

and they were. Also, the Kingdom's economic and military weakness left Mongkut no choice but to negotiate trade agreements which were advantageous to the adversary powers.

Thus, fully recognizing his weaknesses, Mongkut advised his ambassador upon what power to draw. "It is sufficient for us to keep ourselves within our house and home: It may be necessary for us to forgo some of our former power and influence. Being, as we are now, surrounded on two or three sides by powerful nations, what can a small nation like us do? Supposing we were to discover a gold mine in our country, from which we could obtain many million catis weight of gold, enough to pay for the cost of a hundred warships: Even with this we would still be unable to fight against them, because we would have to buy those very warships and all the armaments from their countries. We are yet unable to manufacture these things, and even if we have enough money to buy them, they can always stop the sale of

them, whenever they feel that we are arming ourselves beyond our station. The only weapons that will be of real use to us in the future will be our mouths and our hearts, constituted so as to be full of sense and wisdom for the better protection of ourselves."

The brutal military pressure exerted on Thailand today by Soviet surrogates Vietnam and Laos, as well as the insane U.S. policy to gradually hand Asia to the Soviets, raises the question of how Thailand's leadership will deal with this most serious crisis since the Mongkut era. The challenge to the nation is to rise above the Byzantine no-issue debates which characterize the government and opposition parties to the level of "wisdom" achieved more than 100 years ago.

The book may be ordered for \$7 plus postage from Khun Anothai Nantitat, The Siam Society, GPO 65, Bangkok 10501, Thailand; or EIR Co. Ltd., Silom-Surawongse Condominium, 6th Floor, 43/53-54 Soi Anuman Rajdhon, Surawongse Road, Bangkok 10500 Thailand.

Precursors to Project Democracy

by John D. Morris

The Landing at Vera Cruz 1914

by Jack Sweetman

Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Md., 1987
222 pages, hardbound

The historian can draw many striking parallels between the Reagan administration's current intervention in Central America, and the actions of President Woodrow Wilson in 1914. President Wilson applied his own misinterpretation of the Monroe Doctrine in his relations with the countries of the southern hemisphere, with effects as deleterious as the Reagan administration's actions today.

The Landing at Vera Cruz 1914 is an anecdotal narrative of the events surrounding the invasion and occupation of a coastal port in Mexico by U.S. naval forces in the period immediately preceding World War I.

The author, Jack Sweetman, a professor of history at the U.S. Naval Academy, provides an adequate survey of the individuals involved in debating the crisis in Mexican-American relations, but fails to provide any coherent understanding of the historical process which created and determined the Vera Cruz action.

The interventions carried out during Woodrow Wilson's presidency can be seen as a precursor to those of Lt. Col. Oliver North's "Project Democracy" secret government grouping today. Sweetman includes Wilson's reply to a query from William Tyrell, the private secretary to British Foreign Secretary Edward Gray, concerning Vera Cruz. Wilson states, "I am going to teach the South American Republics to elect good men." Respecting Mexican Provisional President Victoriano Huerta, the heir to Mexico's decaying governmental structure, Wilson's policy was "to isolate General Huerta entirely; to cut him off from foreign sympathy and aid, and from domestic credit whether moral or material, and so to force him out."

Another clue to the deeper influences on Mexican-American policy at that time, is the description of one Robert J. Kerr, an American lawyer and translator of the Mexican legal codes, who was asked by the Navy to head the civilian government of Vera Cruz while it remained under military occupation. Kerr was rejected by the Wilson administration because of his opposition to Wilson's Mexico policy, which Kerr claimed to favor "the government or the set of individuals, or the political party, or the mob of bandits, pledged, if they get into power, to do things which will be favorable to the Standard Oil interests."

Sweetman avoids any overt attempts at political analysis. An unfortunate omission is the absence of any discussion of the Monroe Doctrine, developed by John Quincy Adams to ensure a community of interests between the United States and other sovereign nations of the hemisphere. Without considering how this doctrine was perverted, there can be no understanding of how treasonous elements behind the Woodrow Wilsons and the Standard Oils have not halted their efforts to obscure crucial issues of natural law in all the 212 years of the United States' nationhood.