Bank Press Release No. 66/57
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Subject: $6 million loan for vocational education in Thailand

The World Bank has approved a loan equivalent to $6 million to the Kingdom of Thailand to assist in financing a project intended to strengthen and expand vocational education for agriculture and industry. The project -- to be carried out over three years at an estimated total cost of $21 million -- includes the expansion of 14 trades and industries schools, nine vocational agricultural schools, a vocational teacher training college and an agricultural teacher training center, as well as specialist teachers from abroad.

This will be the World Bank's sixteenth loan in Thailand, but its first for an education project in that country. This latest project will help meet the country's needs in skilled personnel for its expanding industry and for modernizing its agriculture. Apart from the Bank's loan, finance for the project will come from within Thailand. The United States Agency for International Development will provide advisers and teaching specialists for the project on a grant basis.

In the field of industrial training the project proposes expansion of land, buildings and equipment for 14 trades and industries schools to permit more effective training in five trades for a total enrollment of about 7,000 students, leading to an output of 2,100 students per year -- 900 per year more than at present. This increased output is expected to meet the needs of industry for the immediate future without the risk of an unemployable surplus. Of the 14 trades and industries schools involved, three will be large schools in the Bangkok area and one will be located in each of the eleven other educational regions in Thailand, thus providing a balanced distribution throughout the
country. Courses offered by these schools will cover the following trades: auto mechanics, building and construction, machine shop, metal work and electricity and radio servicing. The operation of these project schools will require about 100 additional technical teachers a year in each of the three years of the project. To meet these needs the project will expand an existing vocational teachers' college in Bangkok into a national institution for technical teacher training.

For expanded agricultural training, the project will provide additional land, buildings, equipment, livestock and in-service teacher training at nine vocational agricultural schools and at the teacher training college at Bang-Pra. The agricultural schools of the project are well distributed among the regions with different natural and social conditions and varying patterns of farming. The new facilities will enable expansion of enrollment from 1,900 to 4,100 which will provide an output of 1,250 mid-level agriculturalists every year to meet the estimated requirements of the public services, private farming and farm service enterprises. This section of the project gives special attention to the agricultural teacher training program. In addition to new land, buildings, equipment and livestock, the Bang-Pra college will receive the services of five expatriate specialists in teaching crop production, animal production, agricultural engineering, agricultural economics and extension education in agriculture.

Thailand's growing educational system has been, and promises to continue to be, a major factor in the country's economic progress. At the same time this growth in the economy generates an increasing demand for skills in key sectors. The country's rapidly changing industrial sector requires well-qualified workers able to face a variety of production problems. Because of limited training facilities in industry, employers are turning increasingly to the vocational
schools for production workers and also for technicians. In agriculture, voca-
tional school graduates are at present needed mainly for Government service in
the fields of agricultural extension, research, land settlement and cooperatives.
However, economic progress will lead to increasing demands for qualified agri-
culturists in private farming and for farmer services.

The Government of Thailand intends that this vocational education project
shall form part of a national human resources development program coordinated
with economic and educational planning. To keep the program of its trades and
industries school in line with the requirements of industry the Government also
intends that the existing National Vocational Training Committee will include
representatives of industry and other private employers and will establish local
committees, representative of employers and appropriate Government departments,
to advise on the operation of each school. The Government is to establish ad-
visory committees on agricultural education on both the national and local levels
and to formulate plans for the development of technical services for agriculture.

The Bank loan, to be made in various currencies, will be for a term of 30
years and will bear interest at the rate of 6 per cent per annum. Repayment of
principal will begin November 1, 1976, after a 10-year period of grace.