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December 6, 1976

PHILIPPINE BASE AGREEMENT

Q: Do you have any comment on Philippine Foreign Minister Romulo's accusation that the State Department attempted to pressure them into premature acceptance of a base agreement?

A: No. Negotiators with the Philippine Government are continuing.

When an agreement is concluded, it will be announced. I would direct any further inquiries on the negotiations to the State Department.

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES AND INDONESIA

Q: Why have you decided to visit the Philippines and Indonesia in conjunction with your trip to Peking?

A: It is quite natural for me to visit both countries. They are countries with which we have very friendly relations and, of course, a close historic association with the Philippines. Moreover, the United States continues to have important interests in Southeast Asia as a whole. Through my visits to the Philippines and Indonesia, I seek to reaffirm that we intend to continue to play a constructive role in preserving peace and stability and promoting developments.

President Marcos extended an invitation to me to visit, and I have accepted because I want to discuss matters of mutual interest with him personally.

In accepting President Suharto's invitation, I hope to emphasize that we are looking forward to continuing and increasing cooperation between our two peoples. Indonesia, as one of the leading and most influential countries in Southeast Asia, has been a good friend of the United States. We want to continue this relationship which is beneficial to both countries.

U. S. / PHILIPPINES RELATIONSHIP

BACKGROUND

April 14

According to AP, GOP "government sources" report that President Marcos called for a review of the Philippines' security relationship with the U.S. during a banquet hosted by Romanian President Ceausescu on Friday.

These sources said that the re-examination of Philippine treaties with the U.S. has assumed new urgency because developments in Cambodia and Vietnam have given a new perception of America's commitments to its allies.

Q. What is the President's reaction to reports that President Marcos of the Philippines has called for a review of the Philippines security relationship with the U.S. ?

A. The United States has enjoyed a close and friendly relationship with the Philippines and hopes and expects to continue that relationship. President Ford was warned however that nations will judge us by our actions and relations with other countries. At this time, when our support to our friends in Southeast Asia appears, unfortunately, to others to be in doubt, they ^{maybe inclined to} ~~will naturally~~ reexamine their own relationships with the U.S. President Ford strongly reaffirmed our commitments to stand by our friends and allies in his speech of April 10.

FYI ONLY: The U.S. and the Philippines have a long-standing mutual security treaty ratified by the United States Senate. Furthermore, we have no word as of yet whether the Philippines have formally communicated the intention of such a review. END FYI.