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To: All Full-time Ministers

April 10, 1985

From: Joseph Tkach J.T.

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Ministerial Services

Subject: Royal SUPPORT Foundation Brochure

Hello! Queen Sirikit of Thailand recently completed a very successful visit to Ambassador College as a personal guest of Mr. Armstrong. Enclosed is a brochure, designed by our own Publishing Services staff, that we thought you would be interested in. It explains the purpose and goals of the Royal SUPPORT Foundation. The art objects you see pictured were among the many items that were on display in the Hall of Administration from March 20-24.

Thank you for your continued service and diligence.

Simplicity.







HER MAJESTY
QUEEN SIRIKIT OF THAILAND
FOUNDER, THE ROYAL SUPPORT FOUNDATION

In 1946, eighteen-year-old Bhumibol Adulyadej ascended the Siamese throne as King Rama IX of Thailand. During the coronation ceremony, His Majesty pronounced the Oath of Accession, "We will reign with righteousness for the benefit and happiness of the Siamese people." That oath became the Royal Code of Conduct practiced by all members of the royal family.

COVER: Regal peacocks of pure gold with diamond-studded wings. Each feather is individually crafted of hand-beaten gold by hilltribe SUPPORT trainees.

LEFT: Exquisite Yan Lipao handbag adorned with smooth golden handle, embellished with lotuses and insects of gold and brilliant green enamel foliage, crowned with Her Majesty's personal cipher.



Yan Lipao fern vine handbag furnished with graceful handle and ornaments of gold.

INSET: An elegant hand-painted ceramic vase from the Queen's SUPPORT collection.

OVERLEAF: Border motif is a distinctive woven pattern of Thai mudmee silk.

For eight months of every year, King Bhumibol, accompanied by Her Majesty, Queen Sirikit, travels many thousands of miles throughout the 73 provinces of the realm. They listen to the people themselves about local problems and conditions. This first-hand contact at the

grassroot level has enabled the Royal Family to become familiar with all aspects of the needs of their people; and it has led to the initiation of numerous royal projects aimed at solving the problems of the rural poor. The SUPPORT Foundation, under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit is such a project.

King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit took their first tour of the provinces in 1955. While visiting remote Udon Thani, in the most arid and poor region of Thailand, they expressed concern over the kinds of poverty and hardship faced by the rural people.

Eighty percent of Thailand's population are farmers and, in the far north, nomadic hilltribes. These people are the backbone of the nation and are totally dependent upon the land for their livelihood. If the weather is good and rain sufficient, the harvests will produce enough food to feed their

families for the coming year. However, floods, droughts, and disease can cause great hardship to the farmer and his family. In the Northeast provinces, in particular, the arid land lies idle many months of the year due to scarcity of water.

Queen Sirikit saw an opportunity to help. While talking with the people about their problems, Her Majesty noticed that the older women of the region wore a particular kind of silk woven into very distinctive patterns known locally as "mudmee." The knowledge of this ancient skill had been passed on from mother to daughter for hundreds of years. However, this art was dying out as cheap, mass-produced clothing became more readily available.

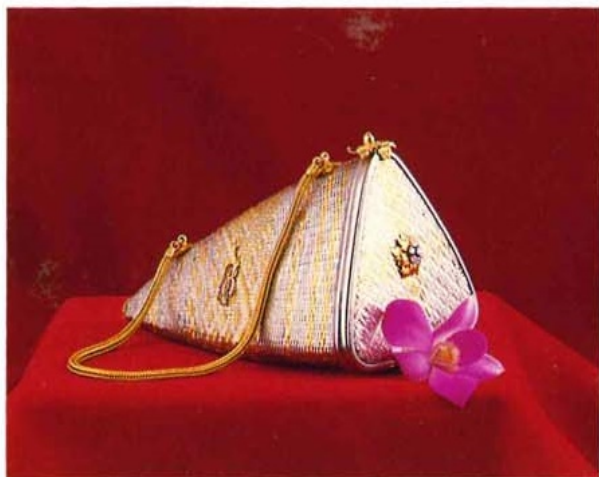
Queen Sirikit began by encouraging the older women of the village to continue teaching the skills of mudmee silk weaving to their daughters and granddaughters. The Queen then explained to them that she would personally buy all they could produce. By reviving mudmee silk production in this region, the people could earn supplementary income to offset financial hardships while at the same time preserving an ancient skill in danger of becoming lost. Queen Sirikit has since included many items of mudmee silk in her personal wardrobe. Led by Her Majesty's example, fashionable women of Thailand now choose to wear mudmee as the dress for every social occasion.

Wherever Queen Sirikit has found poverty and hardship, she has encouraged the people to supplement their incomes by reviving arts and traditional crafts unique to that particular part of the country. Whenever she has found an especially skillful artisan, she has encouraged that person to pass on these precious skills to others.

In July 1976, Her Majesty consolidated her efforts by establishing the Foundation for the Promotion of Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques (SUPPORT) under the Royal Patronage.



The main objectives of the Foundation are to train low income peasant farmers and hilltribes to earn additional income



by producing traditional arts and crafts, to encourage them to achieve the highest standards of design and craftsmanship and to secure home and export markets for their products.

Her Majesty has set up training centers throughout the country where traditional embroidery, intricate silk weaving, Yan Lipao fern vine basketry, fine ceramic crafting, silversmithing and the making of bamboo and rattan products, for example, are taught. She personally invites especially poor and needy individuals to join the SUPPORT training programs. The Foundation then buys the products made



by these trainees at fair prices and offers them for sale through the nonprofit Chitralada shops attached to SUPPORT.

The best craftsmen are personally awarded by Her Majesty the Queen for their achievements.

As far as the quality of the products is concerned, to Her Majesty the Queen "only the best will do" and so the trainees adhere to the SUPPORT motto: "Improvement is our spirit, perfection is our aim."

Through the efforts of Her Majesty and the volunteer staff of SUPPORT, many poor families are able to acquire wider training in a variety of traditional arts and crafts, to develop skills, and most importantly to become self-supporting and to gain self-respect.

Under Queen Sirikit's direction, SUPPORT training centers have been established throughout the various geographical divisions of Thailand and are training people in cottage industries utilizing materials available locally. Training centers are even located on palace grounds. Ancient skills almost forgotten are now being revived and taught. Crafts and products that were in danger of dying out from the impact of the modern and industrial world are now enjoying renewed popularity.



Both Their Majesties encourage national pride in producing Thai products and in developing an appreciation of the fine arts and crafts of traditional Thai culture. Queen Sirikit is now reintroducing the skills and techniques used to produce the finest hand-crafted art objects once available only to the Siamese kings.

Through the efforts of Queen Sirikit and the SUPPORT Foundation, Thai citizens who were once limited to a life of poverty and despair are now producing world-class works of art of the highest quality and craftsmanship.

LEFT: SUPPORT evening bag in the shape of traditional cane-knitted betel leaf holder, hand-woven from strands of silver and gold and decorated with precious stones.

BOTTOM LEFT: Luxurious artificial lotus blossoms, each a work of art, hand-made of silk by SUPPORT trainees.

Exquisite evening bags, gold replicas of the common surf clam, bear the Royal cipher, crafted in diamonds and sapphires of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit.



FOR INQUIRIES:
SUPPORT FOUNDATION
Office of Her Majesty's Private Secretary
Chitralada Palace
Bangkok, Thailand