

Today the state of the world economy is alarming. Third World debt has now reached the \$970 billion mark. It is urgent that we find a solution to this problem. Thailand's economic problems must be looked at from a global standpoint. A weak economic situation is the source of instability and the Philippines is, unfortunately, a clear example of this. Continued instability in the Philippines, the danger of disintegration of our neighbor, the Philippine nation, will have devastating repercussions on the overall situation of the ASEAN nations.

I am also pleased to see that this conference will touch upon a very important question, that is, the question of drugs. Whether we will be able to tackle this problem successfully will determine the welfare of our future generations. On this matter, I would like to especially applaud President Reagan's initiatives to seriously suppress international drug traffic. I totally share his truly generous concern for the world's population that the United States will once again play a major role in guaranteeing the physical security of this region. And, I hope, that the United States will realize that to fight drugs efficiently, conditions for economic growth and industrial development must be created.

I would like to remind the participants of this conference today that since 150 years, since the period of colonialism, Thailand has never known a better friend than the North American republic on the other side of the Pacific. During the reign of his Majesty, King Rama IV, the United States was a young nation, a nation seeking to establish friendly relations based upon mutual interest, a nation that had just won her freedom, a nation that sought to dominate no one. More recently, after the Second World War, it was again the United States that prevented former colonial powers from taking over Thailand. Today, Thailand is being encroached upon once again by a new imperial power. I hope that the United States will once more be the beacon of hope and act, once more, to uphold the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness of the world's population.

In dealing with questions of security and economic development, all too often short-term solutions are adopted at the expense of a more thought-out long-term consideration. This is one remark I would like to leave with the conference organizers and participants who will be debating these issues for the next two days.

The world economic situation may be alarming. The strategic situation may be more tense than ever before globally. But I am optimistic. I am optimistic because I believe we are the masters of our own destiny.

In closing, I wish to repeat to you the German poet Friedrich Schiller's quote, which President Reagan so appropriately used during his recent trip to West Germany, "He who has done his best for his own time, has lived for all time." I hope that our foreign friends, from the United States, neighboring ASEAN nations, and elsewhere, will carry this message back home. And I wish the conference great success.

The State Department's

by Criton Zoakos

In the immediate post World War II period, political and social forces throughout the Near East/Middle East region regarded as the "friends of the United States," were forces associated with programs and aspirations aiming at the establishment of strong and prosperous nation-state institutions. Nations inhabiting the wide corridor stretching from approximately Trieste to Calcutta, had all produced national leaderships and elites looking forward to building the kinds of national political and economic institutions appropriate to the growth and nourishment of strong and prospering nations.

United States policy in those days was to support such national aspirations. This U.S. policy orientation was abruptly terminated during September 1973, when Henry Kissinger was sworn in as secretary of state. The change was never announced, of course, and to this day, it will not be formally admitted by the State Department.

The single greatest source of confusion spread by the State Department's post-1973 policies is this refusal, on the part of the Department, to formally admit that this change has in fact been made and institutionalized: Those nationalist forces around the world who to this day imagine themselves "friends of the United States," in the accepted, post World War II sense, find themselves, time and again, betrayed, ruined, and destroyed as a result of State Department policies which they find incomprehensible.

These victims still refuse to accept what should by now be obvious: The State Department no longer considers nationally oriented forces and elites to be the "friends of the United States." The State Department, as it was revamped and reorganized by Henry A. Kissinger, has abandoned the historical, fundamental American foreign policy commitment of supporting, everywhere in the world, the institution of the sovereign nation-state against all forms and guises of tyranny—oligarchical, sacerdotal, or merely mob tyranny.

No international political development from 1973 to date can be rendered comprehensible unless one assumes that the Kissinger and post-Kissinger State Department has identified the nation-state as its principal enemy.

This is nowhere truer, perhaps, than in the Near East/Middle East region, the general domain over which the Ot-

Levant nightmare

toman Empire ruled for approximately five centuries. The State Department's "Kissinger Era" of war against the institution of the nation-state began in this particular region, with the launching of the "October War" of 1973, exactly one week after Kissinger became secretary of state. Since that first act of war by Secretary Kissinger, one after the other, the traditional "friends of the United States" throughout that region began to disappear into a quagmire of defeat, disillusionment, and national destruction. The most dramatic moment, perhaps, of systematic destruction of "friends of the United States," was the overthrow of the Shah of Iran by Secretary of State Cyrus Zbigniew Brzezinski, and NATO Supreme Commander Alexander Haig, Kissinger's "paperclip general."

What the State Department of today supports, instead of the institution of the nation-state, is a rival kind of social and political organization known in the region by its Ottoman administrative name, the *Vilayet*. State Department policy toward Lebanon in particular, best exemplifies this *Vilayet* principle: *Vilayets*, in the old Ottoman Empire of the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries, were self-defined sacerdotal communities, similar to modern Lebanon's "Druze," "Christian," "Shi'ite Moslem," "Sunni Moslem," etc., communities, whose internal administration had a measure of autonomy exercised not by the members of the community, but by their leaders. Those leaders, in turn, enjoyed their local power only to the extent that their policies were in agreement with the broader interests of the Imperial Court, the Sublime Porte at Istanbul.

Internal peace in the imperial domain was not necessarily a desired policy objective. Nor was prosperity. The sole objective of the entire Ottoman imperial arrangement, was the perpetuation of this system of petty tyrannical fiefdoms, which would torment and exploit their constituents according to their peculiar communal customs and traditions. It was exactly this administrative scheme which the U.S. State Department adapted when in the 1973-79 period it opted for the notorious "Bernard Lewis Plan," which envisaged the systematic elimination of all nation-state institutions in the Near East and Middle East region, and their replacement with a

motley group of religious, semi-religious, and cult-tribal entities.

During March of this year, in a little-noticed meeting in Vienna between officials of the U.S. State Department and the Soviet foreign ministry, a formal agreement was reached to allow the Soviet government to "do as it pleases" in Lebanon. Moscow assigned the case to Hafez Assad of Syria. Assad embarked on a scheme of inducing anti-Arafat Palestinians to kill and exterminate pro-Arafat Palestinians; all kinds of Palestinians together to kill Christians; Shi'ite Muslim militias to kill anti-Arafat, so-called "Syria-supported Palestinians," and preparing Druze militias to go after Shi'ite militias at a later point of the exercise.

Assad is conducting this operation with the almost overt backing of his purported arch-enemies in the Israeli government. The Israeli government shares with the State Department the objective of replacing the nation-states of the region with Ottoman-style *Vilayets*. The Soviet Union shares in this goal with equal fervor.

The PLO-Israel peace initiative

Immediately following the 1984 election victory of President Reagan, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Yasser Arafat, and King Hussein of Jordan agreed to make all the formal concessions to Israel necessary to open up the possibility of direct Palestinian-Israeli peace talks. Arafat, since then, has been living under constant assassination threat from his "hard-line" political rivals. Moderate Palestinians, weary of years of fruitless fighting, rallied around Arafat.

President Mubarak of Egypt came to Washington to seek U.S. mediation between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan, designated by Arafat to be the Palestinians' negotiating proxy. The State Department and Secretary Shultz personally ensured that this eminently reasonable peace initiative collapsed. The United States refused to lend its support. Mubarak returned home to face a runaway political crisis, which now begins to threaten the security of his regime. The assassination potential against Arafat multiplied. King Hussein was forced to replace his entire government in order to save himself from the fiasco.

After the May 13, 1985 meeting between Shultz and Gromyko, where the Middle East was extensively discussed between the two men, it appears that Shultz has no objection to this same format of Arab-Israeli talks, provided they are supervised by Moscow!

The Soviet ambassador to Jordan, Aleksandr Zinchuk, in a May 16 interview to the Jordanian *Sawt al-Shaab*, announced that his country supports the Jordan-PLO initiative toward Israel, under the general diplomatic rubric of the "Fez Communiqué." Up until then, the U.S.S.R. condemned the "Fez Communiqué" as an insidious part of the 1982 Reagan Middle East peace initiative.

Has Shultz given Gromyko the go-ahead to run the entirety of the Middle East game?