

BOOK REVIEW

U.S. MILITARY BASES AND PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN RELATIONS

Enrique Voltaire Garcia II, Bookman Printing House, Quezon City, Philippines, pp. VI 128 (1968)

In the realm of Philippine-American relations, the most frequent source of friction is the Military Bases Agreement. This treaty has evoked widespread criticism among Filipino leaders since its execution in 1947. More and more people realize the undesirable provisions of the agreement, attempts at revision notwithstanding. However, too many Filipinos are still uninformed about this agreement and little realize the implications of its provisions. This book of E. Voltaire Garcia II is a complete analytical presentation of the subject. As Congressman Enverga points out in his introduction, one will find in this work "an impartial historical research on military base agreements."

The book is divided into five chapters: (1) Background; (2) Military Bases Agreement Analyzed; (3) Emergence of Issues; (4) Attempts at Accord; and (5) Conclusion. A postscript was added relating to the employment of Philippine nationals in U.S. Bases in the Philippines. In each chapter the author presents the facts first and from them draws his inferences and conclusions with noteworthy objectivity. He appeals to the intelligence of the Americans and to their sense of justice and fairness.

The author traces the historical origins of the Agreement, analyzes its provisions and compares them with similar provisions of Bases Agreements the U.S. entered into with other countries in Asia and Europe. The conclusion reached is that the Philippine-U.S. Military Bases Agreement contains terms which are outdated and more disadvantageous to the host country, as compared to the other bases agreements. This in a nutshell is the message of the author. He states that the several attempts at accord through revision are to a large extent far from successful, because irritants remain in the agreement.

The current relevance of the book cannot be overemphasized. The recent announcement of the U.S. President on gradual troop withdrawal from Vietnam may revive agitations for the abrogation of the Philippine-U.S. Bases Agreement. For as the author says: "Whatever policy the U.S. may adopt for the future, there is one truism that she will have to consider — that the U.S. Bases in the Philippines will have to be removed in the foreseeable future."

GABRIEL P. DE JESUS

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<i>Name</i>	<i>Post Office Address</i>
Editor: IRENE R. CORTES	U.P. Diliman, Q.C.
Business Manager: HUGO E. GUTIERREZ .	U.P. Diliman, Q.C.
Owner: College of Law, U.P.	College of Law, U.P. Diliman, Q.C.
Publisher: College of Law, U.P.	College of Law, U.P. Diliman, Q.C.
Printer: JMC Press, Inc.	52 Quezon Blvd. Ext., Quezon City
Office of Publication:	College of Law, U.P. Diliman, Q.C.

If the publication is owned by a corporation, stockholders, owning one per cent or more of the total amount of stocks:

Bondholders, mortgages, or other security holders owning one per cent or more of the total amount of stocks:

Bondholders, mortgages, or other security holders owning one per cent or more of the total amount of security:

In case of publication other than daily, total number of copies printed and circulated of the last issue, July, 1968:

1. Sent to paid subscribers	548
2. Sent to others than paid subscribers	324
TOTAL	872

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