hill tribes, development agencies should tailor their messages, training sessions, and other dealings to indigenous styles. This usually requires little more than recognizing that hill tribes are simply, in their present condition, a different kind of human being, but human beings nonetheless. Those in positions of authority should realize that in many ways Karens, Hmong and other tribal groups are quite

different cultures than the Thai, particularly the central Thai. Hill tribes in northern Thailand speak their own languages, sometimes have their own script, follow their own religion, wear distinctive dress, and see the world in ways not at all like the central Thai.

When development agencies wish to introduce change into these cultures, they should realize that the most efficient way to bring change about is to speak and to act in ways the hill tribes readily understand. Usually this will be different than methodologies used in instructing Thai officials or even Thai lowlanders. Even though almost all tribal peoples understand Thai and northern Thai, hill tribe languages can and should be used when appropriate. Rather than weakening the appeal of the Thai government to the villagers, it would increase their desire to participate in a country's programs since that country had showed itself to be interested enough in the hill tribes to actually make use of the tribal languages.

For the sake of efficient transfer of ideas and success in project implementation, hill tribes should be approached as equals by project personnel. No purpose will be served if officials talk down to hill tribes as if they are backward. They should bear in mind that there are now Hmong and Karens with Ph.D.s and law degrees, and Karens who have been ministers in Burma. The native intelligence of hill tribes is quite likely no different from that of the Thai. His Majesty the King realizes this fact; members of development projects should also.

In the largest corporations in the world and in the United States Army, if a student or recipient of training fails to learn

what is taught, it is considered to be the teacher's fault. This attitude should be adopted by training sections of highland development projects in northern Thailand because of how important getting the message across is to both the recipients and to the nation as a whole.

Insofar as possible, hill tribe members should participate in the training sessions. There is of course an age problem in that younger hill tribes would find it difficult to teach their elders, particularly in their home area. However, if they work in areas away from their native village, this problem can be minimized. One specific case is the Lahu, Mr. Suwit Damrongpong, who was the head of Thai-German Highland Development Programme staff in Tambon Wawi, Mae Suai District, Chiang Rai Province until quite recently. He established a very close rapport between himself and his staff and the local people. He treated the villagers as equals, indeed he treated the elders as superiors knowing exactly how to honor them when appropriate. Although he is now working for the Lahu Baptist Convention, the example of his liaison work ability is valid. Unfortunately, people like him are hard to find.

There is, in this regard, an urgent need for Karen and Hmong to become members of the Royal Forest Department, one agency of the Thai government that deals extensively with hill tribes and with a number of difficulties have arisen in the past. An immediate solution would be for TN-HDP to offer scholarships for Karens and Hmong to attend the Royal Forest Department school in Phrae; however, eventually if Karen or Hmong can major in forestry at Kasetsart University and become full-fledged

foresters the lack of successful communication between that Department and the hill tribes can be improved. Means for having Karen and Hmong work in other critical agencies, such as the Land Development Department and the Public Welfare Department should also be pursued. There are increasing numbers of hill tribes graduating from agricultural, vocational, and teachers training colleges as well as universities. These individuals should be encouraged to work in line agencies of importance to highland development so that the development of the hills can be effected as efficiently as possible with the fewest obstacles possible. Hill tribe personnel working as government officials in pertinent line agencies (just as many tribal peoples teaching at highland schools) will almost surely, assuming they are not ashamed of their ethnic background, relate well to the local people and perform quite satisfactorily (just as the tribal teachers have a considerably lower rate of absenteeism than lowland Thai teachers working at highland schools).

Another way to encourage Thai officials to relate better to the tribal peoples is to create a positive impression of hill tribes among Thais in general, who often view hill tribes negatively. This can be seen, for example in much of the early literature by Thai government agencies that dealt with all of the various problems were caused Thailand by the hill tribes. Recent publications and attitudes shown in movies and everyday life show that this attitude has not vanished and may well endure for many more years.

One way is to implement an activity earlier suggested by Payap University (Renard, et al. 1987, pp. 76-77) to the Thai-

Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project. This is that material telling of highlights in hill tribe culture and individual leaders could be prepared and integrated into educational activities (certainly non-formal programs), presented on television and radio, and various magazines and journals. Given the widespread popularity of Hmong and Karen (and others hill tribes) costumes and cloth in Thailand, these articles could well reach a sympathetic audience. Articles about King Chulalongkorn visiting the Karens 80 years ago, the prowess of Hmong from, say Pa Kia Nai in marketing peaches, or the Karen in Wat Chan working with Khuba Si Wichai to rebuild the chedi there would help to accent positive values in hill tribe life. Karen or Hmong art forms, recipes of tasty local foods (like Karen Hungle curry), musical techniques, and folk tales could also be used in popularizing positive aspects of these peoples. Certainly they would help reverse common negative, if not insulting mistruths about Karen, Hmong and other highland groups. No less beneficial would be help in strengthening Karen attitudes about their own self-worth; a lack of confidence among Karens certainly exists and may have been a factor (in spite of the denial of this by several Karen church leaders) in several recent suicides among them, even in the Christian village of Mae Yang Ha where one might have thought the people would be more resistant to such a temptation.

This leads to the observation that TN-HDP should continually bear in mind that Karen and Hmong have a number of profound differences. Karens, subsistence farmers probably for all of their history, often as not prefer to stay by themselves, favor

subsistence agriculture, and are less inclined to favor roads to their villages than Hmong, a point noted to the TN-HDP problem census (Robert, et al. 1986, pp. 206-208). The Hmong, who by and large have raised cash crops since coming to Thailand, are oriented towards cash crop inputs and a good road network. Thus, careful consideration should be given before implementing programs universally. In the Huai Manao Project Area, for example, the Hmong at Pa Kluai have, once they actually made the shift from opium cultivation to cabbage and potatoes, become major entrepreneurs. They have built concrete water storage tanks, gravity-fed sprinkler systems, and concrete stone fences in old opium fields. Trucks from the lowlands come year-round to buy crops from in their fields. Success in adjacent Karen villages, where cabbage and potato are also grown, however, has been on a much smaller scale. More often, in fact, Karens work in Hmong fields as hired hands, earning 30 baht or so per day while the field owners sometimes earn over 10,000 in a single month. In Karen villages much smaller quantities of cabbage and potato are cultivated with correspondingly smaller amounts marketed.

Although this sort of inequality surely existed a decade ago (in Mae Hon, even three decades ago) when opium was much more heavily cultivated by the Hmong (with the help of Karen hired help [usually addicts]) than by the Karens, whether a continuation of such inequality is appropriate is open to question. Greater attention might be given, from the policy-making level down to extension teams, to being responsive to Karens as an ethnic group with needs differing from those of the Hmong. This would be one means of, perhaps, stimulating growth,

development, and self-reliance in changing times among them. More information on Karen and Hmong culture could be included in the training of extension teams to facilitate this process.

2. Avoid Duplication

One definite problem impeding successful highland development is overlapping authorities and jurisdictions in highland development. This has been a problem since highland development began in earnest about thirty years ago and, sadly, there is no reason to believe that it will not persist. There is little if anything individual projects or agencies can do to solve the overall problem; there indeed may be little anyone can do to rectify the situation.

Since overlapping jurisdictions in the development of the Doi Inthanon Range are unlikely to go away, highland development projects, like TN-HDP must get used to the persistence of confusion as a condition of operating in the field of highland development. Many organizations, operating at all levels of society, have sponsored activities in the hills for a variety of purposes (and indeed cross-purposes).

At the same time, the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project, supports activities in a range of areas, from crop replacement, to nutritional development, to educational support. This brings TN-HDP, and cooperating line agencies, into areas where other organizations are already working. Often TN-HDP is more capable than the other organization and can run this activity more effectively than the other group.

Regardless of how capable TN-HDP is, it should resist the urge to move in when another organization is coordinating an

activity within its range of operations. An example from Mae Yang Ha is illustrative. The Karen Baptist Convention has been active in this Christian village for its entire history. As a part of the KBC's development program, it started a rice bank. One of the guiding principles of the KBC is forgiveness. When Karens failed to return rice that they had borrowed on time, the KBC managers of the bank tended to overlook such a failing, often even covering the loss itself. When TN-HDP came into the operation, with credit and village revolving funds being within its scope of activities, a rice bank was started in Mae Yang Ha. Since, however, TN-HDP's rice bank rules were enforced more stringently than those of the KBC, and since the villagers were still used to the style of the KBC, it wasn't long before members started defaulting. TN-HDP staff was less lenient as that of the KBC and misunderstandings resulted. These misunderstandings could have been avoided had TN-HDP either worked through the existing rice bank or stayed out of this village. A possibility also would be to aim for a gradual shift from one to the other.

Obviously the Project cannot stay out of activities relating directly to opium control and replacement or the implementation of educational systems which are national policy. However, in activities that are not necessitated by the national government and which are not related directly to immediately and dramatically upgrading people's lives, such as setting up a rice bank, it would perhaps be wiser to exercise discretion rather than competing with an existing operation.

Compounding the duplication of activities in the hills can only serve to confuse the villagers, to create inefficiency, and

raise questions of whether the villagers are or are not taking advantage of a given situation. This is so even when the TN-HDP activity, in this case the rice bank, is run more efficiently than that administered by the KBC.

3. Develop the Entire Person

The changes being introduced into tribal societies mean nothing less than the nearly complete remaking of Karen life. Religion, clothing, forest usage, occupations, methods of transportation, health care and diet have all been transformed in the past thirty years and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future.

Large projects, such as the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project, address so many aspects of life that they become principle "packages" in effecting change. As stated before, change has become inevitable to the hills and would be occurring without the existence of TN-HDP and other Projects like it--indeed Wat Chan, which is more remote in many ways than the TN-HDP villages, seems to have changed more than Mae Knapu Luang which is in the Project area and very close to the mines at Bo Kaeo. Still, TN-HDP can directly benefit the development of the people in its villages by presenting the most positive aspects of change while helping to cushion the people against the more negative.

A unified approach to TN-HDP activities should be presented, even more than it already is. Instead of presenting activities as part of an agricultural extension section or a training section, as much as possible there should be emphasis on the

unity of the entire operation and the interrelation between different sections. Although this is certainly the goal of TN-HDP, perhaps more effort could be used in presenting this to the villagers. Successful development workers, such as Suwit, formerly of the Thai-German Highland Development Programme, well understand this principle and constantly utilize it in their work.

By presenting all of the program components of TN-HDP as part of a unified whole, the villagers can see interrelationships where otherwise they might have been confused by individual details. This would be more useful with the Karen who seem to be having more difficulty assimilating changes than with the Hmong who are adapting more readily to changes occurring at present. Inspiring line agency staff to cooperate in a presentation of TN-HDP work as a unified whole may not be so easy, however.

This may well be, however, a means for facilitating self-reliance among the people in the TN-HDP Project Areas. As far as the research team has seen, the Hmong are considerably more able to deal with problems than are the Karen. Insofar as Berger's concepts can be applied to the hill tribes in the Doi Inthanon Range, the Hmong seem to have made the transition from tradition-bound society to modern technological society (indeed the transition was well underway thirty years ago) whereas the Karen are still very much tradition-bound. There are very intelligent, progressive Karens but as a group they have made less progress towards self-reliance than the Hmong. The research team believes that there is an urgent need for special work with the Karen.

4. Carry out More Basic Work with Karen

Admittedly, much of the justification for establishing the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project was to replace opium cultivation. In the Huai Manao and Mon Ya Project Areas, where much of this research has been carried out, most opium cultivation has been by the Hmong in Pa Kluai, Pa Kia Nai, and Huai Nam Chang.

However, the residents of these three villages have shown a greater receptivity to innovations and have been more able to adapt to changing conditions. The richest stores and the greatest number of material goods from two-storey houses to pick-up trucks to televisions are in those Hmong villages. They have, particularly in Pa Kluai and Pa Kia Nai, been able to utilize the new technologies being offered and earn cash income from them more effectively than almost any of the 32 Karen village in both those Project Areas. A convincing case can be made that the three Hmong villages have, assuming opium cultivation can be made to cease, made a successful transition from opium cultivation to the cultivation of replacement crops.

This cannot be said at all for Karen villages. Almost none of the Karen villages in the two Project Areas have stores, very few Karens have pick-ups, and not all that many of them have been able to successfully market large amounts of the cash crops they grow. In many ways, opium replacement projects in general have not been designed for Karen needs because of the simple fact that Karens only grew very small amounts of opium. Karens were not well-integrated into a cash economy (as were the Hmong) when these projects began and thus were ill-prepared for many of the

otherwise well-planned and appropriate inputs presented by development agencies.

At the present rate of change, the Hmong are progressively pulling away from the Karen and at least in some villages, the Karens there face the prospect of becoming a longterm underclass in the hills. All of this is in spite of quite a few Karens in Mae Khapu Luang (and elsewhere) picking up cash crop cultivation and making other attempts to catch up with developments in the areas around them. Karens face serious problems in many areas of their life, from self-confidence to cash income. In many cases Karens are enroute, after having an average income a century ago probably higher than that of northern Thais, to becoming some of the poorest people in the entire kingdom of Thailand:

The Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project should devise specific projects aimed at improving the status of the Karens in its Project Areas. If this requires an extension of the life of TN-HDP, than it should be extended. Karens are the most numerous highland minority and notwithstanding various projects by church groups and government agencies, they have seemingly been sinking inexorably to lower and lower standards of life. This must be reversed, not only for the benefit of these peoples, but for the welfare of all the residents of the Doi Inthanon Range and other Karen areas.

Given the expertise of TN-HDP staff in Karen affairs, no organization is better situated to create such a program. Components could include: recreating Karen pride (for in many ways Karen problems involve a worldview which is heavily influenced by psychological factors); devising a viable

agricultural system (including the development of cash as well as subsistence crops); and a job-creation project finding means for the many college- and technical-school educated Karens to find work in the hills among Karens (although not necessarily their own home villages).¹

The research team observed that even the Karen church in Mae Yang Ha, formerly a bastion of Karen identity and pride, was finding it difficult to keep younger Karens interested in its activities. According to Karen Baptist Convention leaders, many of the younger people seemed to prefer to go to town, drink, and spend their limited money on luxuries. Although certainly plenty of Thais engage in such activities without many ill-effects, the danger with Karens is that this is one rather large step towards the losing of their identity. Without Karen identity, many of them will lose the essence of their lives and could well face many emotional difficulties in the future. A well-coordinated program by TN-HDP, working with indigenous Karen organizations, could stave off much of this, rechannel the still abundant Karen energies towards the betterment of their villages, and assist in the development of the hills of northern Thailand as a whole. Bringing this about could well represent just as beneficial a result as the opium replacement work done among the Hmong that has brought so much attention to the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project.

Carry out Specific Measures with Hmong

For the Hmong, who are responding to many of the changes, particularly related to economics, in general, more specific

technical assistance is needed. However, many of the Hmong, particularly at Pa Kia Nai, fail to see the value of a Thai education, with about 20 percent of the school-age children in the village not attending the Rappaport School there. In Pa Kia Nai, this seems to be related to the continued cultivation of opium and the general feeling expressed by some villagers of their apartness from Thai society. Once children complete a Thai education, however, this attitude of being separated from Thai society will decline.

Specific programs to be implemented should be in the field of environmental protection. An understanding of the need to preserve the environment would be useful since the Hmong's traditional practices have been based on continuing migration to new settlement sites. The old sites, over-cultivated, only become forested after decades of regrowth. This kind of environmental usage can continue no longer because of growing population pressure and the cessation of frequent population mobility.

Related to this should be explanation of the safe use of pesticides. This new tool in cultivating crops can only be properly used by people aware of its dangers. Observations by the research team have led to the conclusion that training in this area should be given to both men and women who are almost as frequently involved in cultivating crops.

The Hmong should also be involved in increased tree planting projects. Fast-growing nitrogen-fixing trees in double rows about half a meter wide along contours within the Hmong's fields, perhaps 8 meters apart depending on slope (steeper slopes require

narrower strips) should be planted. The trees, once reaching a sufficient height would be cut back to about 50 centimeters, would then be cut about once every month during the rainy season. The residue would be placed directly on the fields where it would decompose, increasing the fertility of the soil. In between the tree strips, consideration could be given to trying the cultivation of other crops. This would help reforest hillsides around Hmong villages, provide more stability to the agriculture there, and increase yields.

Finally, once the process of encouraging Hmong to enter schools had reached a satisfactory stage, the Hmong could be assisted to becoming members of the civil service. For the immediate future, trained Hmong (who usually come from outside the Doi Inthanon Range such as from Nan Province) to enter the Royal Forest Department (initially at lower levels not requiring college education) and other agencies dealing with tribal development. This may well be the final step in the development process.

THE ROLE OF THE THAI-NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Since its inception in 1985, the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Project has become involved in many activities not conventionally associated with an opium control project. Components on nutrition and discussions on the role of women in tribal development (both developers and highlanders) both indicate TN-HDP's innovativeness.

This innovativeness can be used as a tool to improve conditions for the highlanders. Although much of the

misunderstanding of the government approach to hill tribes is because of inadequacies of the Thai primary educational system's discussion of them (which itself stems from a lack of Thai experts on hill tribes who can make inputs into devising textbooks and curricula) which is beyond the ability of TN-HDP to affect, there are some things the Project can do, particularly regarding the Karens where the problem seems greatest.

In the down-to-earth world of American business, a recent best-seller, In Search of Excellence, suggests that dialogue between many different parties can make for success. This strategy has been used in huge companies like IBM and Procter & Gamble to create an environment encouraging casual discussions. According to the authors (Peters & Waterman 1984, pp. 119-122), this creates a bias for action that can generally create success.

To make use of this technique, we suggest that the Thai-Norwegian Church Aid Highland Development Project arrange a seminar with pertinent Karen elders and formally educated younger Karens along with TN-HDP staff and other pertinent individuals. The purpose would be to explore ways to allow Karens to escape their downward path; to look at how some Karens have managed to succeed and to help all sides know each other better.

Surely this will not by itself make the Karens successful. Action-oriented people might think that this will amount to an academic (and perhaps useless) exercise. However, there is nowhere else to go. A careful look at TN-HDP activities will show a variety of projects and efforts covering (or seeming to cover) all aspects of development. It would be difficult to suggest more than the few small items mentioned above on what to

do to improve the situation. Yet, all concerned would agree, that the peoples of the hills, the Karens in particular, are not progressing as they should especially after longterm intensive assistance; in other words, they have not yet successfully made the transition from Bergers "traditional" to his "technological" society.

Perhaps after all these thirty years of change, the time has come for a reassessment of what has gone on before in order to reconsider the future. Bring the old-timers together with those that are causing the change and those that are directing it. To find out what should be done requires the assistance of everyone involved. And then, only, then can a new start be made so that hopefully in thirty years from now, more real progress will have been made.