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Phil Inquirer

Henry Kissinger

Too Much Euphoria?

Nearly three weeks after the event, the collapse of the Marcos government still inspires both gratification and ambivalence. Gratification for the banishment of the Marcoses—husband and wife—for their high-handed conduct, their extravagant life style, the corruption they encouraged and, above all, for the assassination of Benigno Aquino. Gratification also for the good fortune of the emergence of Corazon Aquino, whose fortitude, courage and spirit of conciliation give hope for the rebuilding of democracy. Ambivalence, because a queasy feeling remains for some of us about American conduct on two levels: first the intensity and near-unanimity of the final American dissociation from an old ally, and second, the implications of this conduct for long-term American policy.

With respect to the first level of ambivalence, whatever else may be said about the Marcos regime, it contributed substantially to American security and had been extolled by American presidents, including President Reagan, for nearly two decades.

The double standard applied to Manila, however necessary at the end, is painful. Ethiopia's Col. Mengistu continues to receive economic aid despite plausible reports of genocidal practices; the secretary of commerce calls for increased trade with the Soviet bloc. In neither of these areas will the government ever be charged with fraudulently counting votes, since no opposition candidate will survive to that stage of the political process. Conventional wisdom in the case of hostile governments seems to hold that patience accompanied by economic aid or increased trade will in time bring about an amelioration of domestic conditions.

With respect to the second level of ambivalence, I have grave concerns about the implications of these actions for the future, especially if the special case of the Philippines emerges as a general strategy. It should be noted that one group of countries was conspicuous by its refusal to join the general self-congratulation. Asian neighbors of the Philippines such as Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea know only too well that some of their domestic practices—though less flagrant than those of Marcos—could not stand the kind of scrutiny recently applied in Manila. Will they be the next targets of the new U.S. strategy? Will opposition groups seek to trigger U.S. intervention by mass demonstrations or will the governments seek to forestall this by an increase in repression?

China and probably Japan cannot avoid asking themselves, as Soviet bases advance down the Indochina coast, how it was possible that senior Americans publicly deprecated the importance of installations in Subic Bay and Clark Air Base for which no study I know about has ever come up with an alternative. What will be the impact on world security—or human rights—if Asian countries decide that they must distance themselves from their intrusive and changeable friend?

The gravest consequence may be within the United States itself. Ideally, national security concerns should be in harmony with traditional American values. This ideal cannot always prevail, imposing the necessity to strike a balance. To insist, then, on total purity can lead either to permanent abdication or permanent intervention. In recent years a growing—or at any rate clamorous—group in Congress has insisted that almost the only American security interest in developing countries friendly to the United States is the promotion of democratic institutions. If this is to be the lesson of Manila, a fateful new interventionism will have been born in which commitments will be almost impossible to balance with responsibilities.

Specifically, does the phrase "democracy is more important to us than bases" mean that America will defend only countries with democratic institutions acceptable to us? Should America then become the global arbiter of democratic elections? Are there no other overriding national interests that must be taken into account? In the light of congressional attitudes toward covert actions, what means are available to prevail in the bitter domestic struggles abroad that such an interventionist doctrine will generate? Can American national security be sustained when the capacity to overthrow friendly regimes exceeds the capacity to shape the alternative?

Unidentified spokesmen have bragged about the culmination of a two-year campaign carried on against Marcos by second-level American personnel at a time when Corazon Aquino had not even emerged as a political figure. It would be interesting to know how much of this was told to Reagan, who, until quite late, was asserting that the alternative to Marcos was communism. We were lucky America's basically unfocused harassment did not produce the chaos it invited. Instead there emerged, literally at the last moment, a leader who had been quite unknown theretofore, capable of uniting the democratic opposition. My misgivings about the prevailing self-righteousness include no doubt about the impeccable democratic credentials of Aquino.

Even with its democratic impetus, it is highly likely that when the immediate euphoria has worn off, disparate tendencies will begin to contest for primacy. The history of revolutions teaches that the coalition of resentments that united the opposition disintegrates once the status quo is overthrown. The army having emerged from the barracks may prove reluctant to return to the battle against communist insurgency. Amid these preoccupations and distractions there is the very real danger of substantial gains in the countryside by the well-disciplined communist guerrillas. The United States, having encouraged the overthrow of a suddenly unpalatable ally, has a moral commitment to provide maximum help for the Aquino government, lest in the end the best organized and most ruthless—and least democratic—group fills the vacuum.

These challenges, serious enough in the Philippines, are nearly insuperable in different cultural contexts, the major countries of Latin America excepted. Western democracy resulted from a long historical evolution in relatively cohesive societies that were nations before they were states. The state, once it came into existence, reflected but did not create a sense of historical, linguistic and cultural identity. Wherever this condition does not obtain, democracy does not take firm root, even in the West. When majorities are unchangeable—and especially when they follow national or, even more dangerous, racial lines—political contests turn into tests of power. Where boundaries were drawn by colonial masters across tribal, cultural, religious and linguistic lines, the state precedes the nation, indeed the nation is created by the state. In such circumstances, opposition is conceived not as a legitimate means of seeking office but as a threat to national unity.

This is also why the reform of the military, which is one of the standard U.S. recipes for friendly countries, has a profoundly revolutionary impact. In a constitutional system, a "professional" military commander without personal ties to the chief of state is restrained by a generally accepted legitimacy. Where that is absent it will be believed that only personal obligation—through family ties or pecuniary awards—can prevent the military chief from exercising his monopoly of power for his own purposes. If this restraint disappears, the military, once in power, may not give it up voluntarily.

These are only a few of the numerous preconditions for democracy that are familiar in the West but are lacking in many developing countries. And if we involve ourselves in a policy of permanent intervention, we will also have to involve ourselves in supplying them.

It will be argued that anti-Americanism and totalitarianism develop only when we stick too long with unpopular rulers, as in Iran or Nicaragua. There is no doubt that early reform is highly desirable. But it must also be recognized that the U.S. government can only deal with a finite number of problems at one time. Undertaking global political reform is a consuming task. Finding the right moment will always be difficult, especially since there is always a surfeit of urgent issues. Choosing the right means can prove even more complex. Knowing what in fact constitutes demo-

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cratic reform is something the West has clearly not thought through. The American partisan debate, which puts human rights and national security into separate compartments, has further inhibited a resolution.

The anti-Americanism of the Khomeinis or Sandinistas or Mengistus is inherent in their philosophy of a Marxism that brooks no compromise, as in Nicaragua and Ethiopia, or in an Islamic fundamentalism on a crusade against Western values, as in Iran. Neither in Nicaragua nor in Iran did revolutions encouraged by America in fact produce a gain for human rights. Corazon Aquino should be given all support possible so that the Philippines can be an exception to this trend.

One of the paradoxes of current American conduct is that American conservatives and liberals seem to be able to form a consensus behind overthrowing or at least harassing friendly authoritarian regimes. But they divide sharply on America's right or capacity to pressure regimes considered "progressive" such as Nicaragua or Ethiopia or Angola. Nor is there a consensus or even machinery on how to conduct the inevitable contest in those countries where American pressure has succeeded in dissolving the existing structure.

A national discussion over the scope and the purpose of American intervention and of the relationship between American values and American security is long overdue. Clearly, security without values is like a ship without a rudder; but values without security are like a rudder without a ship. The United States has a duty to defend its democratic ideals. But if American policy winds up harassing friendly governments and dithering about hostile ones we will find ourselves ultimately in a very lonely world.

C

Charles Krauthammer

Intervening For Democracy

It is fitting that a Philippine election called by George Will should end in an orgy of American meddling. It was, you will remember, in response to a Will question in a live TV interview that President Ferdinand Marcos unexpectedly announced a snap election. Since then, Congress, the administration and the media have been unrelenting in their efforts to influence the outcome of the election. By that they mean 1) to make it fair and 2) to defeat Marcos (1 and 2 being taken, by most, to be the same thing).

Nothing covert to this operation. Administration officials leak evidence, buried for 40 years, that Marcos fabricated his history as an anti-Japanese guerrilla in World War II, a myth around which Marcos' entire persona is built. It becomes a major campaign issue for his opponent, Corazon Aquino.

Other administration officials then make it clear through private (!) conversations with a New York Times correspondent that they want Marcos removed from office. The hope is that, if not the electoral process, God will issue the recall.

At the same time, a House subcommittee holds hearings on massive Marcos holdings in the United States. Imelda ("Don't cry for me, Manila") Marcos owns real estate in New York worth, it seems, $350 million. The hearings, previously closed, were opened in January. The election is Feb. 7.

And now comes a former foreign minister of the Philippines, Raul Manglapus, to urge *more* American meddling. The election-monitoring team led by Sen. Richard Lugar, he says, should not just stand around a few polling places to rubber stamp the election. It should intervene—with the military, with the media, with Marcos' party apparatus —to ensure a clean election.

American interventionism? So what, says Manglapus. The United States intervenes all over the place. Why not here?

Precisely. Notice how few people, American or Filipino, seem to be bothered by all this "interference in the internal affairs of other countries," as the phrase goes. And rightly so. In friendly countries ruled by dictators, it should be the policy of the United States to meddle on behalf of a "third force," a democratic alternative to a pro-American despot on the one hand and communist insurgents on the other.

In such countries, "third force" politics should be the theme of American diplomacy. With one proviso: the democratic center must exist, and not just in the imagination of Americans. The caveat is important. If there truly is no center, as was the case in Iran at the time of the shah's overthrow, supporting a nonexistent center means having a nonexistent policy. It almost certainly means dealing ourselves out and destroying our friends.

The Philippines has a third force, an enormously vibrant center now clustered around Mrs. Aquino. In El Salvador, the center, clustered around President Jose Napoleon Duarte, is less solid, but solid enough, with strong American backing, to sustain Duarte against far left and far right.

In Chile, too, the administration is cautiously but resolutely pursuing a "third force" policy. The new U.S. ambassador has been openly sympathetic to the democratic opposition. And the State Department has warmly supported the "national accord" signed by a range of political parties (excluding communists and extreme rightists) representing 80 percent of the electorate and calling for a return to democracy. Gen. Augusto Pinochet is not amused. He complains that the United States is violating the principles of sovereignty. And so it is.

Marcos, no doubt, has the same complaint. And one can find a few Americans to agree with him. Some conservatives, like Robert Novak, for example. A supporter of American intervention in places such as Nicaragua, Angola, Afghanistan and Cambodia, Novak is shocked— shocked!—to find interference in the internal affairs of other countries going on in the Philippines. Hypocrisy about meddling, however, is a two-party game. Liberals profess to be appalled by one or the other of Novak's favorite anticommunist interventions. But when it comes to the Philippines, sovereignty loses some of its sacredness. Liberals who will tell you that we have no right to dictate who should rule in Managua are leading the charge in Manila—orchestrating, for example, the House hearings, a transparent election-eve discrediting campaign.

I'm all for the hearings. I'm all for discrediting Marcos and his kleptocracy. I'm all for intervention. What I fail to see is why the sovereignty of a dictatorship of one ideological color may be violated, but not that of another.

In other words, I don't see how semi-interventionists can hope to get away with it. Left and right have their pet interventions, but, when dealing with despots more to their liking, they are suddenly stricken with high-mindedness about noninterference and some such "principle."

Why not come clean and admit this principle: that out of strategic necessity and moral duty the United States should and will intervene in the world to promote democracy where it can, i.e., wherever it can do so without unbearable cost or risk.

We have started to face our responsibilities in the Philippines. Other democrats around the world have the right to ask: Why not here, too?

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Mixed Messages

ON SUNDAY the administration was standing firm behind fair elections in the Philippines. On Monday the president suggested maybe it was enough for the two-party system to survive. On Tuesday Mr. Reagan checked himself and said he'd send out a personal envoy, Ambassador Philip Habib. Yesterday it appeared that the prior day's policy was still in effect, but it wasn't exactly sure.

What is behind this confusion of messages? President Reagan sees that the elections went wrong: they did not produce a clear winner accepted by the losers. In his view, and fairly so, this is the prescription for chaos and destabilization. What is the best way to limit the damage? A fair count is one way, but the Marcos forces resist it. Waiting for the next elections is another way but the Aquino forces reject that.

Meanwhile, gunmen—whose can they be?—are on the prowl: Evilio Javier, an outspoken critic of Mr. Marcos and a leading figure in the Aquino campaign, was publicly assassinated Tuesday by six thugs driving the jeep of Mr. Marcos' assembly leader. Mrs. Aquino is preparing huge street demonstrations.

Mr. Reagan's response is to dispatch yet another mission to follow that of Sen. Paul Laxalt, the warner, and that of Sen. Richard Lugar, the inspector: Ambassador Habib is to "assess the desires and needs of the Filipino people"—as though they had not just expressed their own.

One understands why the president wishes for the convenience of having Mrs. Aquino stop complaining and rally around Ferdinand Marcos for the sake of civil peace. The bases are important; the American tie to the Philippines is important; moving on is important.

But the time for telling her to pipe down, if it ever was here, has long since passed. Mrs. Aquino has mobilized a huge portion of the Philippine electorate and brought it to the polling place. That fact cannot be ignored and the expression of those Filipinos cannot be wished away any more than they can be expected to find satisfaction in a note of congratulations from the United States calling on them to consider their vote a nice show but not binding.

The United States can live with Ferdinand Marcos—but only if the Filipino people can live with him. Without a fair count no one can say for sure who won, but Mr. Marcos' vote-counting tactics and the gunplay bespeak a telling lack of confidence in his own popular standing. It is unthinkable that Washington should substitute its judgment favoring Mr. Marcos for what may well have been the Filipinos' judgment rejecting him.

The administration's back and forth messages have had an effect. An impression has been conveyed to the Filipinos that, cheating and thuggery notwithstanding, the Americans need Mr. Marcos for stability. This is a keen irony, since Mr. Marcos by his manner of rule is destabilizing his country; his chief leverage on President Reagan is the threat of destabilizing it further.

Mr. Reagan must move carefully, but he must move surely to undo the impression that he is choosing anyone. It is not clear that the way to do it is to make threats about aid. But it is clear that events have denied President Reagan the role he sought as the kindly impartial observer on the sidelines. He is in the thick of it.

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BEN WATTENBERG

Ben - Asked Ben's article on Philipines for Wall St. Journal

The Genies Are Out Of The Bottle

Ben J. Wattenberg, whose nationally syndicated columns appear regularly in this section, is a member of the team sent to the Philippines by President Reagan to observe the election.

Our national interest lies in seeing that the fourth wave of the democratic process surges.

MANILA

Beneath the apparent electoral chaos, corruption, and confusion that is playing itself out in the Philippines, something is going on that is of enormous global significance. It is more important than whether Ferdinand Marcos or Corazon Aquino "wins" this close and controversial election.

For despite all the charges of fraud, thuggery, theft, violence, harassment, and goonery — strange as it may seem — democracy has won a mighty battle.

For wittingly or unwittingly — probably unwittingly — Ferdinand Marcos let all the genies of freedom out of the bottles of liberty.

The first genie, of course, was the election itself. The Philippines have a genuine democratic tradition. As Americans, we should be proud that it stems from a time of American colonial rule. That tradition was so sturdy that it did not vanish during the years of Marcos-imposed martial law. In such an open culture, an election can have the power of a tidal wave; it is, in fact, an uncontrollable force.

The second genie Mr. Marcos let loose was the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections. Now, there is simply nothing like this organization anywhere else in the democratic world. It is as if a conservative U.S. president, facing reelection, signed an executive order deputizing Common Cause and the National Council of Churches to become a fourth branch of government during the election period, and that new fourth branch — while authentically stressing and policing the precepts of good government — worked against the hated president with a passion. In the Philippines, there were half a million NAMFREL volunteers watching the process — very, very closely.

This good-government genie interacted famously with a third genie that Mr. Marcos underestimated: a ravenous international press corps. The basic, all-purpose story — it may be true, it may be false — was graven in stone the day the election was called: Mr. Marcos will try to steal it. All that was needed were the details, and a few good video bites.

The fourth genie was collective: the U.S. Embassy and the free-floating international electoral corps. I was privileged to be a member of the team sent out by President Reagan and headed by Sen. Richard Lugar, Republican of Indiana. We received a non-stop tattoo of allegations of fraud, corruption, and harassment. Some of the charges were even confirmable.

In short, all the pent-up forces of democracy were let loose upon poor Ferdinand Marcos.

There was a final factor: Mr. Marcos and his thugs may indeed be corrupt — but they are surely inept. Watching them operate, one wants to present marksmanship medals to The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight. Surreptitious is not a word in their vocabulary. These palookas couldn't get away with the smooth theft of an election in the dark of night, let alone with all the genies jumping up and down in broad daylight.

As this is written, no one really knows whether Mr. Marcos or Mrs. Aquino got more votes. (My guess is Mrs. Aquino.) No one knows (yet) what machinations the players will use to make their will felt. Mr. Marcos still has plenty of power left, which he may still try to use illegitimately.

But the Philipines will never be the same. All the president's horses and all the president's men will not be able to put the toothpaste back in the tube. There will be an opposition party — either Mr. Marcos's or Mrs. Aquino's — that will have received 48 or 49 percent of the vote. They will organize, complain, bang the drum — in short, do all the things that happen in a contentious and fractious democracy. The sanctimonious faction will be sanctimonious. The bully-boys will be the bully-boys. The press will keep the kettle boiling.

But at the end of the day, I hope in 1986, but maybe a little later, the Philippine Islands — 50 million people in a developing country — decent people, friendly to America — will be a nation squarely in the column called "free."

That is no small matter. Popular democracy is on a hot streak. It blossomed in the modern world in America 200 years ago. In a tortuous way, Europe followed. After World War II, there was another surge.

And now we are witnessing the fourth wave. Latin America is going democratic in quite a remarkable way. Even perhaps Haiti. Parts of Asia have already made it, other parts, like the Philippines, are closing in on it.

If it indeed happens here, it must be understood that it is more important to us than our military bases, or the control of the sea lanes, or whether the Communist guerrilla army is a little stronger or a little weaker. For our national interest is to see to it that the fourth wave of the democratic process surges. When it does, we ride it on a superpower surfboard that can't be stopped.

E

philippines

Gaston J. Sigur, Jr.

Current
Policy
No. 815

U.S. Security Interests in the Philippines

United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Following is a statement by Gaston J. Sigur, Jr., Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, before the Subcommittees on Sea Power and Force Projection and on Military Construction of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington, D.C., April 10, 1986.

I appreciate the interest of your respective subcommittees in the Philippines, and I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you vital U.S. security interests in that country. One of the hallmarks of our Philippine policy during the past several years has been the close consultation between the executive and legislative branches regarding the formulation and implementation of our Philippine policy objectives. The recent dramatic changes in the Philippines that produced a return to democracy and the election of a popular new leader are eloquent testimony to the value of the bipartisan approach. When the U.S. Government speaks with one voice, that voice is heard abroad and the effectiveness of our foreign policy is enhanced.

I intend to continue this tradition of close consultation and look forward to a productive dialogue with you and the members of your subcommittees regarding the security aspects of our Philippine relations.

U.S. Security Interests

U.S. security interests in the Philippines stem from three agreements signed with the Philippine Government in the years immediately following its independence in 1946. These agreements concern military bases, security assistance, and mutual defense. The first of these agreements was the basing accord signed in March 1947. It marked the beginning of our defense relationship with the modern Philippines and has been the focus of our defense policy there ever since.

The military basing agreement was amended in 1966 to shorten the term of our basing arrangement in the Philippines from 99 to 25 years. A further amendment in 1979 specified that the bases at Subic and Clark became Philippine bases encompassing U.S. defense facilities and also provided for regular 5-year reviews of the agreement. At the expiration of the original 25-year agreement period in 1991, the basing agreement's term becomes indefinite. Thereafter, either side has the option to terminate the agreement on 1 year's notice. This provision is quite similar to those in our security treaties with NATO, Japan, and Korea. It is, therefore, a misapprehension that the agreement automatically terminates in 1991.

While our basing agreement has been amended many times during the past four decades, the fundamental import of our facilities at Subic Bay and Clark Air Base to our defense posture in Asia has remained constant. The location of these two facilities, in close proximity to each other, and their combined capabilities place them among the most important military establishments we maintain anywhere in the world.

Essentially, these facilities:

- Guarantee the external security of the Philippines and represent our most significant contribution to the U.S.-Philippines mutual defense pact;
- Support our wide-ranging commitments all along the Asian littoral, including our security commitments in Korea, Japan, and Thailand and important national interests in the Persian Gulf—the geostrategic location of the Philippines is unsurpassed with regard to meeting these vital national security commitments; and
- Offset the expanding Soviet military presence at Cam Ranh Bay and, as a consequence, preserve the stability of Southest Asia by securing the vital South China sealanes against the ever-increasing Soviet threat.

The facilities at Subic and Clark have also helped to preserve a stable regional environment which has permitted East Asian states to avoid diverting excessive amounts of scarce resources to military efforts and to concentrate instead on economic development which is crucial to long-term stability. Possible locations other than our present facilities exist but would be much more expensive and considerably less effective in terms of contributing to regional peace and prosperity.

Future of the U.S. Security Relationship

Seven Philippine administrations, including the present government, and eight American presidents have supported

close defense ties between the United States and the Philippines and have attested to the importance of the facilities at Subic and Clark in serving our mutual interests. We look forward to a continuation of this close security relationship with the new democratic government in the Philippines headed by President Aquino. Her position with respect to the U.S. facilities has been consistent. She has pledged to uphold the current agreement until 1991 and to keep her options open for the post-1991 period. Both sides will have the opportunity to look closely at bases issues during the next 5-year review scheduled for 1988.

We believe the importance of the bases to the security of the Philippines is well understood by Filipinos. Recent, reputable public opinion surveys point to acceptance of the bases by the majority of the Filipino people. This high approval level represents a fundamental recognition by Filipinos that U.S. access to the facilities benefits their country. Economic factors may also influence this approval, as the U.S. facilities are the second largest employer in the Philippines and contribute an estimated $350 million to the Philippine economy each year.

We also note that the Philippines' ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations] neighbors, as well as Japan, Korea, and other key states in the region, have expressed their strong support for our continued presence at Subic and Clark. These countries have a keen appreciation of the direct contribution our facilities make to regional security.

In view of this widespread support and because there are no other attractive locations, we have no plans to relocate our facilities from the Philippines. As a great power, we must, of course, plan for contingencies. Evaluations of other possible locations are a regular feature of our strategic planning. Prudence demands it. But no one should underestimate our resolve to maintain our defense and mutual security arrangements with the Republic of the Philippines and to preserve our access to the facilities at Subic and Clark through 1991 and beyond—with the continued cooperation and support of the Filipino people.

Because we have close ties with the Philippines, we are concerned about the threat posed by the communist insurgency. Measures to improve the security of our facilities at Subic and Clark have been undertaken and will continue. We have also targeted our security assistance program to support Philippine efforts to counteract the internal threat they face. The twin objectives of our aid are:

First, to help restore professionalism to the "new" Armed Forces of the Philippines; and

Second, to provide the armed forces with the means to fight the communist New People's Army.

The coming to power of the Aquino government has dealt a political blow to the communist insurgents. The principal target of their propaganda—former President Marcos—is now gone, as is the "crony" military leadership which so demoralized the Philippine Armed Forces. Reform of the military has taken a big step foward with the forced retirement of many "extendee" generals and colonels and their replacement by professionally qualified officers.

The efforts of the communists to organize a boycott of the recent presidential election were a dismal failure, repudiated by Filipinos even more emphatically than during the 1984 National Assembly election. President Aquino is considering several new approaches to dealing with the communist insurgents, including a possible amnesty and a cease-fire.

However, in order to be successful, the government's program against the insurgents should also include economic and political reforms which promote an effective system of justice that punishes wrongdoers down to the village level, including errant military personnel who violate the human rights of civilians. A close, coordinated relationship between civilian and military authorities in an anti-insurgency strategy will be required—the type of plan that Defense Minister Enrile and [Armed Forces Chief of Staff] General Ramos are now proposing to the civilian leadership. Although great difficulties remain, there exists now the vital element that previously was lacking in the Philippines anti-insurgency struggle—a credible government.

U.S. security assistance can play an important role in support of Philippine Government efforts to enhance its counterinsurgency capabilities. Following recent visits to Manila of senior U.S. officials—including myself—to consult with President Aquino and senior members of her government on Philippine needs and priorities, we are now working on a proposal to increase the level of our economic and security assistance to deal with these deep problems. We expect to consult with the Congress shortly on the details of our expanded assistance program.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our facilities at Subic and Clark continue to play an indispensable role in contributing to the stability of the region. They support our strategy of forward deployment in Asia and provide a secure foundation which makes possible the pursuit of our larger political and economic interests in this key part of the globe.

Our bilateral relationship with the Philippines, which is crucial to maintaining U.S. facilities, is excellent. We are impressed with the skillful leadership of President Aquino and the team she has assembled to carry out her policies. We look forward to working with the Aquino government, as appropriate, in helping to find solutions to the formidable challenges facing her country. There are occasional problems, of course, and there will be others in the future. But with good will they can be worked out to the full satisfaction of both sides.

We believe that the prospects for continued, unhampered access to Subic and Clark are very good. Access to our facilities is best preserved, we maintain, by supporting broader U.S. interests in the Philippines—particularly a healthy free market economy and the development of democratic institutions. ■

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FEATURES/COLUMNISTS

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Spy case brings sea change in US-Israel ties

By Joseph C. Harsch

This past week has witnessed a strange phenomenon. United States relations with America's most generously supported client, Israel, were more ruffled on the surface than those with its great rival and adversary, the Soviet Union.

Soviet-US relations are still in the post-Geneva euphoria of assuming that things are going to get easier rather than worse. Word was leaked that negotiations over a possible Soviet withdrawal of armed forces from Afghanistan are progressing and just might succeed, though that still seems unlikely.

PATTERN OF DIPLOMACY

But with Israel, something like a sea change has taken place in the wake of the arrest of Jonathan Pollard on a charge of spying for Israel. An American investigating team was in Israel this past week interviewing Israeli intelligence officials. The Americans were not only seeking full knowledge of Pollard's activities, and recovery of classified US documents that Israel had obtained from him. The team was also probing around wherever it could to try to identify all members of Israel's covert-intelligence and technology-gathering apparatus in the US.

In a parallel operation at home, American federal officers armed with search warrants were examining the records of three US companies. They were trying to find out whether, as suspected, the three companies had been illegally sending Israel both technology and equipment for a special process of making better cannons for tanks. Last May, another US company had been indicted for improperly sending Israel devices that could trigger nuclear weapons.

At the Pentagon, CIA, State Department, and National Security Council, routine relations with Israeli intelligence officers were suspended while procedures for tightening security went into effect.

One "high official" was quoted in the New York Times as saying that "an official who conveys classified information to Israel without formal authorization is committing espionage, even if he does it without pay." The same official was quoted as saying that "any individual who sees Israeli and US interests as parallel is dead wrong."

The indications are that a general policing of relations with Israeli officials is going on, and that from now on breaches of security for Israel's benefit will be dealt with as severely as they would be if any other foreign country were involved.

Various government officials have informed this writer that the unauthorized passing of classified material to Israeli agents has been frequent and usually left unpunished in the past. The word seems to have gone around that this must be stopped.

Meanwhile, a further change was taking place in the military balance in the Middle East.

Syria mounted more and new types of antiaircraft missiles along its borders with Lebanon and Syria and took delivery of several new fast-attack ships from the Soviets. The identity of the ships was not disclosed in the official Syrian announcement, but they were believed to be four ships of the Natuchka II class. These are described as corvettes and are known to carry several surface-to-surface missiles.

Israel withdrew its ground forces from Lebanon on June 10 of this year, but has continued ever since to patrol both Lebanon airspace and the Lebanon coast. Syria is openly aiming to build to military equality with Israel. The process seems to be well under way.

Here is a subject calling urgently for consultation between Washington and Moscow. Israel expects the US to keep Israel's military strength up to a level at which it could handle the armed forces of all of its Arab neighbors. Israel, in fact, has enjoyed that level of military superiority in its area ever since the 1967 war when it defeated Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in a mere six days of battle.

If Syria is expecting Moscow to give it military equality with Israel, then Israel will want Washington to provide a major increase in Israel's military power.

Can such an arms race be headed off by an agreement between Washington and Moscow? The subject is no doubt one of those under discussion between Soviet and American diplomats in their "regional" meetings. It will be most interesting to see whether anything comes of any such talk.

Meanwhile, the US has persuaded Syria to withdraw some of its new Soviet antiaircraft missiles from inside Lebanon, but not from inside Syria along the border with Lebanon and Israel.

As matters stood this past week, Syria could presumably strike down any Israeli aircraft flying over Lebanon from weapons based inside Syria. In other words, Israel no longer can fly reconaissance over Lebanon without Syria's tacit consent.

Not enough details about Syria's growing sea power are yet available to permit a measure of the relative strength of Syria's versus Israel's naval forces. Presumably, Israel is still well ahead. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Israel has six corvettes, 24 fast-attack crafts, and 45 coastal patrol boats; Syria has two frigates, 22 fast-attack craft, and seven coastal patrol boats. If the latest additions are, in fact, the four Namuchka IIs that have been on order since 1981, then these plus the existing two Petya-class frigates might be a match for Israel's six corvettes.

Israel's ability to dominate Lebanon by sea and air is definitely under challenge. And this is happening at a time when official Washington is annoyed over Israeli spying in the US and when serious efforts are being made inside the federal establishment to clamp down on Israel's previous freedom to take unauthorized material at will.

Phil. Press

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CORD MEYER

Marcos's electoral strategy

After 20 years of domination by the political machine of the redoubtable President Ferdinand Marcos, Philippine election campaigns have become difficult to understand in all their Machiavellian complexity, and Mr. Marcos himself confuses the picture further by keeping his options open to the last possible moment.

But on the basis of long experience in dealing with the tactically brilliant but deeply flawed Filipino leader, President Reagan's best-informed advisers think they understand why Mr. Marcos decided to call a snap election for Feb. 7, how he plans to win it, and what he might do if he thinks he will lose it.

Mr. Marcos's decision to risk his presidency on Feb. 7, instead of waiting for the regularly scheduled election 15 months later, was a tribute to the effective pressures for far-reaching reform that the Reagan administration and a bipartisan majority in the U.S. Congress have brought to bear on him.

Unwilling to risk the threat to his power base involved in ending the corrupt cronyism that has undermined the Philippine army and the economy, Mr. Marcos came up with a snap election as a way of diverting attention from the need for reform. Once re-elected, President Marcos would be able to flaunt his electoral mandate in order to silence his American critics.

Moreover, in a typically deft move, Mr. Marcos has strengthened his electoral chances by appointing as his vice presidential running mate Arturo Tolentino, who at 75 years is still the vigorous and leading dissident in the ruling KBL party. In one thrust, Mr. Marcos satisfied American demands for a regularized succession and calmed fears that he might be planning to place his ambitious wife, Imelda, in line to succeed himself.

With all the advantages of incumbency, Reagan advisers hope that Mr. Marcos might for once permit an honest vote, but they have to admit the signs do not point in that direction. As the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was warned this week, the Marcos regime continues to delay in making the key institutional decisions that could ensure a fair election.

With the election only seven weeks off and voter registration already beginning, Mr. Marcos has, as of this writing, not yet acted to fill the two vacancies on the Commission on Elections, which is currently dominated by a Marcos-controlled majority. Hope of impartiality in settling electoral disputes depends on prompt appointment of independent and respected citizens to fill these empty chairs.

The National Citizens Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) is prepared, as in 1984, to play a crucial and impartial role in providing thousands of volunteer poll-watchers to check the ballot count. But so far NAMFREL has not been officially accredited. There are rumors it will be excluded from Manila, where a volunteer organization under Mr. Marcos's control seems scheduled to review the counting.

Finally, there is the critical isue of whether the opposition is given enough access to the media to reach the scattered voters in the 90,000 voting precincts throughout the Philippine Archipelago. The Marcos regime already controls TV, and there are reports that Mr. Marcos's supporters have pre-emptively bought up most of the prime radio time.

In spite of Mr. Marcos's control of the electoral machinery, the army, the media, and most of the money, there is an outside chance that the newly united opposition led by Corazon Aquino and Salvador Laurel may ignite a chain reaction of emotional support that could threaten Mr. Marcos's majority. The president's initial campaign rallies have been poorly attended, and there are reports of KBL leaders defecting to the opposition.

The Reagan administration has made it very clear that it will do everything possible as a concerned ally to help guarantee a free and fair election, and Mr. Marcos knows he will have to face an army of international observers and the full glare of American media coverage on election day. Rather than risk exposure of heavy-handed efforts to rig the voting, Mr. Marcos is quite capable, if he fears defeat, of canceling the snap election even though his Supreme Court has now found it constitutional.

This would be a confession of weakness. But the worst-case scenario that keeps President Reagan's advisers awake at night is the possibility that Mr. Marcos will polarize the country and destroy the democratic process by engaging in massive fraud on Feb. 7 to perpetuate his hold on power.

With the road blocked to peaceful democratic change, the way would be open for the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. In its last year in office, the Reagan administration might then be forced to watch impotently as a ruthless Communist reign of terror created a human tragedy for the Filipino people and a strategic disaster for the United States.

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CONGRESS APPROVED a $368.2 billion omnibus spending bill for fiscal 1986. Final adoption of the measure, which gives the Pentagon initial funding for modern chemical weapons but bans space tests of anti-satellite missiles, came by voice vote in the Senate after a 261-137 House roll call. Meanwhile, the congressional leadership, eager to adjourn, appeared to abandon any hope of immediate action on a bill with $80 billion in three-year deficit reductions.

Congress also approved a bill guaranteeing that dump sites for low-level nuclear waste will stay open for seven years. About half the waste is produced by electric utilities. (Stories on Pages 2 and 7)

The action was aimed at averting a showdown with governors of the only three states with sites, who had threatened to bar waste from other states.

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NASA scrubbed the launch of the space shuttle Columbia just 15 seconds before liftoff because of trouble with a booster-rocket steering system. The mission was rescheduled for Jan. 4. NASA officials said it would take at least until Christmas to replace the defective hydraulic power unit.

* * *

The Reagan administration welcomed an offer from Gorbachev to allow some inspection of Soviet nuclear test sites, but rejected the condition that the U.S. first must join Moscow in a moratorium on all testing.