

Thailand: Anti-Regime Protesters Tell Their Side of the Story

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Statesman Kasit Piromya weighs in on the ongoing Thai political crisis – peels off Western label of “anti-democratic protesters.”

[In Part 1](#), protest spokesman Akanat Promphan enumerated the grievances of his movement and attempted to correct disinformation being intentionally propagated by the Western media.

Now, former Foreign Minister and veteran statesman Kasit Piromya has gone into the issues deeper – pointing out the illusion of democracy created by the regime of Thaksin Shinawatra and the paradigm shift that needs to be made to move the people and the nation of Thailand beyond it for good. He also examines and exposes the West’s support for the current regime in Thailand and its use of superficial “democracy” with which it couches its true big-money agenda.



Image: Veteran statesman, a former ambassador and former Thai Foreign Minister, [Kasit Piromya](#) now speaks out against the regime of Thaksin Shinawatra.

Kasit’s essays also challenge the West’s labeling of the protests as “anti-democratic.” He discusses true democracy and attempts to impart a deeper understanding of it, its role in governance, and both its weaknesses and strengths – as opposed to the current ruling

regime who appears to believe “democracy” is merely winning elections and cashing in the blank check of impunity they believe has been granted to them.

Three essays, available in full on Scribd, include:

[Break Out of the Illusion](#)

[We Want to Settle Our House in Order: Our Own Way](#)

[Biased Because of Misplaced Priorities](#)

On The Democracy Thai Protesters Seek...

The wish of the Thai people from all walks of life is to change away from corruption and dictatorship. They want justice in politics. They are the rightful owners of their country. They now want to reform Thailand in every important and pertinent aspect. They want reform to occur before new elections are held. They want to experience for real a changed and reformed Thailand without any vestige and residue of Thaksin’s regime. Thaksin’s regime has done much damage and caused deep sorrows and divisions for the Thai people. They want to prevent money politics. They want to fight and eliminate corruption. They want a democratic Thailand, of participation and empowerment, and not of domination. They want to live with governance, transparency, and accountability. They want to keep out old-style politics. They want the country to observe and practice the Buddhist values of right minded governance and the Buddhist inspired economic philosophy of His Majesty the King. They want to ensure that those who volunteer to serve the country are not rent seekers. They want to protect the environment for future generations. They want to live in an inclusive and non-discriminatory society. They want the caring of the disadvantaged. They want to narrow development gaps. They want to ensure that Thailand is a society with justice and equality. They do not want to live under a Mubarak or a Marcos. They do not want to be subservient pawns who must bow and scrape under the whims of a family fiefdom, especially one that does not respect core Thai values.

-Kasit Piromya, [We Want to Settle Our House in Order: Our Own Way](#)

On Western Hypocrisy: Ukraine vs. Thailand vs. Hugo Chavez of Venezuela...

The case of Ukraine surely illustrates a Western desire to both undermine an elected government and lessen the influence of Russian Federation, in order to draw Ukraine into the more liberal European orbit. There seems to be a forgetfulness of democratic process and the principle of non interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other independent peoples in order to seek geo-strategic advantage, namely eastward expansion into the Euro-Asia heartland at the expense of Russia’s dominance in its Near Abroad region. So the Western world appears to fully support the protestors. The subject matter, it seems, is not about democratic principles or people’s life and death, but about a Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Ukraine.

In the case of Thailand, Thaksin Shinawatra speaks the West’s corporatese . He has cleverly presented himself as the Western world’s “our man”. And he was elected to office in line with Western values and his successive proxy governments were also all so elected. So Western intellectuals ignore his illiberal and undemocratic practices. They do not mind that Thaksin is a convicted criminal and a fugitive. They do not care how election victories

were actually won on the ground. The Western world seems not to notice that dictatorial populism à la Thaksin was divisive and discriminatory and a means to siphon off the people's money for the use of himself, his family and his cronies. Whereas populism à la Chavez of Venezuela was not acceptable because Chavez stood up against the Western world and capitalist corporatism, populism à la Thaksin in Thailand was trumpeted as caring for the downtrodden and not as a means towards corruption and national self-destruction. Thaksin learned how to charm the West while some of the mega-populist projects offered western suppliers the benefits of lucrative concessions and business deals.

So, protesters against Thaksin and his proxy governments are labeled by many in the West as elitists; urbanized; ultra-conservative and reactionary or even anti-Western. This is utter nonsense as well as demeaning and condescending to the intellectual capacity and integrity of the Thai people.

To add insult to injury, many Western commentators, even those who have lived in Thailand - but not close to the Thai people - believe that Thaksin's supporters, the Red Shirts who used violence and thuggish behaviour à la the Brown and the Black Shirts are true democrats and revolutionary in spirit. This is a naive and shallow view which cannot be further from the truth.

-Kasit Piromya, [Biased Because of Misplaced Priorities](#)

On Thailand's Support for Occupy Wall Street...

In Thailand's case we see unfolding before us a people's undertaking through freedom of expression and participation, with the principle of inclusiveness, and rejection of extractive political institutions and rent-seeking personalities.

Occupy Wall Street in the US rejected financial dominance and control over politics. The danger of money running politics is international. No one is safe from the corrupting power of big money. Thai people share the sentiment of this movement to bring ethics to Wall Street and wish them further success, because their success would help minimize the misbehavior of their government abroad.

-Kasit Piromya, [Biased Because of Misplaced Priorities](#)

On Overcoming the Illusion of Democracy...

We want to make a point that if you want to break through the Matrix, this illusion of democracy, then we need a fair and transparent electoral system devoid of interference and violence.

That is also why I and fellow members of the Democrat Party felt it justified to boycott this THB 3-billion election. We did not stop anyone from exercising their rights, but we want to make a point that if you want to break through the Matrix, this illusion of democracy, then we need a fair and transparent electoral system devoid of interference and violence - frankly in the past the Democrats could not campaign in certain provinces because of death threats.

The people's fight is a demand for electoral reform and accountability from the

government. We wish not see the country plunge further into the abyss. For we will be stuck in a black hole where totalitarian abuses of power will be accepted under the guise of democracy, where one man reins with complete disregard for check and balance.

I do not wish to paint a dark and dystopian picture for the sake of scaremongering, I shall leave that to Thaksin Shinawatra's proxy the Red Shirts, nor am I dreaming up a utopia, but this is the reality. In modern Thai history, I have never seen any parliament majority defied and defiled the rule of law by brushing aside the judiciary and other independent anti-corruption bodies as if they are some flies, necessary nuisance, as they made a mess of the country.

So what shall we do for now? Like Neo in the film we may have doubts and may have even been deceived by the distorted reality perpetuated by the mainstream media. But we must not lose heart. We must break through from the world that prevents pluralistic civic engagement, a world filled with hatred, a world where a supermajority is propagated to be the panacea for all social and economic grievances. I believe the time is now. It will not be easy as we are being engulfed by the Thaksin machinery, but through patience and open-mindedness, I believe our cause to redefine democracy, as a viable and fair system for all - where all votes are equal and respected - will succeed.

-Kasit Piromya, [Break Out of the Illusion](#)



Image: The Western media claims [the ongoing protests in Thailand](#) are “anti-democratic” and “elitist,” however, the words of protest leaders and a growing faction of forsaken rice farmers joining its ranks contradict that portrayal. Kasit Piromya's essays encapsulate the democracy protesters are seeking - giving it the substance the Thaksin regime's version lacks.

Clearly, it would be very difficult to take Kasit Piromya's sentiments and label them “anti-democratic.” The picture he paints of the protesters conflicts entirely with that which the regime of Thaksin Shianwatra and its many Western backers have attempted to portray.

The dishonesty of the West in labeling the protesters as “anti-democratic” and “elitist” match a pattern of deceit many should recall at least as far back as the Iraq War and tales of non-existent “weapons of mass destruction.” The same self-serving deceit that paved the way for a deadly, protracted, and astronomically destructive war is now sowing political

instability across the globe, including in Thailand.

That a veteran statesman like Kasit Piromya cannot get his work published on CNN, [while paid-propagandists caught mocking disabled people can](#) – illustrates the decline of the West and the crumbling of its institutions. As those institutions crumble, they are taking with them the lofty ideals that have perpetuated their credibility and legitimacy for so long. Kasit's words, as a leading member of the protests himself, are a reflection of the will and aspirations of the people in the streets who have risen up against the Thaksin regime, [now for many months](#).

This is the true face of the protests – a face the West has spent an inordinate amount of time and resources to disfigure through deception. Pleading for them to tell the protesters' side of the story will ultimately be fruitless. [We must build the platforms necessary](#) to get the word out ourselves. In the end, media serves the interests of those who create it – and in the West it is clear those interests and that of the Thai people could not be further apart.

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