

STEVEN SEAGAL

February 7, 2003

Pol. Lt. Col. Thaksin Shinawatra
Prime Minister
Government House
Thanon Nakhon Fathom, Bangkok 10300
Thailand

Dear Prime Minister Shinawatra:

Over the last 30 years, I have visited the beautiful country of Thailand more than 100 times. As an admirer of your people, your culture, and your religion, I was particularly saddened to hear from my friends at People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) about the cruel and sometimes deadly training practices used on Thailand's elephants.

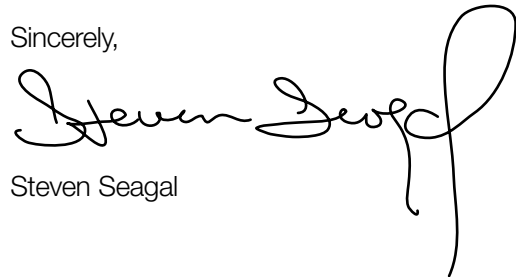
Videotape obtained by PETA reveals in graphic detail the process by which elephant trainers in Thailand ready baby elephants for use in Thailand's tourism industry. In the video, baby elephants are separated from their mothers, roped, bound, and imprisoned in a wooden cage where they are methodically tortured and beaten for seven days straight. The elephants struggle, defecate, and scream in terror and fear as their trunks and feet are beaten with nail-studded sticks and clubs and blades are sunk into their skulls. The baby elephants depicted in the video represent only a fraction of those "broken" in villages across Thailand. In less than four months, this one village alone subjected approximately 10 baby elephants to this ritualized torture and abuse, also known as *phaajaan*.

One hundred years ago in Thailand there were 150,000 elephants. Today, there are only 5,000, the majority of whom are in private hands. For the sake of these endangered animals and your country's reputation, I ask that you immediately enact laws to abolish their use and abuse by the entertainment industry.

If you would like to speak to someone further, please contact PETA spokesperson Andrew Butler at 757-622-7382, extension 1516, or via e-mail at AndrewB@peta.org.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Seagal", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

Steven Seagal
