PREFACE

Since 1950s the United States had invariably declaring that it was an Asian/Pacific power, whose destiny was intertwined with that of various countries stretching from Japan to Australia. Indeed, at various periods, the United States had embroiled itself in a most profound way with developments of the entire region, particularly in the sphere of security.

After the end of Second World War, Southeast Asia had been strategically and economically important region for the United States and the United States policy was marked by its determination to safeguard and promote political, economic and strategic interests in the region. The containment of communism had been emerged as a major policy of the every American administrations and also to contain the widespread influence of former Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China, which later on contributed
to the instability and conflicts in the region, particularly in Vietnam.

The United States containment policy to preserve the non-communist states from being controlled by the communists collapsed in 1975. It caused a major shift in foreign policy of Southeast Asian nations in general and Thailand in particular. The United States, therefore, reduced the assistance and military presence and urged each nation to rely largely on its own resources to preserve its national independence and security.

An attempt is made in this thesis to trace out the role of United States diplomacy towards Southeast Asia, particularly during Indo-China war and the subsequent developments in Thailand - United States relations since 1975 relating to political, economic, social and cultural aspects as the growing ties between the two countries had a profound impact on the politics of Southeast Asian region. The entire region including Thailand witnessed a new era of democracy, freedom and right of self-determination and
assertion to maintain the individual identity of a nation which was free from, external threat or domination.

The thesis consists of five chapters, conclusion, two appendices and the select bibliography. Chapter I, deals with the historical background of the United States interests and its involvement in Southeast Asian region. While the retrospective of Thailand - United States relations since the very beginning has been discussed in Chapter II. Chapter III explains the reasons and factors which led to the Indo-China war of 1970s. The Nixon Doctrine and the Vietnamization of war have been highlighted in Chapter IV. Chapter V is mainly concerned with Thailand - United States relations since 1975 focusing, particularly the economic and commercial aspects, which indicate the changing approaches in their bilateral dealings. The conclusion draws the assessment of growing bounds of friendship between the United States and Southeast Asian region in general and in particular between the United States and Thailand.