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frontation, it cannot be expected, for the time being, that the neutralization of Southeast Asia will be guaranteed by the US, China and the Soviet Union, however, have announced that they will uphold or respect the same idea. Also the US, which maintains military bases in two of the five ASEAN countries, has suddenly entered a period of confrontation, and is withdrawing from Vietnam militarily. We think it may become possible for Southeast Asia to have its neutralization guaranteed by the big countries some time in the future.

Isn't it most important for Southeast Asia, which must adapt itself to the new situation, to establish diplomatic relations or improve the existing relations with China, first of all? We can understand that the Southeast Asian countries, most of which have a great number of resident Chinese merchants in their territories, are anxious about the complicated problems to be brought about by the normalization of relations with China. Under the new situation created by the termination of the Vietnam War, however, it is necessary for these countries to overcome these problems. For this reason, we think Malaysia's establishment of diplomatic relations with China ahead of other ASEAN nations, which is scheduled to take place in the near future, has great significance. We hope that relations between Malaysia and China will develop further, because it is said that the adjustment of views on the China problem has been the major subject of discussion at the summit conferences which have been held frequently among Southeast Asian countries since this spring.

Furthermore, Burma began to move for participation in regional co-operation, after the conclusion of the Paris Agreement. Burmese Prime Minister Ne Win stated, while visiting Indonesia, that "The nations in this area should confer together to discuss how to attain our common purposes." It can be said that this statement has epoch-making significance because it means that Burma will put an end to the policy of seclusion it has maintained for ten years, and will take part in ASEAN or in the conference of Southeast Asian countries which ASEAN is planning to hold under its leadership.

Expectations on Japan mixed with suspicion

It is natural that the Southeast Asian countries, which have been trying to maintain their relative stability by "taking advantage" of the cold war in their respective ways, are starting efforts to meet the new situation, at this time when new relations between the US and the Soviet Union and between the US and China are becoming clear.

One important goal, which the Southeast Asian countries must attain hereafter, is the realization of "peaceful and free neutrality" not to be threatened by intervention by big countries. Another important goal is the stabilization of the internal political and social conditions through the attainment of economic independence and the improvement of the people's livelihood. Regardless of our wishes, the existence of Japan will necessarily loom large in connection with the latter goal, because Japan and Southeast Asian countries are dependent on each other economically, though to varying degrees.

Japan relies, for instance, on Southeast Asia for most of the tin and rubber it needs. Japan also accounts for about 40 per cent of the total volume of Indonesia's foreign trade, and one-third of that of Thailand and the Philippines.

Such economic interdependence between Japan and Southeast Asian countries may serve as a foundation for good neighborly relations between the two, if it develops favorably. If it follows an erroneous course, however, it will become a source of ceaseless friction and trouble, as can be seen from the boycott movement against Japanese goods which occurred last year under the

leadership of Thai students. According to the results of the opinion polls conducted by JETRO last year in Thailand and Indonesia, the peoples of these two countries are almost equally divided between those expecting an improvement of relations with Japan and those who think that relations between Japan and their countries will worsen hereafter. This indicates that the peoples of these countries are suspicious or distrustful toward Japan, while placing expectations on the future role of Japan.

This fact is also indicative of the necessity for Japan to answer the expectations of Southeast Asian countries concretely and correctly, and at the same time, endeavor to eliminate the feeling of suspicion or distrust harbored by these countries toward Japan, so that Japan hereafter can establish unshakable good neighborly and friendly relations with Southeast Asian countries.

For this purpose, it is essential for Japan to take measures in accordance with the actual conditions in the respective Southeast Asian countries instead of only pursuing immediate interests as in the past, with sufficient consideration for the positions and interests of these countries in all such fields as Governmental assistance, foreign trade, private investments and personnel and cultural exchange.

A MAJOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONFRONTATION IN OUR COURTS

Mr. MONDALE. Mr. President, the refusal of President Nixon to produce the tapes of recorded conversations which both the Senate Watergate Committee and Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox wish to review threatens to produce a major constitutional confrontation in our courts.

Perhaps just as importantly, this refusal threatens to further undermine the faith of the American people in their President and foster the feeling that there is indeed something unseemly which the President is attempting to hide through his refusal to reveal tape-recorded information.

In this connection, Mr. President, I commend a recent editorial from the St. Paul Pioneer Press and ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the editorial was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NIXON ON WRONG COURSE

President Nixon's position on release of the White House tapes inevitably increases public suspicion that he is concealing evidence of his own involvement or knowledge of illegal activities.

By refusing to make these tapes available to either the Senate Watergate committee or to the Department of Justice's own special prosecutor Archibald Cox, Mr. Nixon defies both the Legislative and Judicial branches of the United States government.

In his letter to Sen. Sam Ervin, chairman of the Senate Committee, Mr. Nixon said: "If release of the tapes would settle the central questions at issue in the Watergate inquiries, then their disclosure might serve a substantial public interest. . . ."

But then Mr. Nixon says that he has personally decided the tapes "would not finally settle the central issues" and consequently no one else will be given access to them.

So here is an elected official, the President, who stands accused by John Dean, his own former White House counsel, of involvement in criminal activities. Yet this accused President arrogates to himself the role of deciding

that the taped evidence available is to be concealed and suppressed. The common sense inference is that what is being concealed would reflect adversely on Richard Nixon's claims of innocence.

Mr. Nixon tries to justify his position by his own interpretation of presidential privileges under the doctrine of separation of powers among the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of the government. But Special Prosecutor Cox says: ". . . any blanket claim of privilege to withhold this evidence from a grand jury is without legal foundation." He adds that "happily, ours is a system of government in which no man is above the law." Sen. Ervin and the whole bipartisan membership of the Senate Committee state that the President has no constitutional or other authority to withhold the taped evidence from the Congress.

The next step in these proceedings presumably will be court actions on the honoring of the subpoenas for the tapes from Cox and the Ervin committee. This course could lead to placing the issue before the Supreme Court.

But no matter what develops in the courts, President Nixon's case is, in a larger sense, already being considered by the American people. His hopes to continue as an effective President depend on his ability to maintain trust and confidence among the public and members of the Congress.

This objective would best be served if the President would retreat from his present stubborn attitude of defiance and open up the White House records to the Senate committee and to Prosecutor Cox. It is not too late for such action. Influential members of the Republican party might yet be able to persuade Mr. Nixon to review his position and agree to an acceptable compromise, if he has not completely isolated himself from outside advice.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. President, I was very enthused last Thursday when I read the President's message about Federal spending for fiscal year 1973. Although Congress had voted to keep spending for the last fiscal year at a level of \$250 billion, only \$246.6 billion was actually spent. This means that the actual budget deficit for fiscal year 1973 was \$14.4 billion—much smaller than the \$24.8 billion deficit projected by the President in his budget message last January. This amount of deficit is still cause for alarm, but it is encouraging to learn that the projected budget deficit was reduced by \$10.4 billion.

I am also pleased that the President has, as Secretary Shultz so aptly put it, "returned to that old-time religion" of striving for a balanced budget—balanced in the sense that Federal expenditures should not exceed the collected revenues. This should definitely be the mutual goal of both the administration and Congress during this fiscal year and each of the succeeding fiscal years. For that reason I have joined with the distinguished Senators from North Carolina (Mr. HELMS) and Virginia (Mr. HARRY F. BYRD, JR.) in sponsoring legislation requiring the President to submit a balanced budget to Congress each year. I think it is extremely important that this country get its fiscal house in order, and it will only do so once the budget is brought into balance.

President Nixon stated in his message that—