

# Thailand Protests Are Anti-Chinese, Not “Pro-Democracy”

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*Ongoing protests in Thailand appearing very similar to those recently seen in Hong Kong are no coincidence.*

*They are part of an admitted “Pan-Asian Alliance” that – while claiming to be “pro-democracy” are in reality created by the US government and aimed directly at Beijing.*

Thailand has tilted too close to Beijing for Washington’s liking and as a response, has scheduled Thailand for destabilization and if possible, regime change.

## **Thailand Tilting “Too Close” To China**

China is Thailand’s largest and most important trading partner, its largest foreign direct investor, and its largest source of tourism with more Chinese tourists coming to Thailand each year than all Western nations combined.

Thailand is also hosting one of the key routes of China’s One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative with construction already ongoing for high-speed rail that will connect China, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, and eventually Singapore.

Finally and perhaps most upsetting for the US is that Thailand has begun replacing its aging US military hardware through a series of major Thai-Chinese arms deals including the purchasing of main battle tanks, other armored vehicles, naval vessels including up to 3 submarines, and jointly-developed arms programs like the DTI-1 multiple rocket launcher system.

Thailand has also recently replaced some of its US-built Blackhawk helicopters with Russian Mi-17V-5’s.

To counter this, the US has mobilized opposition groups and NGOs it has funded in Thailand for years to now demand the current government step down and the nation’s constitution be rewritten, paving the way for US-backed billionaire-led opposition parties of Thaksin Shinawatra and Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit into power. These are opposition parties that have long served US interests in the past and have explicitly promised to roll back Thai-Chinese relations should they take power again.

## **US NED Was Behind Hong Kong’s Unrest, and Are Now Behind Thailand’s Unrest**

The US was indisputably behind the protests in Hong Kong with the political opposition and protest leaders [confirmed](#) to be recipients of US government cash via notorious regime

change arm, the [National Endowment for Democracy \(NED\)](#).

Many of the protest leaders literally flew to Washington DC or visited the US consulate in Hong Kong to receive aid, directives, and other forms of support.

In Thailand too, virtually every aspect of the protests are funded by the US government.

Worse still is that the US is attempting to stitch these various movements together to form a regional front against Beijing with Thai protest leaders regularly traveling to meet their US-funded counterparts in Hong Kong and Taiwan and vice versa while creating [an online army](#) with the help of US-based social media giants to stack public narratives in their favor.

It will be a front that if regime change in any or all of the nations currently targeted by Washington in Asia is successful, will transform the region from a rising global economic power to a dysfunctional warzone not entirely unlike the Middle East.

### **US Funds Thai Protest Leaders**

The core leadership of Thailand's protests includes Anon Nampa of the US NED-funded "Thai Lawyers for Human Rights" (TLHR). Anon Nampa leads every major rally, taking the stage and delivering the opposition's demands to the current government including demands for regime change.

TLHR's founder had in the past admitted that the organization "receives all its funding from international donors," in [an interview](#) given to the English-language newspaper, Bangkok Post.

TLHR's US government [funding](#) was openly displayed on the US National Endowment for Democracy (NED) website in 2014.

Its name has since been removed from NED's website but continues to receive US funding through the NED via the "Union for Civil Liberty" (UCL) of which it is a member.

The UCL is still listed on NED's [current webpage](#) for programs it funds in Thailand. TLHR is listed as a member of UCL [on its official website](#) next to other recipients of US NED funding including the Cross Cultural Foundation, the Human Rights Lawyers Association, and the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL).

### **US Funds Orgs Trying to Rewrite Thailand's Constitution**

Another of Anon Nampa's demands is the rewriting of the Thai constitution. These efforts have been spearheaded by an organization called "iLaw" - also funded by the US NED.

Thai-based English-language newspaper The Nation in an article titled, "[iLaw launches petition for charter rewrite](#)," would claim:

The Internet Law Reform Dialogue (iLaw), a human rights NGO, has launched a campaign seeking signatures from 50,000 voters to sponsor a motion for a Constitution rewrite.

The organization's US government funding is not mentioned in the article, but can easily be

found [on NED's official website](#) under the name, "Internet Law Reform Dialogue" (iLaw). On iLaw's own website under "[About Us](#)" it admits:

Between 2009 and 2014 iLaw has received funding support from the Open Society Foundation, the Heinrich Böll Foundation and a one-time support grant from Google.

Between 2015 to present iLaw receives funding from funders as listed below: 1. Open Society Foundation (OSF) 2. Heinrich Böll Stiftung (HBF) 3. National Endowment for Democracy (NED) 4. Fund for Global Human Rights (FGHR) 5. American Jewish World Service (AJWS) 6. One-time support donation from Google and other independent donors

Other groups working to rewrite Thailand's constitution include "ConLab" or "Constitution Lab" ([on Facebook](#)) who do so in partnership with US government-funded iLaw and which recently held an event at the US Embassy's "[American Corner](#)" at Chiang Mai University.

One can only wonder what the US response would be if Russian or Chinese-funded groups attempted to rewrite the US constitution.

### **US Even Funds Groups Padding out Rallies with "Poor People"**

Filling up rallies is done not only through the billionaire-led opposition parties of Pheu Thai and Move Forward (previously Future Forward) but also through groups like the "Assembly of the Poor."

Assembly of the Poor leader Baramee Chaiyarat has recently vowed to bring his supporters to any future mass rallies in Bangkok.

But just like the protest leaders and legal arms of the protests, Assembly of the Poor is also funded by the US government via the NED.

On the [NED's official website](#) an organization called "Thai Poor Act" has been listed for years, receiving millions of Thai Baht in funding. Its funding falls under a section titled, "Supporting Grassroots Engagement in Promoting Democracy," which is precisely what Assembly of the Poor claims to do.

Evidence proving that Thai Poor Act and Assembly of the Poor are actually the same group turned up on Thai Poor Act's now disused Facebook page where it published a 2011 document titled, "Incorporation Contract of Establishment of a Body of Individuals" listing Assembly of the Poor leader Barammee Chaiyarat as "manager" of Thai Poor Act.

Thai Poor Act's YouTube channel features only one video, but the video begins with a title stating clearly, "Assembly of the Poor presents..."

Clearly they are the same organization, led by the same individual - Barammee Chaiyarat - and funded by the US government to pad out protests.

### **US Funds Local Media to Promote Protests**

There are various fake news fronts posing as "independent media" in Thailand also funded

by the US government via NED and providing lopsidedly positive coverage for the protests and each of the above mentioned organizations and individuals - never once mentioning their collective US government funding.

This includes Prachatai which receives millions of Thai Baht a year from the US government to advance narratives that divide and destabilize Thailand and promote US interests within Thai borders. It is also an echo chamber for US State Department talking points including US policy regarding [the Mekong River](#), the South China Sea, and other opposition fronts the US backs in the region.

It is listed on [the US NED's official website](#) under the name "Foundation for Community Educational Media," which also appears at the very bottom of Prachatai's website. The media front's "executive director" Chiranuch Premchaiporn is also a ["fellow"](#) of the National Endowment for Democracy.

### **Building a "Pan-Asian Alliance"**

An [editorial](#) in the Taipei Times titled, "Young alliance taking on Beijing," would claim:

A "Milk Tea Alliance" among netizens in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand and the Philippines emerged this spring, trolling China's increasingly jingoistic online army that lashes out and threatens celebrities, multinationals and anyone else who directly or indirectly challenges Beijing's "one China" mantra.

Like the Sunflower movement and pro-democracy supporters over the past year or more in Hong Kong, the alliance is self-initiated and spontaneous, interested in greater democracy in their own countries and others, as well as countering Beijing's cudgel diplomacy, military assertiveness and regional ambitions, even if their own leaders are hesitant to do so.

Whether it is countering the CCP's historical claims, China's aggressive dam-building program that threatens those along the lower reaches of the Mekong River or Beijing militarizing the South China Sea, the power of the #MilkTeaAlliance is growing.

It is clearly false to portray this "alliance" as "self-initiated and spontaneous" with the summation of its agenda lifted directly from the US State Department's daily briefings and each respective opposition group that makes up the "alliance" having verified, documented ties directly to Washington.

The regionwide network of political interference and regime change the US is creating in Asia today is not unlike the network it created and used to carry out the "Arab Spring" in 2011.

Even the New York Times in its [article](#), "U.S. Groups Helped Nurture Arab Uprisings," would admit the role of organizations like NED in training, equipping, and funding protests that eventually led to regional death, despair, irreversible economic destruction, and enduring destabilization.

The NYT would admit:

A number of the groups and individuals directly involved in the revolts and

reforms sweeping the region, including the April 6 Youth Movement in Egypt, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights and grass-roots activists like Entsar Qadhi, a youth leader in Yemen, received training and financing from groups like the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, a nonprofit human rights organization based in Washington, according to interviews in recent weeks and American diplomatic cables obtained by WikiLeaks.

It also noted:

The Republican and Democratic institutes are loosely affiliated with the Republican and Democratic Parties. They were created by Congress and are financed through the National Endowment for Democracy, which was set up in 1983 to channel grants for promoting democracy in developing nations. The National Endowment receives about \$100 million annually from Congress. Freedom House also gets the bulk of its money from the American government, mainly from the State Department.

While the NYT claims this money was spent “promoting democracy” it clearly served as cover for what was in reality a violent campaign of US-backed regime change which culminated in multiple direct US military interventions, the destruction of Libya, and the near destruction of Syria. One thing that never materialized was “democracy.”

Also a product of the “Arab Spring” is US regime change efforts in Yemen and its military support for Saudi Arabia’s ongoing war against the country. It has led to what the UN itself has called “[the world’s worst humanitarian crisis](#).”

Considering what US “democracy promotion” has done to North Africa and the Middle East – wider Asia should take serious the threat the US is openly creating and aiming at the region in the form of its “Pan-Asian Alliance” and all the US government-funded opposition fronts that make it up. Just as “democracy” was merely a slogan used to advance US primacy in North Africa and the Middle East during the “Arab Spring,” “democracy” is just a slogan now in Asia used to advance Washington’s real goal of encircling and containing China – thus preserving US primacy in Asia-Pacific.

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