

# An able statesman



A man who listens more than he speaks has a memorable record, with six decades of sterling service to his beloved country, writes **Weerayut Chokchaimadon**

**A**fter working in different capacities, as president of the Privy Council, prime minister, army chief and statesman, General Prem Tinsulanonda remains reticent and listens more than he speaks. In the end, however, things have worked out quite well.

"I have had enough," was Prem's short reply to reporters in 1988 when he announced that he would step down as prime minister after eight years in power.

Despite moving away from mainstream politics, the veteran's influence has not faded.

This is reflected on annual occasions such as New Year and Songkran when Prem opens his Bangkok residence to receive senior military and government officials who come to greet him. It is even believed that annual military reshuffles get the "nod" from Prem.

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