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Center Magazine - 'The U.S. is not an Asian Power'

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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

THE END OF AN ERA: ASIA—A YEAR AFTER THE FALL OF INDOCHINA

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, on April 10, 1975, in an address to a joint session, President Ford asked Congress to approve an additional $1 billion in military and economic aid for South Vietnam. The next day, American Embassy personnel were evacuated from Phnom Penh. The end of an era was at hand. By the last of that month—just a year ago—it was all over. In Saligon and Phnom Penh, the governments of General Thieu and Lon Nol were out and new governments were in. Thus ended the final chapter in the disastrous policy to contain a nonaggressive China.

Where do we stand in Asia a year later? What lessons have been learned from this attempt to interfere in vast lands and peoples half way around the globe? It is time to take stock.

Since former President Nixon’s visit to Peking in 1972, winds of change have blown throughout Asia. After more than two decades of hostility and confrontation, the United States and China began the journey to normalization of relations, a journey far from completed. Last, our Nation’s policy is now grounded on the fact that the United States is not an Asian power but a Pacific power. The difference is more than semantic. It is the difference between a sensible acceptance of the realities of Asia and the dangerous illusions of military omnipotence.

What takes place in this vast region is of concern to Americans. But concern and control are quite different matters.

Simply stated, America’s principal long-range interests in the Far East are to avoid domination of the region by any single power, to maintain friendly relations with China, Japan and other nations, and to lessen tensions which could trigger either a local or a great power conflict in the area.

Let us first look at the People’s Republic of China, the home for one quarter of the people on this globe. Former President Nixon’s journey was only the first step on the path to normalization of relations with China. The Shanghai communique was not a document of flesh and blood. It was a skeleton to which the flesh was to be added by both countries. In the 4 years since that document was issued, some flesh has been added in the form of trade, cultural, educational and scientific exchanges and visits to China by government officials, including members of Congress. But the basic myth of the old China policy, the obstacle to normalization of relations with the People’s Republic of China, remains. The United States, officially, still treats the government of Taiwan as the government of China.

The pertinent provision in the Shanghai communique reads:

The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. In the President’s mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes.

I interpret the Shanghai communique to mean that the United States recognized that the Chinese civil war was over and that the eventual goal was full and formal normalization of relations between the People’s Republic of China and the United States.

President Ford said in Honolulu last December 7 that on his recent visit to China, he “reaffirmed the determination of the United States to complete the normalization of relations with the People’s Republic of China on the basis of the Shanghai communique.”

The Shanghai communique stated that the United States would “progressively reduce its forces and military installation on Taiwan as the area diminishes.” With the end of the war in Indochina, “tension in the area,” which, conceivably, could have Japanese to make, ended. But there are still some 2,500 American servicemen on that island, down from 10,000 in 1972.

In addition to the regular forces, the United States maintains a military advisory mission to advise the Taiwan forces on how best to fight the forces of the People’s Republic. We also continue to supply Taiwan with large quantities of weapons, $611 million worth over the last 4 years, much of that financed on long-term government credits. The administration proposes to sell $182.5 million more in military equipment to Taiwan by the end of the next fiscal year, $43 million of that on credit.

Looking eastward, the partnership between the United States and Japan is the fundamental pillar of American policy in Asia. Japan and the United States are military partners. Japan’s continued trust in the validity of the U.S. security commitment is essential to the maintenance of stability throughout the region because a Japan embarked in search of security on its own way by a major military expansion would unsettle all of Asia. Japan is almost wholly dependent on foreign raw materials to supply its greatly expanded industrial plant. Asian memories of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere are still not forgotten. There are now pressures from the Pentagon for Japan to expand its military forces. I urge the greatest caution in pushing Japan in such a direction. There ought not to be grounds for Japan to have to doubt the U.S. security guarantee and no compelling reason for the Japanese to make a significant change in their defense policy. Any other course, in my judgment, is playing with fire in the Western Pacific.

I am deeply concerned about the fallout from the Lockheed affair on United States-Japanese relations. This episode and other recent examples of payoffs in
shady American business deals abroad demonstrate the need for reforms inside the international system of business ethics. This is an appropriate problem for the United Nations to tackle. Both buying and selling nations should understand that it is in their interest to secure the robustness of the system which now affects international business dealings.

In the present situation, it is in the interest of all concerned that American and Japanese officials handle the problem in such a manner as to minimize the adverse impact on our relationship. Maintenance of a close partnership with Japan should continue to have the highest priority in U.S. policy toward Asia.

Korea, the last remnant of the failure of U.S. policy in Asia, is a time bomb which must be defused. The U.S. objective should be to bring about a settlement between the two Koreas and, in the interim, to ease tensions and lessen the possibility of hostilities. U.S. policy should not be hostage to any particular government in Korea, or anywhere else for that matter. That lesson was learned, finally, in Indochina and Cambodia where two generals, Thieu and Lon Nol became the tail that wags the dog. Are we to suffer the same experience in Korea?

Nearly a quarter of a century after the end of the Korean war, over 40,000 American troops remain in Korea at a cost to the taxpayers of $880 million annually. Many are on the DMZ line in positions which would automatically thrust the United States into the thick of the fighting should hostilities between North and South break out again. Indeed, they are there for precisely that purpose—as a tripwire. U.S. nuclear weapons are also stored in South Korea, according to former Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, adding to the dangers of the situation. Our forces in this last bastion of the Asian mainland should be reduced over a period of time and all nuclear weapons, in my judgment, should be removed. In the meantime, the United States should reexamine the tripwire concept at the DMZ. It may be that a more appropriate approach might be to seek to negotiate an even wider demilitarized zone.

The United States must do more than it has in the past to break the impasse in Korea. We should have learned from the long and costly efforts to contain the People’s Republic of China that quarantines are a reaction, not a substitute for a positive policy which seeks to solve a problem. It is in the interest of the Korean people, North and South, for the United States and world peace, that contact be established between the two to lead to help to minimize the risk of military clash and to facilitate an accommodation between North and South.

Since 1945, the North Korean Government did make a move to establish a contact with South Korea through a meeting of the Red Cross organizations in both countries. According to the Christian Science Monitor yesterday, South Korea has proposed to the North an exchange of an armistice in what appears to be a new initiative toward normalizing relations. I would hope, Mr. President, that that trend would continue between North and South Korea.

In Southeast Asia, the foremost task for U.S. policy remains to recognize the realities in Indochina. The administration’s policy is based on the hope that international and commercial relations with Vietnam or Cambodia, and the failure to send an American ambassador something in it of the ostrich complex. The fact is that just as China was not ours to lose in 1949, neither was Indochina a quarter of a century later. That was not the tragedy for us. The tragedy was that the war was allowed to begin and to continue so long and that so many lives were needlessly lost.

Although the shooting war is over, economic warfare continues as a cornerstone of U.S. policy. There is no way that a unilateral U.S. trade embargo against Vietnam or Cambodia can be effective in a competitive world. Coexistence is not a policy. It is only a petulant reaction. It is time that the United States act toward the governments of Indochina, and only toward them, in an independent, in a spirit which seeks to heal the wounds of war. Like it or not, a united Vietnam, as North and South will ultimately become, will be a major force in Southeast Asia. It is in our long-range interest to accommodate to this fact and make the best out of the new situation.

I share the desire of all Americans to learn whatever can be learned of the missing in action in Indochina. But we can hardly expect to do so by refusing to have anything to do with the new governments of Laos, South and North Vietnam, or Cambodia. The most effective way to obtain information about the MIA’s, I think, is through face-to-face, on-the-spot official dealings. That is not likely without normalization of diplomatic and other relations. It is my understanding that the administration has decided to open talks with Vietnam on the range of issues between us, and that is certainly a step in the right direction.

In Thailand, the United States faces a delicate situation. The question of a continued American military presence has become a national political issue, a further manifestation of the forces of nationalism at work in Southeast Asia. All U.S. forces, except for a small military assistance group, have been ordered to leave the country within the next 4 months, thus bringing to a close an attempt to maintain a second military foothold on the Asian mainland. The action taken by the Kukrit government is both in their interest and in the interests of the American people.

The closing of the U.S. bases may help to improve the prospects for an easing of tensions between Thailand and North Vietnam. This is much to be desired. What the new Thai Government will do remains to be seen.

The remnants of U.S. military involvement, a small residual force in the northeast, a genuine fear of North Vietnam’s intentions, and the continued existence of the Laos have some commitment to Thailand, the only country to which the treaty has practical application, all add up to a sensitive and volatile situation for the United States in Thailand.

Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, there are no major policy problems. Burma continues to go its own way and its Government has no desire to open its doors to large-scale foreign economic intervention by the United States or any other country. There is in Burma, however, a danger that overzealous and costly pursuit of poppies may result not so much in the lessening of the supply of dangerous drugs but in involving this nation in Burma’s internal affairs and the continued flight of the government against various insurgencies. A close rein should be kept on antinarcotics activities, both there and elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

In the Philippines, the outstanding problem concerns the terms for continued use of the military bases at Clark and Subic Bay. Appropriate recognition of Philippine sovereignty is the issue here. Negotiations to meet this issue were begun yesterday by the Kukrit government. I believe that a mutually satisfactory agreement can be reached, given the fact that we want to stay and the Philippine Government wants us to stay.

United States-Indonesian relations are relatively trouble free. But this land of 140 million people has a growing gap between rich and poor which vast amounts of foreign aid, new oil revenues, and outside investments seem only to have accentuated.

In both the Philippines and Indonesia, the debacle in Indochina, coupled with the change in U.S. policy toward China, has stimulated increased interest in regional cooperation and a reappraisal of basic international relationships. As new relationships evolve in Southeast Asia, a new spirit of self-reliance and regional cooperation is emerging. It is in our own interest to encourage and accommodate to this new spirit. One of the most promising developments is the growth of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, comprised of Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore. This genuinely local arrangement is showing much promise. Although the recent summit meeting of the heads of state did not produce any starting agreements, it did reaffirm a mutual desire to explore and develop common regional interests. Expanding its membership to include Burma and the nations of Indochina, a future possibility, would result in a region-wide organization of great potential. A regional zone of peace and freedom, encompassing all the nations of Southeast Asia, would be a giant step toward regional stability.

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,” Santayana wrote. The era of military adventure on the Asian mainland is over. As a result of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, the American people now have a more realistic view of what, as a practical matter, we can and cannot do. They now know that it is not possible, or even desirable, to remake history. We must alter the image. There is a sober realization of the limits of America’s resources and power. As was true of America in the past, the America of the future will be
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the beacon to the world, not because of its military might or foreign aid diplomacy but because of what it stands for in furthering human aspirations for freedom and a better way of life.

America is the last remaining multilateral force in the world. There is, in fact, a growing awareness of the interdependence of the world and the problems that are new to the multilateral basis. As U.S. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim put it in a recent speech, "People are learning to look away from ideas of world interdependence. What they are turning away from are out-moded and unworkable ways of trying to deal with the world."

In summary, I would say that the U.S. position in Asia is more favorable than it has been since the end of World War II.

First, we enjoy good relations with all nations except for North Korea and those in Indochina, which we ignore by choice.

Second, both we and the nations of the region have a better understanding of what it takes to live in peace in a diverse world.

Third, there is no war.

Fourth, American troops are coming home from the Asian mainland.

Fifth, the economic burden of our overseas political involvement is lessening.

There is an agenda of unfinished business, to be sure. But the problems are manageable. Much is needed is for us to clear away the remaining relics of outdated policies and to face up to the present and our future. People in the past, I will continue to do all I can in my remaining months in this body to ensure that work on that agenda continues.

Mr. MANSFELD. Mr. President, I listened to former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger yesterday, and I was asked some questions about the People's Republic of China. As I recollect, he stated that he and some others had discussed the possibility of arms for the People's Republic but that nothing had come of it. I assumed, based on his language, that that discussion was entirely within the U.S. administration and that the People's Republic representatives were not involved, and that it was something that was done in relation to possibilities which might, coincidentally ensue at some future time.

Secretary Schlesinger also was asked whether or not he would approve the sending of arms to the People's Republic. He said, in effect, "We will have to face that question when it arises, but I think it should be treated on the same basis as the Soviet Union."

I, too, think that the People's Republic should be treated on the same basis as the Soviet Union. Furthermore, I would like to see a most-favored-nation treaty executed between the U.S. and China. I would believe that if we are to further normalize relations, that is one of the steps we should take, though I do not believe that we should in any sense, in any way, in any shape, in any form, try to force arms on Peking.

One, it will be counterproductive; two, I do not think anyone can contact with Peking in that respect; three, I believe that the Chinese look upon themselves as being an aggressive nation and not as producing their own armament.

The Secretary also indicated that so far as nuclear weapons were concerned, we were not behind the Soviet Union. In that respect, it is my understanding that Peking has not been accelerating its nuclear programs but has continued to maintain a steady pace and only for defensive purposes.

He did indicate that we were behind in conventional forces which, in the case of the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy, the I estimate that we are now behind by 600,000 people, practically one-quarter of the population of the globe.

At the other extreme, I point out that Saudi Arabia, with an estimated 7 million people, has approximately one-fourth of the oil reserves in the world. We must pay more attention to that part of the globe, be it in the Persian Gulf, as we are concerned, and be aware of the potentialities which may arise from time to time. We should keep our eyes open, so that we will not place undue stress on other parts of the world at the expense of our relations with the nations of the region.

It is important that we better understand what transpires in that part of the world. Getting a little bit closer to home.

I am glad to note that today, negotiations are being held in the Indochina, the Philippines and the U.S. Government relative to the future status of our bases in the Philippines Republic, normally at Subic Bay and Clark Field. I have no doubt that those negotiations will be successful. It will take a little giving and taking on both sides, but because of the inherent friendship and the deep necessity for maintaining these bases, I feel that we can get over the stumbling block.

I am optimistic that the Philippines and the U.S. Government will reach an agreement, and I include a little give and take, which will establish a friendly and a cooperative relationship between the Philippines and the American people. I wish to include at this point in the Record an excerpt of a report which was made by the Senate Committee in October 1975. The excerpt deals with the Philippines and the question of U.S. military bases.

WINDS OF CHANGE—EVOLVING RELATIONS AND INTERESTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

I. THREE VARIATIONS ON NEUTRALISM

President Nixon visits to Peking in 1972 released strong winds of change in the international relationships of Asia. The collapse in South Vietnam and Cambodia intensified the pressures. Changes already include the restoration of contact, the United States and China looking in the direction of normalcy after many years of acrimonious confrontation. This shift has been a key factor in enabling us to reduce the U.S. military presence in Asia from some 850,000 at the height of the Indochina war to 220,000 at present. Moreover, a further reduction will take place in the months ahead as U.S. forces are withdrawn from Thailand.

U.S. policy, in short, is beginning to reflect the fact that the United States is no longer the Pacific nation, but a power on the Asian mainland. The winds of the Pacific touch the shores of the United States on the West Coast, at Hawaii, Alaska, the territory of Guam and the U.S. trust territories. They also beat against the coastlines of seven U.S. protectorates—Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, Australia and New Guinea. As well as being of productive and economic significance, the U.S. relationship with both Union and China. What takes place in this region is of great concern to us.

However, concern and capacity to influence are quite different. What we began to perceive in the 1960s as a U.S. crusade against communism on the Asian mainland, Burma and Cambodia, each in their own way, tried to defend themselves against the forces of non-involvement. The former did so throughout the Indochina war, in part, by the support of the U.S. to the former government. Under Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia, broke away from the former government, which was destroyed successfully for many years. When the Prince was overthrown by a military coup, however, the United States supported the overthrow of the Sihanouk regime, and the United States continued to support the new government of King Sihanouk.

The overthrow of Sihanouk has been a significant event in the history of the United States. The United States has now withdrawn its support of the Sihanouk regime and has established a new relationship with the new government of the United States, which is now in the United States. The United States has now recognized the right of the People's Republic of China and has established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. The United States has now withdrawn its support of the Sihanouk regime and has established a new relationship with the new government of the United States. The United States has now recognized the right of the People's Republic of China and has established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.

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The treaty seems to me of little relevance to the security of this Nation in the contemporary situation. In fact, it may be more of a liability than an asset to the signatories. As for our relations with Indo-China, what is to be done to help the Burmese, the goals of which are laudable and which seem to be foreseen in the shifting world, is a topic for a peaceful future for the Burmese and the United Nations.

Although it was an early policy of the United States to avoid foreign entanglements, the Burmese border create a dangerous mixture. The Burmese are in the process of developing economic relations with the outside world. The Burmese government of the correctness of its border changes, this policy has served to keep Burma out of the conflicts which have beset other countries in South East Asia. Burma has sought to avoid foreign entanglements and has tried to develop a stable relationship with the United Nations and other international forums.

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It is estimated that the Burmese government has been trying to get the United States to support its military efforts in the border areas of Northeast Burma. The United States has been reluctant to provide direct support, fearing that it might lead to a direct commitment of United States forces in Vietnam. The United States has, however, provided indirect support, such as through the United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and the United States embassy in Rangoon.

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nations can lead very rapidly to other forms, as the bitter Indochina experience should have taught us. Taking account, therefore, any further U.S. assistance to foreign countries for their internal use in anti-drug programs would be a war against its own ends, would seem more appropriately to be funneled through international bodies. With the threat of substantial cuts in U.S. aid to foreign countries for this activity might well go as a contribution to the U.S.'S Narcotics Control program. Moreover, any activity of U.S. narcotics agents in Burma or any other nation in Southeast Asia, for that matter, must remain under the strict supervision and firm control of the U.S. Ambassador who is in the best position to know what practices are or are not possible in the light of our total relationship with the con"ntry. After my visit to Burma six years ago, I wrote: "The Burmese government continues to go its own way as it has for many years. It is neither overawed by the proximity of powerful neighbors nor impressed by the virtues of reform. It repudiates through large inflows of foreign aid. Burma's primary concern is the retention of its national and cultural identity and the development of an economic system preponderently by its own efforts. It remains to be seen whether these goals are attainable. These are still the major preoccupations of the Ne Win government. The nation has sustained its survival because of its cultural and identity. Its economic situation, however, is a very different story. As for our relations with Burma, while some strengthening of cultural and technical aid on a multilateral basis may be desirable and possible, my view is that we would be well-advised to avoid scrupulously any inclinations towards a deepening involvement in Burmese affairs. This nation should not be welcomed in Burma as in its best interests. Clearly, too they would not be in the best interests of this nation.

III. THAILAND

After four decades of military rule, Thailand is attempting anew to forge a democratic system. At the same time, there is an undercurrent in foreign relations, bolstering student uprisings, in October 1973, the military government of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn was ousted and Thanom and other government leaders fled the country. This development continued the rapidly changing situation in Asia, initiated by President Nixon's trip to Peking, and culminating in the collapse in不堪 in the wake of a coalition of students and labor on Thailand. Until the fall of the Thanom government, Thailand had maintained a close relationship—some termed it a "client-state" relationship—with the United States. Now that has changed, with Thailand moving away from the long intimacy with the United States and, at the same time, seeking better relations with its neighbors in Indochina and Asia. How this land of 44 million people handles the turn towards political democracy and a new foreign policy will have far-reaching consequences for the overall relationships in and around the Asian commonwealth.

Political and economic situation

Prime Minister Khukrit Pramo, leader of the Social Action Party, has governed Thailand with the collaboration of eight parties. His own party, with only 16 seats, is third in the lower house, and party strength in the Parliament. While the Thai King, Phumiphol Adunyadej, serves prime minister, his influence has already received a blow. For the first time, the monarchy is still a factor in state affairs, particularly in the air crises. The present Thai political system is based on a Parliament consisting of 469 seats in an elected Lower House and a 100-member appointed Upper House. Elections this year attracted 52 parties and 2,191 candidates. Predictably, the results were inconclusive. There are now representatives from 33 parties sitting in the Parliament which, when I visited it, was meeting in unauthorized and engaged in spirited debate over an aspect of ASEAN. Despite earlier predictions of a short and unstable governmental structure is managing to hold together and is serving as a vehicle for the government.

The Khukrit cabinet, apart from the difficulties inherent in any coalition and, especially in one emerging from the trauma of an abrupt shift from military authoritarianism, is subject to three basic pressures: a volatile student movement; long-standing perennial problems, and south and the ever present possibility of a military coup.

The student movement wields influence, as often is the case in Asian nations, far beyond its numbers. Recently, working together, he has used the constitutional machinery to put an end to the beleaguered national political parties. Since the military leaders of the previous regime, some of whom apparently have fled the country, the demonstration was taking place in front of the Prime Minister's offices. It was necessary to postpone the meeting lest the presence of a visiting American official trigger more serious difficulties.

Ever present in the background of Thai politics is the potential for a military coup. While the government appears to command the loyalty of the armed forces, rumors of possible coups abound in Bangkok. Perhaps, the principal deterrent is the public reaction of the Thai people. The military leaders of the present regime, some of whom apparently have fled the country, the demonstration was taking place in front of the Prime Minister's offices. It was necessary to postpone the meeting lest the presence of a visiting American official trigger more serious difficulties.

The role of the military has been de-emphasized by the present government which appears to want to channel its energies toward social and economic needs. Yet, because the country is small and under the influence of foreign powers, the military will continue to be an issue. The problem of the army is very much of the interest centered on Bangkok. With 4 million people, Bangkok is Thailand's only major city and it is the most prosperous in Thailand. The gap between Bangkok and the rest of the country is great. For per capita income in the capital, for example, is $600 per year but it is only about $200 nationally, and it is, perhaps, not more than $75 per year in the most troubled insurgency area, the north and east. There has been little spread of commercial and industry from Bangkok to the countryside. The city, in some respects, is a foreign city to the Thai. Its traditions, westernized practices and political maneuvering are quite alien to the villagers who make up the majority of the country's population.

Neglect of the region is a major factor in fueling the insurgency movements. In the north, the insurgents are ethnic groups often involved in the north, the interior, the problem is peasant discontent and Thai against the south. In the south, it is largely Malay Muslim or Hillmen.

Over the years, there have been many number of anti-insurgency campaigns launched by Bangkok, all liberally financed with U.S. funds and, often, abetted with advice from various U.S. agencies. None has brought any significant breakthrough. The insurgency appears to have continued to grow, with a total of perhaps 400 new volunteers each year, not to mention the returned dissidents. The Khukrit government seems to be aware that the problem cannot be solved by military means alone. There is more interest in a more comprehensive and regional conflict between a heretofore remote government in Bangkok and the people in the localities. It is trying new approaches which include a form of revenue sharing to channel funds to the poorer areas. Also recognized is the need to change the attitudes of the underpaid and corrupt bureaucracy in the insurgent areas. While it may be difficult to persuade soldiers and police who have rapped much of the financial benefit of past anti-insurgency campaigns, the extra benefits of villagers at least an effort is being made to bring about an atmosphere in which they might be more willing to participate.

In Thailand, the economy has weathered the oil crisis, the world recession, and the phaseout of U.S. military involvement in Indochina. Although the rate of inflation has been in 1974, up from an average of 4 percent in the years before, it has been falling and will be below 1 percent for 1975. Increased earnings from agricultural exports have been a prime factor. In counter- oil price increases. The impact of both the recession and the uncertainty over political developments in the region have been felt in the slackening of foreign investment. Tourism, too, is down. In 1974, Thailand enjoyed a $400 million surplus in its over-all balance of payments in 1974 in the face of a deficit of $260 million. The difference was made up by foreign aid, oil concession payments, tourism and capital inflows.

The United States has given Thailand large amounts of economic aid. During the Nixon administration, $2.1 billion must be regarded as relatively small in view of the billions of dollars provided by the United States. For fiscal year 1977, there has been authorized $1 billion for aid to Thailand.

In an economy as formidable as Thailand's, $2.1 billion must be regarded as relatively small in view of the billions of dollars provided by the United States. For fiscal year 1977, there has been authorized $1 billion for aid to Thailand. There could be international rivalries in some areas since most Thai concessions, overlap in part, territory also claimed by Cambodias. There is no oil, however, there has not been any drilling in disputed areas. Some concessions have also been granted for the Andaman Sea but there is not likely to start until next year. Thailand has already received $232 million from oil prospectors. Renewed consideration is also being given by the Thai government to a proposal to join in the construction of a pipeline stretching across the Kra Isthmus, and terminate at a refinery which would refine Persian Gulf crude for shipment to Japan.
Drugs

Thailand is a major site in the international trade in drugs, not so much as a producer but as the route of transshipment of opium brought into Southeast Asia. Estimates indicate that about 40-45 tons of opium per year are actually produced in Thailand. This level is sufficient only to meet local demand.

Although some Thai officials may still be intent on making the country an opium source, it is now clear that the level of involvement is reported to be much lower than in the past. Contrary to the situation in the past, there is now a significant source of financial support for insurgents but, rather, a means for personal or syndicate enrichment.

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was twice elected under the old U.S. sponsored Constitution, has served as chief executive of the Philippines since the formation of a New Society, described as one “founded on social justice, the equal sharing of wealth and power, and participatory democracy” with reforms in the areas of “peace and order; land reforms; economic development; implement of moral values; government reorganisation; and educational and social services.” Although the President has not announced plans to create a National Assembly as called for under a new 1976 Constitution, plebiscites have been experimented with from time to time in forms adapted from old indigenous political practices. The President recently referred to the possibility of forming an appointed consultative body, a Legislative Advisory Council.

There is no indication of when martial law will be lifted. Nor are the indications of any broad public demand for its termination. Visible evidences of martial law are few; there are a few curfews and roadblocks on the streets of Manila than on those of Washingtion, D.C. on Pennsylvania Avenue.

President Marcos has urged Congress to lift martial law as soon as possible while at the same time pursuing the nation’s development. He has said that his government is determined to carry on the economic, social and political development of the country.

The President has also been working to strengthen the Philippines’ ties with other countries, particularly the United States, which he considers a key ally in the region. He has visited the United States several times, including a trip to Washington in early 1976, where he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

In foreign policy, Marcos has been推行 a policy of non-alignment, which he believes will enable the Philippines to benefit from the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. He has also been working to improve relations with other Southeast Asian countries, particularly Indonesia, which has been a source of friction in the region.

The Philippines is a member of ASEAN, a regional organisation that promotes economic cooperation and political integration among member states. The Philippines has been active in ASEAN and has hosted several meetings of the organisation.

 domestic issues, such as economic development, education, and healthcare, remain high on the government’s agenda. The President has implemented several initiatives to address these issues, including the expansion of the educational system and the establishment of a national health insurance program.

The Philippines has also been involved in regional and international issues, such as the dispute over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea and the international response to the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The government has been working to resolve these issues through diplomatic means, including negotiations and international conferences.

The President has also been focusing on improving the country’s infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and ports.

Despite the challenges faced by the Philippines, President Marcos has been able to accomplish a great deal during his tenure. He has been praised for his commitment to the development of the country and for his efforts to improve relations with other countries.

However, the Marcos administration has also been criticised for its human rights record, particularly during the early years of martial law. Reports of human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings and disappearances, have been documented.

In 1986, Marcos was forced to resign under pressure from the military. He was succeeded by Corazon Aquino, who was elected as the first woman president of the Philippines. The transition period was marked by political instability, but Aquino was able to establish a more democratic government.

Since then, the Philippines has made progress in economic and political reforms. However, challenges such as corruption, drug trafficking, and terrorism continue to affect the country.

Today, the Philippines is a member of ASEAN and continues to play a role in regional and international issues. The government is committed to promoting peace, stability, and development for all Filipinos.

Footnotes at end of article.
Oil of all forms is a critical component of modern economies, enabling the growth and development of nations across the globe. The Philippines, a country rich in natural resources, occupies a unique position in the global oil market, with its own unique challenges and opportunities. In this passage from United States Senator Mike Mansfield's papers, we explore the country’s potential in the oil sector, assessing its economic implications and the role of foreign investment in its development.

Oil is a vital resource, with the Philippines having vast potential in the industry. The government, recognizing the importance of self-reliance, has signed agreements to enhance economic self-reliance and independence from foreign fuels. The growth in the oil market, particularly with the expected increase in crude oil, has significant economic implications for the Philippines and its trade partners.

The passage highlights the need for selective investment to encourage economic self-reliance and independence. It discusses the importance of strengthening national institutions and the role of selective investment in promoting economic self-reliance.

While the Philippines has significant oil potential, the government needs to ensure that the benefits of foreign investment are directed towards strengthening national institutions and promoting self-sufficiency. This approach aligns with the broader goal of achieving economic independence and reducing reliance on foreign resources.

In summary, the Philippines’ oil potential offers a promising avenue for economic growth and development. However, careful planning and strategic investment are crucial to ensure that the country maximizes its potential and benefits from the global oil market. The role of foreign investment must be balanced with the need for self-reliance and sustainable economic development.

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Mike Mansfield Papers, Series 21, Box 50, Folder 95, Mansfield Library, University of Montana
the publication of the result of a 1968 United Nation's sponsored geophysical survey of the Chinese continental shelf, Taiwan, Japan and South Korea each advanced overlapping claims to parts of the region. In December 1970 the People's Republic issued its claim to the continental shelf and to ownership of the Senkaku Islands, although the latter are also claimed by Japan and Taiwan. While U.S. policy is to lend no encouragement to exploration in the disputed areas, some U.S. companies have obtained concessions from Taiwan. Specifically, these corporations are Gulf, Amoco, Conoco, Ocenide, Clinton and Texaco. Several of the concessions lie off the Senkaku. However, no U.S. drilling operations have yet been conducted in that area but Amoco, Gulf and Conoco have been involved in drilling off the west coast of Taiwan in the Taiwan straits, with the work being done by American-owned vessels of foreign registry and manned by foreign crews. There have been no U.S. Government investment guarantees issued for these drilling operations.

There is also an oil potential in the Paracel Islands, southeast of Vietnam, claimed by both South Vietnam and China but occupied solely by China. In fact, the People's Republic had a drilling rig on one of the islands at the time of a military encounter there between the two countries in 1974. There are also conflicting claims of China, South Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan to the Spratly Islands which also lie to the southeast of Vietnam. With oil reserves an increasingly important asset, overlapping claims off the Asian littorals contain the seeds of very serious difficulties. While the United States should not shrink participation in international efforts to deal in a rational way with these difficulties, we should not provide government incentives or otherwise lend encouragement to companies which wish to plunge ahead with exploration and development in disputed areas.

In addition to an offshore potential, China has very promising internal oil bearing basins. In fact, the main emphasis is still on land exploration. Estimates of China's total reserves have been consistently revised upwards over the last ten years. Even approximate figures on how much oil China may have are not available. The general view, however, is that the potential is very great. I was informed that China's oil production was now "in the same range as Algeria's, perhaps a little more." Chinese output is increasing at the rate of twenty percent annually. If this rate is maintained, it would push production to over 400 million tons by 1984, compared with an estimated 60 million plus tons in 1974, making China a major factor in the world petroleum trade.

China sold 5 million tons of crude oil to Japan in 1974, earning about $450 million, and is said to have committed 10 million tons for 1975. Smaller amounts have been sold to the Philippines and Thailand. There are also reports that China has offered to sell oil to U.S. companies. China's 1975 petroleum exports are expected to be double the 1974 level and to continue to climb as new production comes in. Output is limited only by a shortage of equipment and transport.

Some pertinent points about China's oil export potential are brought out by the following excerpt from a recent analysis: "Peking's plans to expand oil exports substantially during the next five years are borne out by the construction of new oil-handling facilities at the ports of Chin-huang-tao and Taichung and the purchase of dredging equipment needed to make Chinese ports deep enough for large tankers of more than 50,000 DWT to transport oil for export. The tonnage of tankers in the Chinese international fleet has doubled in the past year and now totals almost 200,000 DWT."

"The goal of 80 million tons of crude oil for export in 1980 appears feasible. Reserves are large enough, even without production from offshore fields. If production accelerates, even if it only continues to grow at 22 percent—the rate achieved during 1965-1973—the PRC could export 60 million tons in 1980 and still provide a generous leeway for using oil to modernize the economy."

As a developing country, China needs increasing amounts of petroleum. The potential for export, therefore, may not be as great as it seems at first glance although it should be substantial because the Chinese do not use energy or any other commodity for that matter in a wasteful or profligate manner. Indeed, if the United States followed even a part of the Chinese practices in the use of petroleum, this nation would be more than self-sufficient.

Eighty percent of China's energy is produced from coal, and coal reserves are estimated to be one-third of the world's total. Every province has some coal. Like oil, coal remains largely unexploited and could eventually become a major export earner."