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CPIB looked for Phey in Bangkok

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CORRUPT Practices Investigation Bureau officers had gone to Bangkok in an attempt to locate and bring back fugitive Phey Yew Kok, even though Singapore did not have an extradition treaty with Thailand, Parliament heard yesterday.

Home Affairs and Law Minister S. Jayakumar also disclosed that Thai authorities had even gone so far as to raid places that Phey might have stayed at.

He said this to emphasise to Non-Constituency MP Lee Siew Choh that the Government did everything necessary to search for and apprehend Phey.

The former president of the National Trades Union Congress and People's Action Party MP fled after being charged with criminal breach of trust.

Dr Lee, who was pressing Prof Jayakumar for the amount spent by Government on surveillance of lawyer Francis Seow in the United States, wanted to compare the effort with that expended on Phey.

Prof Jayakumar's response was that while the Government knew of Seow's movements, it did not know Phey's whereabouts to this day.

But there was no period of limitation on his offence and he would still be brought to trial when found.

Phey remains on Interpol's arrest-on-sight list and a warrant is still out on him.

He was charged on Dec 10, 1979 with four counts of CBT and two counts under the Trade Unions Act. He was allowed bail.

He failed to turn up when the case was mentioned in January, 1980. It was later learnt he left for Kuala Lumpur by train on Dec 31, 1979, went on to Bangkok and dropped out of sight.

A warrant was issued immediately after Phey jumped bail.

Prof Jayakumar said yesterday CPIB officers checked his home, office and places he frequented. They also watched his house and office.

Interpol was alerted, an appeal made in the local press for informa-

tion, and Immigration and Heads of Missions abroad were asked to keep a lookout.

When Prof Jayakumar said the Government still did not know where Phey was, Dr Lee called out: "Taiwan?"

He replied that if Dr Lee had "special inside information", he would be pleased to pass it on to the authorities.



Phey ... his whereabouts remains a mystery to this day.