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APPENDIX I

Description of Areas in which Displaced Persons are Located

1. Kanchanaburi Province (Sangkhlaburi District)

Sangkhlaburi, a district of Kanchanaburi Province and the location of Three Pagodas Pass, an ancient trade and military mountain pass between Burma and Thailand, has had both Karen and Mon settlements since pre-Ayuddhaya times and the 16th century respectively.

The Karen gradually migrated to this area since, as Karen legend has it, they were pushed out of the Irawaddy delta by the martial Burmans hundreds of years ago. Karen villages can be found dispersed throughout the province. A 1987 survey by the Hill Tribe Welfare and Development Center showed that Kanchanaburi was fourth in Karen population (85 villages and 15,194 persons).¹ During the period examined in the thesis, many Karen villages could be found in the vicinity of the camps near the border. In fact, some of the displaced persons opted to stay with relatives or establish homes in the villages instead of living in the camps.

The majority of the Mon settled in Sangkhlaburi District arrived after the sacking of Pegu, the Mon capital, by the Burmese King Bayinnaung in the late 16th century. Halliday wrote that they fled through Three Pagodas Pass, Ranong, and another point in Kanchanaburi and that the Thai kings sent special frontier troops to watch for them and give them supplies.² Another great exodus passed when Moulmein Mon attempted to mount an attack on the Burman King Thalun in the early 17th century and failed.³ In fear of retribution, the Mon fled into Thai territory. Another 6,000 were reported to have fled after revolt against King Pindale in the mid-17th century while the final large scale movement came in the mid-18th century after King Alungpaya sacked Pegu.⁴ As one of the routes to flee Pegu was through Three Pagodas Pass, many Mon eventually settled there. A large Mon community may still be found in Sangkhlaburi and a significant number have identity cards for both Thailand and Burma.

2. Tak Province

The mountainous Thai-Burma border of Tak has long been an area of Hill Tribes. Amongst the mixture of Lisu, Lahu, Meo, Akha and Yao, the Karen are by far in the majority. A 1986 Hill Tribe Population Survey Project showed nearly 50,000 Karen

¹McKinnon, John and Bernard Vienne. *Hill Tribes Today*. 1987. 425.

²Halliday, R. "Immigration of the Mons into Siam." *Journal of the Siam Society*. 1913.

³Harvey, G.E. *History of Burma: From the Earliest Times to 10 March 1824 The Beginning of the English Conquest*. 1967. 193.

⁴Ibid. 198, 235.

resident this frontier province.⁵ Here too a number of the displaced, not captured in statistical data, have opted to settle in the villages of Thai Karen. Many Karen in Tak carry identity cards from both Thailand and Burma and it is common for the Thai along the border to be proficient in either Burmese, Karen or both from years of interaction.

Anecdotally, while conducting research in Mae Sot (the district opposite Myawaddy in Burma's Karen State), I went to buy some supplies in what was probably the largest department store in the district. When trying to locate the goods, I tried to speak Thai with one of the clerks. She did not speak Thai and thus went on a search for someone who did. Out of the twenty or thirty staff at the store, she finally found one person who could speak Thai. This demonstrates that not only are many of the local staff ethnic Karen, Burman or otherwise, but that their principal clientele must also be of those ethnicities or at least able to comprehend their languages.

3. Mae Hong Son Province

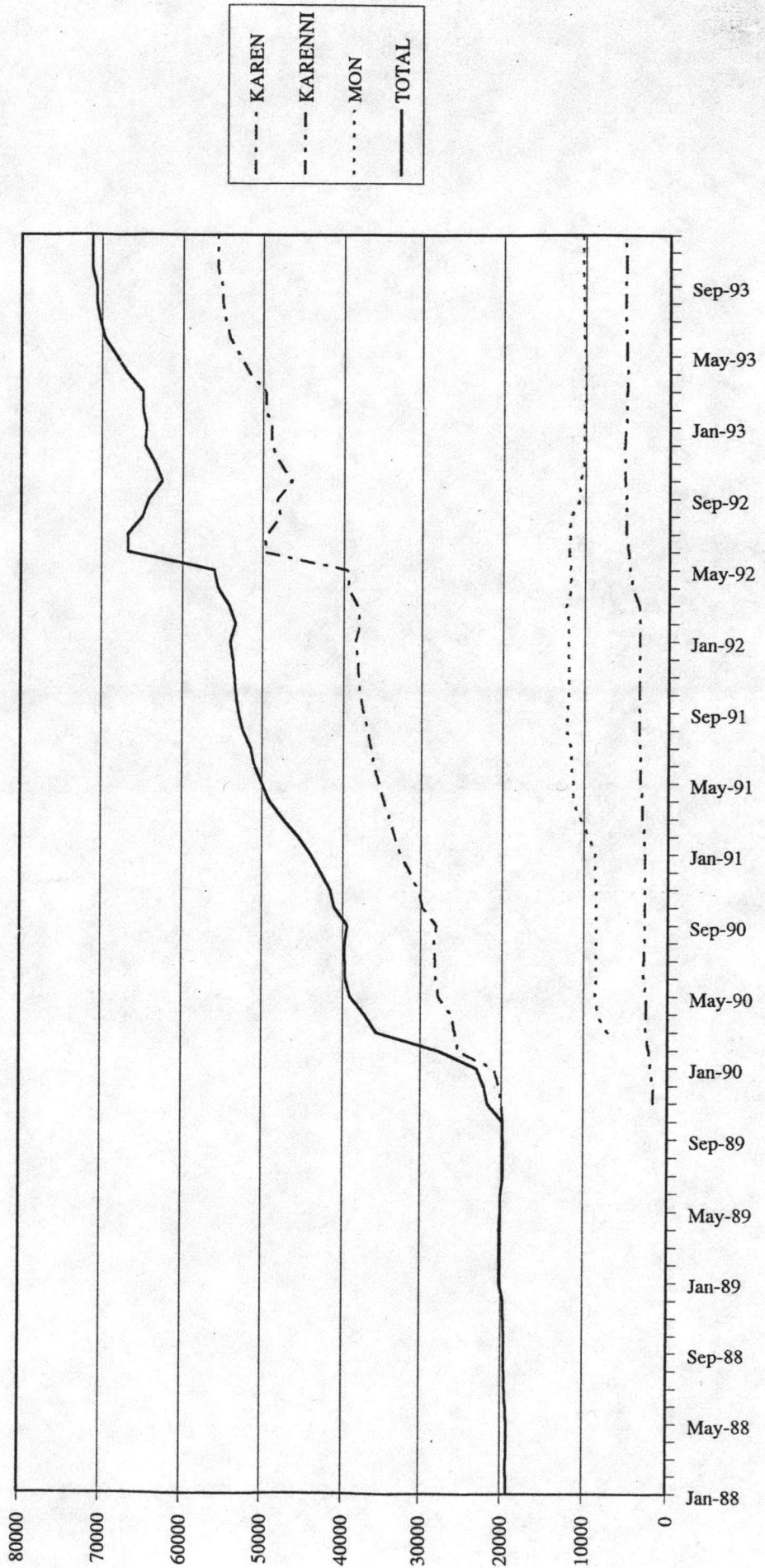
Mae Hong Son also consists of a broad variety of Hill Tribes, where the Karen, once again, enjoy the majority, some 68,516 as of 1987.⁶ Here too, Karen and Karenni (Red Karen) villages line the border as the Karenni State is just opposite the province. Mae Hong Son has not developed into a thriving economic trading post as Three Pagodas Pass and more so Mae Sot have. There are no main historical routes through here and the area is mountainous with little contemporary infrastructure.

There are some displaced Burmese of Shan ethnicity in Chiang Rai around Mae Sai and in Mae Hong Son but because of linguistic affinities, they often integrate into local Thai villages, making them not easily identifiable. All three of the locations enjoy a mix of ethnic groups consistent with those of the displaced persons. Many have family members in both Thailand and Burma. Relations between the camps and the locals has been thus much more harmonious than those with the Khmer or Vietnamese on the eastern border. The camps, until recently, were also fairly small and quite typical for villages in the area therefore not placing an exceptional strain on resources. Relief workers have also assisted in these good relations by providing material and medical services to local affected Thai villages.

⁵ McKinnon and Vienne. 425.

⁶ Ibid.

**INFLUX OF BURMESE DISPLACED PERSONS TO THAILAND
POPULATION OF BORDER CAMPS: 1988-1993**



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