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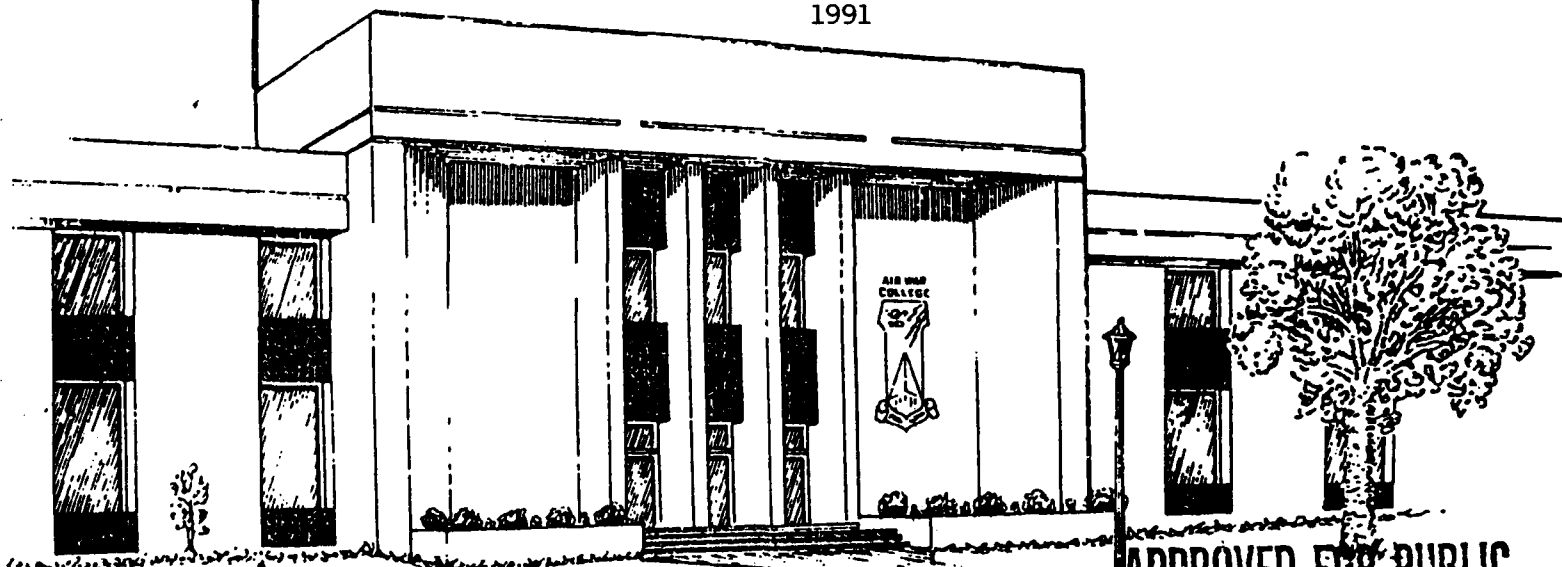
THE CHANGING MILITARY RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND MANILA

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LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT W. TAPASZI, JR

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AIR UNIVERSITY
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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THE CHANGING MILITARY RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND MANILA

by

Robert W. Tapaszi Jr.
Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM

REQUIREMENT

Advisor: Dr. Lawrence E. "Buck" Grinter

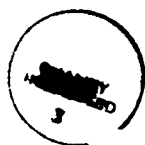
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

March 1991

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: The Changing Military Relationship Between
Washington and Manila

AUTHOR: Robert W. Tapaszi Jr., Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

United States military facilities in the Philippines are at the mercy of the changing military and foreign policy relationship between a superpower and a country which was once its colonial possession. While the relationship has been classified as being "special" to both countries, the significance of a developing power vacuum in the Southeast Asia area has caused concern among the ASEAN nations, the United States military and sheds a light on possible expansion of the Philippine military into external defense.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Tapaszi Jr. (M.S. University of Southern California) has been interested in the East Asian area since he was stationed in the Pacific on the Island of Guam in both 1982 and 1988. He has traveled to South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, New Guinea and the Philippines. He has been a KC-135 squadron commander, a deputy combat support group commander and an air base wing vice commander. Lieutenant Colonel Tapaszi is a graduate of the Air War College class of 1991.

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INTRODUCTION

A recent analysis by Dr. Richard Fisher in an edition of the Asian Studies Center Backgrounder stated: "Washington and Manila have been negotiating the future of United States (US) military facilities in the Philippines since September 18, 1990. These Philippine-American Cooperation Talks (PACT) may lead to a new military and economic relationship between the two countries. In this new relationship, the US would help the Philippines assume responsibility for its own defense, allowing the US to reduce its military presence, and promote economic reforms that would reduce Philippine dependence on foreign aid." (11:1) The central issue to any new relationship is the continued use or access to bases in the Philippines by US military. The differing perceptions about a US presence in the Southeast Asian area by members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and survival of a stable, democratic government in the Philippines, add to the debate over the bases. Survival of the Philippines and its democratically inclined leadership must be a priority for US policy. To what extent can a changing US military relationship assist the Philippines out of its economic doldrums, assure survival of the democratic government, provide leverage in continuing base negotiations and support current military strategy in the area?

HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIPS - THE MILITARY BASING AGREEMENT

Any analysis of Philippine and US issues focuses on

the positive, but often turbulent relationship between Washington and Manila. As Dr. Lawrence Grinter states: "From the start, Washington and most of the American public viewed their administration of the Philippine Islands, acquired by the United States from Spain in 1898, as a temporary tutelage to prepare Filipinos for independence." (8:162) This relationship unfortunately is tainted by haunts of colonialism. The colonial image of the US, from a Filipino perspective, has never been shed.

The special qualities of the relationship between the US and the Philippines are the economic enhancements provided by the US as well as the significant contribution to external defense the US provides through forces based at Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base. Both economic means and US military forces have allowed the Government of the Philippines (GOP) to concentrate on internal problems, particularly the Communist insurgency. Any furthering of this special relationship will come under fire due to problems inherent in the Military Bases Agreement (MBA) governing US access to Clark and Subic Bay.

Negotiations which were progressing well in 1989 slowed dramatically after the December 1989 coup attempt and have been further slowed by Desert Shield/Desert Storm. This has only increased the pressure on Manila and Washington to come up with a new substantive treaty which will solve the basing issue and contribute to Philippine political and economic stability. While the current

activity over the basing situation involves many possibilities, the historic events of the MBA must be reviewed to understand how the US and the Philippines have come to this apparent stalemate.

The Philippines gained independence from the US on 4 July 1946. The military facilities constructed after World War II were to be kept for 99 years. This was done at no expense to the Philippines or the US. The MBA has been renegotiated many times since.

In 1966, the lease was shortened from 99 years to 25 years, expiring in 1991. A provision was provided that the bases could continue to function subject to one year's notification of cancellation by either Washington or Manila. This was satisfactory at the time when so many other bases in the area were available to US military forces. South Vietnam and Thailand as well as Japan (Okinawa) and Taiwan offered bases for a significant forward presence of forces in the Southeast and Northeast Asian areas.

A significant change occurred in 1979 when the bases agreement was amended to place the bases under Philippine as opposed to American jurisdiction. In essence, the bases were now Filipino bases with American facilities within the boundaries of the bases. The bases agreement was also to be reviewed every five years by negotiating teams. The facilities issue was brushed aside as the US was assured of uninhibited operations, but more importantly, full command over the facilities. The price tag established

during the 1979 discussions was \$500 million for five years in military and economic assistance.

In 1983, during discussions for the next five year period, the cost to the US almost doubled to \$900 million. The US also assured the GOP it would consult with them prior to direct combat operations involving the bases. This began to infringe upon the unhindered operations agreed to in 1979.

October 1988 brought the beginning of negotiations for the next five year term. During the preliminary talks, agreement was reached on continued operation of the bases under the 1983 rules, but only until treaty expiration in September 1991. What shocked many more people was the agreement to substantially increase the dollars flowing to the GOP. For fiscal years 1990 and 1991, the cost rose to \$962 million. "The \$481 million per year was broken down to \$200 million in military aid, \$160 million in economic support, \$96 million for developmental assistance and food aid and \$25 million for housing investment." (41:4) What is important about this final monetary increase is that it is in the form of an executive agreement rather than part of a formal treaty. The promised increase angered the US Congress and, given other US and multilateral assistance to the Philippines, almost \$100 million was cut from the 1990 aid package. This was one of the reasons highlighted by the GOP when Philippine President Aquino refused to meet with US Defense Secretary Cheney

during his visit to the country in February 1990. The reduction of funds certainly caused dismay to the GOP; however, the Philippines also noted the aid to other allied countries, particularly Greece and Israel, areas which the GOP feels the US does not have the need to court as they do the Philippines. Filipino leaders feel they are being played with while the US benefits from its old colonial image. It is amazing to me how the Philippines tends to ignore what is happening outside their country militarily and politically and only concentrates on the monetary aspect of the bases under the guise of nationalism. If they truly understood the monetary aspect of the bases, they would also realize the benefits the bases contribute to the Philippines. The benefit of US aircraft at Clark Air Base was underscored during the December 1989 coup attempt.

THE SIXTH COUP ATTEMPT - DECEMBER 1989

The coup attempt that nearly toppled President Aquino was devastating to the country. It would appear the victory over the mutineers was a hollow one at best. The coup attempt sent a clear signal to Mrs. Aquino about the disunity and weakness of the Philippine Armed Forces (AFP). Outside economic assistance is probably a necessity for upgrading the AFP, but only Mrs. Aquino can unify the armed forces. The Philippine military, like the Thai military, appears to be significantly politicized. Military leaders believe they can influence the government and install their own leaders. What further complicates the military

relationship was President Bush's adamant support for Mrs. Aquino. Had the US not supported the democratically inclined Aquino government, the coup attempt could have had a much different outcome. Several other factors rise out of the coup attempt. By asking for US help, Mrs. Aquino shut the door on an open options position at the start of the coup. If the coup attempt had in fact succeeded, I suggest economic setbacks would have marred the country. As it stands, US assistance helped to underscore Aquino's democratic stand. This should encourage foreign investors, particularly Japan and other ASEAN nations. While nationalism appears to be a theme throughout the Philippines in the bases debate, Filipinos should view the assistance as an enhancement to Mrs. Aquino and her pro-democracy stand. Not only should nationalism put aside the argument for keeping the bases, the importance of the bases has been underscored by other ASEAN nations who are also striving for democratic forms of government. The point is, anti-bases sentiment has softened as a result of support for the Aquino government. Combine that with the view of ASEAN nations that the request for assistance during the coup attempt was well within the right and legitimacy of Mrs. Aquino under the broad interpretations of the Mutual Defense Treaty, and it appears the US facilities stand a good chance of remaining.

Foreign and US aid is directly linked to a democratic form of government in the Philippines. While the

world strives toward more democratic forms of government, the Philippines needs to be more outward looking in order not to lose pace with world trends. While we may never know who actually asked for US assistance during the coup, President Aquino or Secretary Ramos -- or whether President Bush through the National Command Authority offered the means for support -- the ability of the GOP to increase the loyalty of the AFP rests squarely on President Aquino's shoulders. Necessary reforms in the AFP should be linked to continued US economic and military aid. This may complicate the basing issue and cause the GOP to call for possible restrictions to US basing if money is used as a leverage tool by the US. We should not forget President Aquino's snub of Defense Secretary Cheney during his visit to the Philippines. Linking money to performance can lead to uncertain consequences, but the GOP is now more cognizant of the US Congress role in the budget process.

TOWARDS MORE US ASSISTANCE

According to experts at Jane's Defence Weekly: "The objectives of the US security assistance programs in East Asia and the Pacific are to ensure essential strategic bases and their access to US forces, support regional democracy, strengthen bilateral relations and maintain regional stability. Every nation in the east and southwest Asian region is provided with United States Military Assistance Programs (MAP) and Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programs as well as cash sales." (14:657) Along with International

Military Education and Training (IMET), the bond is formed to support those nations whose security, political and economic objectives parallel those of the US. In the Philippines, the US provides substantial levels of economic and military assistance in order to strengthen the democratic government of President Aquino. High on the US agenda in dollars spent are continued economic reforms and putting an end to the almost 25 year old Communist insurgency, as well as containing or capturing leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

US aid, which has focused mostly on increased mobility, particularly helicopters and logistic support, needs to be more substantive. Some of the logistic effort is aimed at the Philippine Navy which is in poor condition. While these efforts should improve the Philippine Navy patrol boat reliability and serviceability and expand the helicopter force, the Philippine Navy is no match with other ASEAN nations or regional naval powers such as China or India.

IMET funds support education and technical training for over 500 personnel, and this must be expanded.

While the Philippines has been concentrating on internal defense measures, attempting to control the Communist insurgency and utilizing forces for protection of the very delicate government, changes are beginning to appear. In the early part of November 1990, the Philippine Air Force conducted a deployment of F-5 aircraft from their

base in the northern part of the Philippines to the western island of Palawan. The deployment was designed to test the capability of the AFP to deploy toward and protect the Spratly Islands. The Spratly's are known to contain deposits of oil although no significant quantities have been discovered. Looking at long term economic objectives, the Philippines could benefit from any oil exploration or discovery in those islands.

The Spratlys are partially or wholly claimed by several countries. China, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam as well as the Philippines all have some interest in those oil deposits in and around the islands. The point is we are beginning to see the Philippine military look to external defense.

The deployment to Palawan, led by General Gerardo Protacio, the Philippine Air Force Chief of Staff, seems to underscore this new look. While most deployment details are not available, it is known that General Protacio did visit the Spratlys and viewed the AFP facilities. The concern by the Philippine military should be that a few F-5 aircraft cannot adequately defend their Spratly Islands claim. Despite aid which has increased the serviceability of navy vessels, the AFP needs new ships in concert with new aircraft. Do we see the Philippine military looking for outside sources of new military equipment? Not as of yet, however, the newly appointed Philippine Armed Forces Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Rodolfo Biazon has said "the

military would put more emphasis on external defense rather than internal security." (28:11) Although no specifics were given as to how to meet external defense needs, it is generally acknowledged the Philippines will need to spend enormous sums of money to bring its armed forces up to the caliber of other ASEAN nations. It is generally recognized "the Philippine military is one of the most primitive in the region and has relied on US military bases in the country for the bulk of its external security." (28:11)

The implications for Manila and Washington are significant. Assuming the US vacates the Philippine bases, how much military hardware and what types would the US be willing to offer the Philippines? With a somewhat new emphasis being placed on external defense, the leadership appears to be flexing its muscle and posturing for not renewing the basing agreement as well as signaling a hands off policy to the US for external defense. With this in mind, a long term modernization program for the Philippine military is an absolute necessity. A comprehensive program for the Philippine Air Force out to the year 2000 or beyond is a possibility. For any long range planning, the Philippines could benefit from the acquisition of F-16A and B model aircraft from the US. Other ASEAN countries to include Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia have purchased F-16s and are deeply involved in joint training and exercises. The Philippines could possibly save some precious dollars by participating in joint training and

using the flight simulator facilities in other ASEAN countries rather than purchasing the simulation equipment on its own. This option could assist the Philippines in becoming a more militarily important member of ASEAN rather than formally depending on the US or attempting to fill the vacuum left in the area by a pullout of US forces.

The Philippine Defense Industry

With an external defense program now being considered, it would be a significant contribution to economic development if the fledgling Philippine defense industry was developed to assist in building weapons for external defense. The country now can produce small arms equipment and supplies, but needs to concentrate on upgrading its arms production status. A procurement of some type of fighter aircraft in substantial numbers could lead to coproduction in country. Although an expensive weapon system, the F-16 is a fine example of a multi-role aircraft for the Philippine Air Force. If the F-16 is cost prohibitive from the Philippine perspective, perhaps a less expensive aircraft such as the F-5 or a resurrection of the F-20 could be given consideration. The reason for focusing on the F-16 is the fact that other ASEAN countries have purchased the F-16 in small numbers. The Philippines could serve as a depot type location for repair and overhaul of those F-16s in theater. The point is, major weapon systems need to be produced in order for the Philippine economy to benefit from its external defense initiatives as well as any

long range modernization efforts. For the near term however, with the number of Philippine nationals employed at both Subic Bay and Clark Air Base, the Philippines will be content to provide only maintenance and produce small items only. It would be prudent for the Philippines to embark on a long term plan to implement programs for building major weapons.

Increase AFP Loyalty

The US is in a position to assist the AFP in increasing its loyalty to the GOP. The US should continue to educate senior Filipino military officers at the Air University and other institutions. The unique military environment afforded at intermediate and senior level schools assist those officers in understanding the special relationship between the military and the political structure in the US. This understanding will be carried back to their own country, possibly adding stability to the military and emphasizing the fact that democratic forms of government offer the best solution to the unique problems in their country. Security assistance programs in the form of nation building underscore US determination towards democratization and stability in the Philippines. Stability ultimately rests with the GOP.

One of the key steps Mrs. Aquino must take is to stop the AFP from threatening her democratic reforms and governmental stability. According to Asia Studies Center analyst Dr. Richard Fisher, Mrs. Aquino must "defeat the

military threat to Philippine democracy. This includes gaining the confidence of younger officers, addressing problems of interservice rivalry and punishing military corruption." (10:1) The frightening thing that occurred after the December 1989 coup attempt is that President Aquino simply let the survivors of the coup return to their military bases and barracks. This can only lead to other coup attempts as the core of dissent still remains in the military. Mrs. Aquino must rid the military of corrupt officers and coup leaders. The urgency to reform the military cannot be played down. Although it appears Mrs. Aquino is not going to run for another six year presidential term, she must turn over a stable government and a loyal military to any successor. Mrs. Aquino has managed to survive and will, most likely complete her term. She must look closely at the military, replace corrupt officers and set the tone for a more vibrant, supportive military. President Bush should certainly warn the Aquino government that the US Congress would not disperse any aid to the Philippines if the military overthrew the current government and established a military junta in its place. AFP loyalty can be approached from two avenues, US help and GOP strength. By maintaining support for democratization, the US, in the long run, can assist the GOP in increasing AFP loyalty.

Eliminate the Communist Insurgency

In light of the new effort toward external defense,

the continuing effort to defeat the Communist insurgency is now a balancing act between resources. The external defense initiatives should not take priority over the internal efforts against the insurgents. The GOP's attempt to control the Communist insurgency should be made while US support and the security umbrella that support provides is still very evident. To suddenly change course when the efforts to combat the insurgency have been proceeding well could spell disaster. Significant pressure on the insurgents is still needed. Again, permitting the US to utilize Filipino bases can solve the need to devote precious resources to external defense. The GOP then could expand its battle against the Communist insurgents and continue to make necessary military and economic reforms. If the US facilities do not remain, are there options to focus on so as to retain a US presence in the area?

BASE OPTIONS AND THE MANILA-WASHINGTON LINK

Clearly the US and the Philippines are attempting to forge a new relationship with the bases as the core of any future military linkage. It appears the Philippines will be the biggest loser if a basing agreement cannot be upheld. The issue in the forefront of all activity concerns compensation for use of the bases. If the GOP insists upon a substantial increase over the \$481 million per year for US forces use of the bases, then I am convinced the US will leave in its entirety. This can be the only outcome in light of declining budgets and force reductions.

The current base negotiations are nearing an end. Foreign Secretary Manglapus has even hinted a willingness to continue the basing arrangement out to the year 2000, with options for a longer stay. Compensation again is the key to any long term arrangement.

Despite the encouraging negotiations, the US must analyze the changing military relationship between the two countries and develop a long range plan for eventually closing the bases. Options are available for US forces as the long range planning effort continues. Furthermore, the US should continue to evaluate and make plans for a further withdrawal or "phase down from bases in South Korea and Japan such as the time phased force structure and security initiatives currently being expressed as a general strategy plan by the US Secretary of Defense." (30:8)

The options for the US are based on several assumptions:

1. The US will not change fundamentally its military strategy of forward defense in the Pacific
2. The Soviet Union will not add forces in the Southeast and Northeast Asian area.
3. China will not become more militarily aggressive in the area.
4. The overall US defense budget as well as that portion focused on the Pacific will continue to decline into the next century.

Access Option

If a bases agreement allowing a permanent presence of US forces cannot be reached, the US must seek an agreement which at least will allow access to bases in the Philippines in times of world-wide or regional crisis or for bilateral training. That begs the question of prepositioned equipment on bases and who will maintain and or secure the equipment. The Crow Valley range should also be included in any access to those bases. The Cope Thunder training could then continue at the invitation of the host country. Training with US forces could enhance the Philippine military situation particularly if the GOP commits to continue upgrading its external defense capability with, for example, the purchase of F-16 aircraft and other support equipment. In addition, the Subic Bay naval facility must be accessible to US Navy ships transiting to and from the Indian Ocean area.

According to State Department officials, "The US military is the second largest employer of Filipino nationals after the Philippine government." (17:3) With a total US pullout, the great labor force would be unemployed. With access to the bases, the US would present a continuing windfall economically to the Philippine government as well as providing for mutual defense. However, the Philippine government cannot expect the same level of monetary contributions as they receive now if only limited access is granted to US military forces rather than what has been in

the past permanent basing.

Commercialization Option

This option piggybacks on the access option but takes on a non-military flavor. If required, the US should withdraw completely and as rapidly as possible in order for the GOP to pursue commercial applications of Subic Bay and Clark. Commercial applications have proven successful for bases which have been closed stateside. Local communities have developed industrial parks on former government property. With a large infusion of cash, the Philippines could perhaps develop the bases into industrialized centers. Again this can be tied to new external defense initiatives by developing the bases into production centers for military hardware. Certainly Subic Bay offers the more lucrative area for commercialization with its large area, excellent facilities and accessibility. Shipbuilding for both military and commercial means could be given a legitimate try in this area. Again, what is needed in any commercial venture is a massive influx of dollars. The US has supplied the dollars in the past, but not for such a unique development plan. Could the GOP be looking for another investor in perhaps Taiwan or Japan? With the record of Japan in the Philippines during World War II, can or should this be pursued by the GOP? US military aircraft and ships as well as vessels from both the commercial and military sides could use any commercialized areas. The question then becomes is the GOP willing to support vessels from the

Soviet Union, China, India, Japan, ASEAN nations or other emerging superpowers in the area, as prospects for instability in the area nevertheless continue.

Guam Option

A significant capability exists to beddown forces on the island of Guam. By air, the Philippines is approximately three hours distant; by sea, three steaming days. The greater advantage to Guam is the fact it is an American territory with Navy and Air Force bases already established. Guam is strategically located and offers the best concept for forward basing as the US begins to draw down other facilities in the region. While the sea lines of communication are in fact more distant, the unencumbered air and sea operations from Guam offer a value which cannot be matched. Any money spent on the island will benefit Americans and not a foreign government.

General Merrill McPeak, US Air Force Chief of Staff, has proposed "a composite wing concept with fighter and support aircraft operating from the same location." (25:4) Andersen AFB could be a part of the composite wing effort as the base offers essentially an empty aircraft ramp as a result of the closing of the 43d Bombardment Wing. The limiting factor is the amount of space on base to house a large unit.

The Government of Guam has also proposed moving Agana Naval Air Station from the international airport to Andersen AFB. Based on my experience in working with

Government Accounting Office (GAO) representatives on Guam, that move alone could cost well over \$400 million according to GAO estimates to create the unique infrastructure for the Navy, but would not limit aircraft ramp space. The US could also assist the Government of Guam with power production and water distribution. These unique problems and difficulties continue to plague the island as the Government of Guam struggles with a massive build of the tourist industry trade. Despite some drawbacks, Guam appears to be the best outlook for forward basing in the long term.

Regional Option

Both Philippine Vice President Salvador Laurel and Foreign Secretary Raul Manglapus have pointed out the Philippine "burden" of hosting US forces on its territory. Mr. Laurel has also stated "the bases cannot and should not be permanent installations in the Philippines. No country will ever agree to this permanent presence of any foreign military power on its soil." (18:18) I point out the bases in South Korea, Japan and the European theater as permanent presence on foreign soil.

Singapore's offer to host US military forces can also be matched in the Philippines in a regional sense. While the Philippines struggles with the feeling they are carrying the burden for Pacific stability, the bases should be open to forces from other ASEAN nations. Deployments by ASEAN forces into the Philippines could accomplish two things. First, it would send a regional message to

potential threats to the area that forces are deploying and training together. Second, it could also encourage the expansion of Philippine forces deployed to other ASEAN bases. This would give the AFP some capability to practice further deployments in response to external defense initiatives. I believe that ASEAN could present a credible military force if all countries were involved in a mutual defense pact. This may be the regional initiative necessary for a defense pact. Should the US withdraw completely, regional forces could occupy the bases.

Extending the Current Agreement

From the Philippines, the US can protect Southeast Asia's sea lines of communication and thwart any potential threat from an emerging China or against Soviet military expansion. The US can play a role in balancing any future Japanese efforts at military expansion. The Philippines offers distinct advantages which have been recognized by US political and military leaders for some time. The support offered by those bases is unparalleled in Southeast Asia. The GOP also realizes this and sees the advantage to raise the stakes on the bases during discussions. The current negotiations under the guidance of Ambassador Richard Armitage appear to be aimed at extending the main elements of the 1988 agreement past the September 1991 time frame. The significant question again is how much money will the GOP demand from the US Government? Mr. Armitage has already announced that if the monetary cost is too high, the

Philippines can have the bases. President Bush has also indicated the US will not stay where it is not wanted.

US negotiators have also announced the "unilateral decision to withdraw the two F-4 squadrons from Clark Air Base. One of the F-4 squadrons was to have been replaced by long range F-15E Strike Eagle fighters. This unit will now be based at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska. Like the A-10 unit at Eielson Air Force Base and the current F-15 unit at Elmendorf, the new unit could deploy to Cope Thunder exercises or other areas in the theater." (24:24)

This has some impact on the local Philippine population as the jobs associated with the two F-4 squadrons were plentiful. It is estimated by base officials about "2000 Air Force personnel will withdraw opening up base housing to more families." (24:24) Being able to to move personnel and families on base favorably affects morale, but affects local merchants and property owners off base. The elimination of dollars begins to affect the local population dramatically. With the continuation of talks, come an increasing voice to continue the agreement. Many Filipinos will be directly affected should the current agreement lapse. This is finally being realized by the Philippine population in general.

"The conclusion of a number of public opinion surveys is that the majority of Filipinos want the bases to stay." (36:19) While other issues crop up during negotiations, the key issue in continuing the current bases

agreement is compensation. Should a serious monetary amount emerge from the current negotiations, the US must decide quickly and responsibly for keeping forces based in the Philippines.

MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY

This treaty, signed in 1951, provides that "an armed attack on either of the parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the metropolitan territory of either of the parties or on the island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific Ocean, its armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific." (38:1) Foreign Secretary Raul S. Manglapus indicated the Mutual Defense Treaty and the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, coming out of the MBA discussions and the Philippine-American Cooperation Talks (PACT) are separate and distinct entities. He also stated: "The Mutual Defense Treaty has a life of its own and shall remain in force indefinitely." (38:1) However, Mr. Manglapus is suggesting the Mutual Defense Treaty can be carried out even without basing forces in country. Mr. Manglapus is also attempting to link the Mutual Defense Treaty to Philippine claims over territory in the Spratly Islands. The new concept of external defense becomes even more evident as the GOP and military attempt to hold the territorial claim while negotiating basing rights and asking for more military aid. If the tenets of the Mutual Defense Treaty are looked at closely, then by all means the US should be involved in the fight against the

communist insurgents, the US should have committed more than just two F-4 aircraft to support loyal forces during the 1989 coup attempt, and the US should uphold the Philippine claim over a portion of the Spratly Islands. That posture would almost certainly guarantee a place for US forces in the Philippines. Those forces could then be used to assist the Philippines in any defense of their claim in the Spratly Islands. The most severe drawback to the forces used as a result of the Mutual Defense Treaty would be in the fact that other Asian countries lay claim to the Spratlys. Most notably, Vietnam and China came to blows as a result of disputed claims. Malaysia also claims a portion of the Spratlys. This would pit two ASEAN countries in direct conflict. This may also be contentious in current terms as the Philippines and Malaysia branch out for larger foreign weapons buys. ASEAN nations view the necessity of keeping the bases open to US forces as a balance in the area and will be monitoring the negotiations as they progress.

ASEAN: VIEWS AND DILEMMAS

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is built primarily on political and economic ties. Currently ASEAN is becoming increasingly concerned with the military power vacuum if the US is not successful in basing negotiations with the Philippines. Philippine Foreign Secretary Raul S. Manglapus has consistently asked other ASEAN nations to assist in sharing the burden of further US defense presence in the region. In a statement in the

Far Eastern Economic Review, former Indonesian foreign minister Mochtar Kusumaatmadja suggested a withdrawal of US forces from the area would be destabilizing. He stated: "The new multipolar world is generating more concern than euphoria among ASEAN nations as the reduced potential for superpower conflict in the region is paradoxically now viewed in ASEAN capitals as threatening their security."

(39:30) It appears ASEAN is more concerned with regional power conflict and associated ambitions of growth by certain countries. China, India, Vietnam, Cambodia and Japan are causing concern from ASEAN members over possible expansion and regional conflicts which can destabilize the area. Salvador Laurel commented that: "Singapore's offer to accommodate US ships and aircraft presents an important opportunity. Other ASEAN nations may feel natural inhibitions against such an arrangement." (18:18) The arrangement with Singapore was described in a US official statement as "concrete evidence of US determination to retain a military presence in Southeast Asia for the foreseeable future. But analysts stress Singapore is unlikely to provide a substitute if the US has to withdraw from Clark and Subic, and at least one other Southeast Asian country would have to provide substitute facilities in order to avert a drastic run down of the US presence in the region." (34:11) Thailand and Brunei as well as Malaysia offer advantages to the US for basing alternatives in the region, but none has offered to host US forces as has

Singapore.

In an analysis of US Pacific strategy and the Philippine bases, Gregory Corning states: "The Singapore offer has made the task of US diplomacy much more complex. Washington must balance the potential contributions of Singapore with the forces of nationalism and regional hostility in Southeast Asia. Malaysia argues that Singapore's offer undermines the ASEAN effort to make the region a neutral zone. Meanwhile, Indonesia has asked that any increased US military presence be limited to maintenance facilities. While the precise negotiations behind the Singapore proposal remain unclear, the initiative highlights the tension between the ASEAN commitments to neutrality and the desire to preserve regional concensus." (6:22-23)

The country of Singapore has been the most ardent supporter of retaining bases in the Philippines. Their offer to allow access by US forces to bases in Singapore sends a clear signal to the GOP that they are no longer shouldering the entire burden of hosting US forces in the area. To the bewilderment of the Singapore government, the GOP appears to be upset with Singapore and the offer to act as a host. One can speculate the offer has undermined the efforts of the GOP to substantially increase the amount of compensation to be paid by the US for retaining the bases.

The remaining ASEAN countries have been remarkably silent on the issue, perhaps out of respect for Singapore's decision or they are merely trying to deflect

any efforts by the US to gain inroads to other ASEAN countries. Thailand and Malaysia, which have exceptional facilities in country have not offered basing arrangements to the US. Thailand does sponsor exercises with US forces such as Cobra Gold. The Cobra Gold exercise, just like Cope Thunder, could provide a platform for participation by other ASEAN nations.

Many ASEAN countries are struggling with security agreements, both bilateral as well as multilateral. The most dynamic arrangement is the Five Power Defense Arrangement (FPDA) consisting of Malaysia, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. The FPDA is struggling with the differences between Singapore and Malaysia which are unclear at the time. No support has come from the FPDA for retaining US presence in the area. The primary result of the Singapore action has been to awaken ASEAN as to its responsibilities in the area. While not wanting to interfere with Philippine internal matters, it is precisely the external responsibility of ASEAN nations to provide a defense umbrella for the area should the US vacate the Philippine bases. According to a recent article in the Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly, "the Philippines is planning to hold a conference in Manila this summer on regional security ...this will lay the groundwork for a statement on collective security by foreign ministers of ASEAN later in the year." (4:3) Does this impinge on ASEAN's call for a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality

(ZOPFAN)? If it does, then the practicality of ZOPFAN must be weighed against ensuring regional security.

CONCLUSIONS

The nature of any new relationship or a changed relationship between Washington and Manila actually will create a far reaching impact in the Southeast Asian area. The concerns of the ASEAN nations cannot be excluded from US-Philippine relations.

US forces using US facilities in the Philippine bases have been able to assist in peace keeping efforts in East Asia. The strong US presence brought stability which encouraged economic growth. Should the US have to abandon its facilities in the Philippines in total, a power struggle both internally and externally could be ignited in country. Although tremendous strides have been taken by the Aquino government, stability of the democracy is still threatened by the Communist insurgency. The threat to the democracy still exists from the AFP. Externally, there are countries with a growing military, such as the Soviet Union, Japan, China or India that could fill the vacuum created by a total US pullout.

While I have offered several options for the area, some form of basing access must be continued in order for the Philippines to enjoy protection and the monetary flow from the United States. The US, within the spirit of the Mutual Defense Treaty, can also assist the Philippines in building a future external defense mechanism. The potential

exists for enhanced bilateral training, exercises and military assistance.

The US needs the Philippines and the Philippines needs the US. With the current US focus on stability in the Pacific, it is absolutely imperative that any basing agreement include provisions to maintain some type of US presence. Whatever options the US and the Philippines choose, US access to the bases is a must. ASEAN should also pursue the US access issue in order to offset increased military capability by outside nations.

The suggestion of a changing relationship between Manila and Washington should be in the context of a new relationship, void of any previous colonial interests and based on the dignity and mutual respect of both nations. Acknowledging each other as partners in the area is a key to future success. The new relationship can provide the necessary stability in the area and provide the Philippines with new opportunities for military, political and economic growth.

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