Internal and External Security Issues in Asia
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Internal and External Security Issues in Asia

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Preface

This volume, together with the two that preceded it—Asian Economic Development—Present and Future and Asian Political Institutionalization—is the result of a project that began in 1982. At that time Sato Seizaburo, Robert Scalapino, and Jusuf Wanandi met to plan a series of workshops involving scholars from the five countries then comprising ASEAN (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand), Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, and the United States. We determined to focus on three issues central to the concerns of the peoples of the Pacific-Asian region: economic development; political institutionalization; and the problems of security, both internal and external.

In September 1983 three workshops—each devoted to one of the above subjects—were held in Bali, Manila, and Tokyo, with ten to fourteen participants. After an interval of some eight months—during which time the authors, taking advantage of the initial discussions, had an opportunity to revise their first drafts—a four-day meeting of the entire group took place in Berkeley on March 17–21, 1984. Some additional individuals were present at this meeting, scholars who had a general or theoretical knowledge of the subjects under discussion. A full list of the workshop participants and the outside scholars is provided elsewhere. Further revisions in the papers took place during the summer and fall of 1984, prior to this publication, but no attempt was made to impose a standardized format on authors. Hence, there are inconsistencies in such matters as capitalization, abbreviations, translations, and forms of citations.

We are deeply indebted to the Ford Foundation, the Fuji Xerox Co. Ltd., the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the U.S. Department of Education for support of the project, and to many others for hospitality in the course of the meetings and for assistance in connection with this publication.

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Introduction

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Increasingly, security has become a seamless web. For the individual, it commences with his or her local environment. Is the home and neighborhood relatively safe from crime and violence? Can one move freely in the course of one's daily routine? When the individual is viewed as citizen, the issues become broader. Has the government acquired sufficient legitimacy to be acceptable to the great majority of its subjects? Do they feel a genuine stake in its survival or the survival of the political system from whence it derives authority? If alienation from the prevailing political institutions and/or the individuals who serve as leaders is widespread, the state is rendered weak and susceptible to challenge, from within or from without. In all probability, indeed, the challenge—if it comes—will be a combination of internal and external inputs. Some systems of dubious legitimacy can be sustained by the extensive use of coercion, but the costs are high—and sheer coercion is not likely to succeed over a protracted period of time.

In any case, it is abundantly clear that a state cannot exist unto itself in this age of accelerating interdependence. It is no longer possible to separate local, national, regional, and global security issues, whether the focus be upon the substantive problems that produce cleavages or upon the allocations of military power. The American and Soviet military forces positioned in the Pacific-Asian area, for example, relate partly to the defense of a given state or region and partly to the concern over the global balance. Every Pacific-Asian state must adjust to such facts.

It is impossible in this volume to encompass the full range of issues related to "comprehensive security," to borrow the terminology introduced earlier in Japan. In most essays, however, an effort has been made to signal the complex connections between domestic conditions and international relations, as well as the degree to which broader strategic considerations have penetrated the region and its component units.

The first essay by Allen Whiting opens with a brief survey of the threats to its East Asian territories as perceived by Russian leaders, beginning with the experience of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 and the recurrent Japanese challenges of the 1930s. He continues by depicting events disturbing to the USSR in the years since World War II: the shift of North Korea from satellite state to a state claiming
independence and generally tilting toward China; the transition of China from ally to
every and, more recently, to “nonaligned” nation tilting toward Japan and the West;
and, perhaps most worrisome, a formidable American military presence in East Asia,
with Japan and South Korea aligned nations.

Given the steady military build-up of Soviet forces in the Pacific-Asian region
in recent years—a build-up still continuing—Soviet vulnerabilities are sometimes
overlooked: the fragile nature of transport across the vast Siberian region; the scanty
population and the formidable problems involved in the development of this area,
notwithstanding its extensive resources; and, not least, the choke points that limit the
flexibility of Soviet naval bases in the Siberian region.

The Soviets may well exaggerate the forces arraigned against them, Whiting
notes. The Japanese military force alone could scarcely defend itself for a few weeks,
and it is exceedingly vulnerable to nuclear attack. China’s People’s Liberation Army
(PLA) is backward, with largely obsolete equipment. And American forces, despite
recent increases, remain spread thin. Yet fears of a sudden Japanese military surge, of
a growing Chinese nuclear capacity, and of further American technological advances
in the military realm keep Soviet anxieties high. Hence, Soviet military leaders,
pursuing conservative tactics, take refuge in massive deterrence. And while a portion
of Soviet power in the region is clearly directed toward potentially hostile neighbors,
the primary concern is the United States. Whether termed defensive or offensive in
intent, the USSR is determined to be recognized as a global power, coequal in strength
to the United States.

The major change in the Soviet military position in East Asia, Whiting notes, is
the military bases that have been acquired as a result of the alliance with Vietnam. In
the discussion of the Indochina situation that follows, he is optimistic that despite the
obstacles in front of any peaceful settlement of the complex issues relating to
Cambodia, a larger war can be avoided. Expanding upon this theme, moreover,
Whiting believes that while tensions elsewhere in East Asia exist, there is no plausible
scenario for a major war in the region short of a global conflict. While the growing
Soviet military strength is not benign, being supportive of Vietnamese expansion (and
North Korea), Whiting sees no effort on the part of the USSR to seek changes in the
present alignments or to wage war there. The expansion of Soviet power into
Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean has required countermeasures on the part of the
United States, but he believes that the balance of power now existing is sufficient to
assure stability.

There follows a brief overview of Chinese policies from 1949 to the 1970s,
illustrative of the major shifts in the PRC’s alignments and perceptions of threat.
China unlike the Soviet Union has grievances against the territorial status quo,
primarily in the form of territories held by others that the Chinese deem rightfully
theirs. Yet there are now major reasons to believe that the PRC will eschew the use of
force in seeking to resolve these issues, at least for the near term. Not only is Chinese
military strength limited (as illustrated by the effort to punish Vietnam) but China’s
current priorities are on internal development, and foreign adventurism of any type
would seriously jeopardize this key objective.
Thus in taking a look at the future of PRC foreign policies, once again, Whiting is optimistic on balance. Since logic argues against any expansion of the Indochina conflict by Hanoi to Thailand, China is unlikely to be drawn into major hostilities with Vietnam. The jurisdictional issues involving South Korea and Japan are not pressing. Taiwan might present an explosive issue under certain circumstances—such as if a new government were to proclaim itself a Republic of Taiwan—but if the status quo is maintained, Beijing will probably avoid the use of force. The Hong Kong issue has already been resolved, at least as an issue among major powers. Even the thorny problem of Korea seems to be yielding to dialogue rather than conflict, although many unknowns cloud the future. Thus, in general, the prospects for avoiding a major conflict centering upon East Asia have not been better since World War II.

Our second author, Takashi Inoguchi, factoring economic and political considerations into the security equation, is somewhat less optimistic. He focuses on two basic developments of recent years concerning relations in the western Pacific: the intensification of conflicts on the Asian continent—conflicts primarily involving rival Communist states—and the growth of economic friction among the major trading nations, notably Japan and the United States, but also encompassing the newly industrializing countries (NICs) and the ASEAN states.

The first development, in his view, is the result of a structural change in interstate relations that flowed from the lessened power of the United States in the aftermath of its defeat in Vietnam. Earlier, the United States had provided regional stability through a Pax Americana, even though the continental Communist states lay outside its orbit. By the mid and late 1960s, this situation was already beginning to change as a result of American domestic problems and overcommitments abroad. Subsequent events in Vietnam, Iran, and Angola served to tarnish the American image, in Inoguchi’s opinion, and convinced many governments that the United States had entered a period of decline and withdrawal. In this same period, Soviet military expansion progressed, notwithstanding the widely heralded American-Russian détente.

Under these conditions, each state on the Asian continent was forced to adjust to a significantly altered configuration of power in seeking to protect its security. Traditional relations revived, together with new pressures and antagonisms. Gradually, a “dynamic stalemate” has ensued, but one with the potential for future conflict despite the recent improvement in Sino-Soviet relations. Limited war, indeed, continues in Indochina, but a major conflagration has been avoided as the states of the region have sought to “fine-tune” their policies to a new era, taking account of the recurrent shifts in the security balance between the United States and the USSR.

Inoguchi notes that three nations associated with the United States in varying degree have begun to broaden their international ties. He perceives U.S.-Indonesian relations to have slipped, with Jakarta’s tilt more strongly toward nonalignment. South Korea continues as a staunch U.S. ally, but Seoul is actively seeking to reach out to the Third World. Japan, another reliable ally, has begun to expand its relations globally, adding political increments to an already massive economic involvement. Inoguchi also observes a shift in the tone as well as the emphasis of Japanese foreign
policy, a shift supported by the altered attitudes of the opposition parties.

He then discusses the decline in the economic competitiveness of the Western industrial nations, the United States included. While Japan has faced some problems in recent years, its economic performance has been good measured against key competitors. Therein lies the root of the current crisis in U.S.-Japan economic relations. Inoguchi finds the problem exemplified by the American belief that Japanese industrial competitiveness damages the United States’ self-sacrificing efforts to prevent Soviet military superiority, while for Japan, American pressures for trade and defense concessions jeopardize Japan’s attempts to contribute to world peace by building a structure of economic interdependence.

Notwithstanding the seriousness of the problems, Inoguchi is basically hopeful about future American-Japanese ties. He believes that the continuing military strength of the United States will sustain a Japanese desire to support the security alliance and that the overwhelming economic interdependence between the two countries now existing will preclude any fundamental rupture on this front. He feels, however, that an element of tension, varying in degree, will continue. In his conclusions, moreover, Inoguchi advances several sober hypotheses. He notes that the continuing economic strength of some western Pacific nations is bound to cause serious structural problems in international relations in the years ahead. He also fears that the military buildup of the USSR and the United States, coupled with the protectionist tides, will convince many Asian governments that they need a stronger military shield of their own. Hence, “theater militarization” will take place. This will not necessarily result in war, but it will have adverse economic and political implications.

The next essay, contributed by this writer, deals with U.S. security policies in East Asia. Pointing to the growing linkage between regional and global security issues and the centrality of the U.S.-USSR relationship to all regions, I commence with an evaluation of the Soviet position in Asia today. On balance, Russian leaders cannot be satisfied with their past performance, and Mikhail Gorbachev is likely to advance new initiatives as well as refurbish old ones in an effort to improve Soviet relations with various Asian states. In the recent past, Soviet military power in Asia has grown impressively, but the political and economic influence of the USSR in the region is less than it was three decades ago.

Improvements can be noted in Sino-Soviet relations, and the future will bring further advances. But it is difficult to envisage a Soviet abandonment of its encirclement policy toward China; and as long as that encirclement continues, truly normal relations between the two countries will be virtually impossible, although partial accommodation will be in the national interests of each.

Soviet relations with Japan have been basically hostile throughout this century. They are complicated at present by the Soviet fear of an emerging American-Japanese-South Korean military entente directed against the USSR, with China acting as a sidelines supporter. Stronger Soviet-Japanese economic ties could benefit both nations, but there is little evidence as yet that political-security concerns will yield center stage. Improvements in U.S.-USSR relations might facilitate a thaw in Japan-USSR relations; many obstacles, however, need to be overcome, including the
negative psychological atmosphere that has long influenced the relations of these two peoples.

Recently, Soviet-North Korean relations appear to have warmed as Moscow stepped up its assistance to the DPRK and accommodated to North Korean interests, among other things, accepting Kim Jong Il as his father's successor. From the Soviet standpoint, however, Pyongyang cannot be a reliable ally. Cultural, historical, and geopolitical factors combine to provide gravitational pulls toward China. By playing off Russia and China, moreover, the North Koreans seek to obtain maximum benefits while maintaining their independence.

In Southeast Asia, the most notable Soviet achievement has been the alliance with Vietnam. It has provided a presence in this region, with significant base facilities increasingly used. The overall balance sheet, however, is more complex. This alliance is one of the principal obstacles to Sino-Soviet “normalization.” Beyond this, it creates troubles in relations with most of the ASEAN states. Some Soviet leaders hope to improve relations with Indonesia and, in the longer run, to see an alignment among India, Vietnam, and Indonesia aimed at “blocking Chinese expansionism” to which the Soviet Union would render support. But such a development seems doubtful.

The Soviet record in South Asia is a more positive one from Moscow's viewpoint. In particular, the close ties with India, ties that have survived political changes in both countries, are regarded as a signal accomplishment. It seems likely, moreover, that India will continue to lean toward the USSR, at least for the near term. Rajiv Gandhi has shown indications of desiring some changes in India's domestic and foreign policies, changes that might improve U.S.-India relations substantially. Moreover, the evolution of the Indian economy, with an ever greater premium upon sophisticated technology, could abet such improvements. But Soviet military and economic interaction with India has been of benefit to both countries, and over time, the Soviet way has influenced certain Indian modes of operation; the trends of the past two decades will not be overturned lightly.

Meanwhile, the Soviets have paid a substantial price to maintain control of Afghanistan, and the end of the struggle is not in sight. It is most unlikely that Moscow would abandon this cause or make concessions that would jeopardize its perceived interests. Speculation currently centers upon whether the Soviets would be willing to accept a neutral but friendly Afghan government that encompassed a broader spectrum of groups than the Babrik Kamal regime. If no solution is forthcoming, the temptation to destabilize Pakistan will remain, but such a course would be extremely risky, since it would adversely affect relations with China and possibly with India.

Unquestionably, the United States among others has benefited from the extensive Soviet reliance upon military power in Asia, and its relatively limited economic, political, and cultural appeals. If Soviet policies were to become more sophisticated, the Soviets would be more formidable competitors. The key issue is whether culture, perceived interests, institutions—and the legacy of past policies—will permit significant changes in Soviet behavior and policies in the Pacific-Asian region.
The United States has sought to balance two considerations in determining its security policies in Asia. On the one hand, it has sought to counter widespread speculation after the Vietnam debacle that it was withdrawing from the region. U.S. military forces in the Pacific-Asian area are being strengthened, primarily through the introduction of more modern equipment. On the other hand, the United States has sought to impress upon allied and aligned states the need to share security burdens and to take measures that will enhance internal security, thereby rendering the society less vulnerable to external interference as well as domestic turmoil.

In this context, U.S.-Japan security issues relate to burden-sharing, but American authorities have been more satisfied with trends in recent years. Joint defense planning and military exercises have been conducted with increasing effectiveness, although questions about leadership and coordination within the Japanese defense structure remain. Japan's defense expenditures remain too low from the American government's perspective, but the percentage of increase has held steady in the face of budget reductions elsewhere, and Japan's role in forwarding a "soft regionalism" in Northeast Asia is gradually being appreciated. The serious problems in American-Japanese economic relations, however, currently cast a deep shadow over the total relationship, a shadow not apt to be dissipated soon. Yet American-Japanese interdependence has reached a level making a total breach inconceivable. The odds favor "muddling through" amidst a considerable volume of mutual recrimination.

American security policies toward China have run a wide gamut in the past thirty-five years, from conflict to proffered alliance. While the PRC defines its current policy as one of "nonalignment" and rigorously criticizes the United States on many issues, its actual policy is one of tilted nonalignment, with the tilt being toward Japan and the West, especially the United States, and this is likely to persist. In U.S.-PRC relations, irritations are harbored by both sides, but neither country represents a threat to the other; and on issues pertaining to the Pacific-Asian region, there is a considerable area of agreement, the Taiwan issue notwithstanding. A low-level strategic relation may well be forged, but the driving force in Chinese foreign policy is nationalism and the determination to follow "the Chinese way" in foreign as well as in domestic policy.

The American security commitment to South Korea, subject to controversy at certain points in the past, now appears firm. With North-South dialogue once again under way, hopes exist that a new era of peaceful coexistence on the Korean peninsula may be in the offing, but it remains too early to determine the precise course of developments. Meanwhile, American forces will remain in South Korea, joint military exercises will continue, and the ROK military forces will be strengthened. Whether any changes in U.S. troop deployment will be made at the end of the decade, when the ROK will supposedly acquire the military capacity to defend itself against the North, will be determined later, with many variables to be assessed. Developments in U.S.-North Korea relations are likely to be slow and heavily dependent upon trends in North-South relations, although the North has indicated a desire for select contacts and the United States has approved cross-contacts in principle.

In Southeast Asia, the primary responsibility for the effort to block Vietnamese control of Indochina now rests with China and Thailand and, in a more general sense,
the ASEAN six. Despite the modest U.S. assistance being given the non-Communist Khmer resistance, it is very unlikely that the United States will again become a major actor in strategic terms on the Southeast Asian continent. But contrary to the expectations of some, the U.S. military presence in the region remains strong, with the key facilities being the bases in the troubled Philippines.

The latter fact serves as an introduction to the final sections of this essay which deal with the interrelation between political stability and economic health on the one hand and the issues of security on the other. The vulnerabilities of “soft authoritarian” states are assessed, with the dilemma posed for U.S. policy set forth. Past experience suggests that there are no simple or easy answers to U.S. relations with developing societies, but if the American economy can be kept strong and if more effective international economic measures can be devised, the Pacific-Asian region as a whole should continue to exhibit a vitality supportive of peaceful coexistence.

Seizaburo Sato provides us with a perspective on Japan’s security policy from the vantage point of both a seasoned scholar and a consultant to the Japanese government. At the outset, he notes that from the end of the Meiji era, the security issue for Japan was posed primarily in terms of external rather than internal concerns. This became even more true in the post-1945 years, with neither Marxism nor militarism having any significant appeal to the Japanese citizenry. Japanese politics have thus been dominated by moderation and an absence of violence, enabling parliamentarism to operate more effectively.

Another advantage for Japan lay in the fact that until the late 1960s, the United States provided that nation with a sense of complete security. American military power in the region was overwhelming. Hence, there was no need for Japan to concern itself with the development of the Self-Defense Force into a truly effective military unit. There were additional inhibitions: the attitudes of other Asian states and the strong pacifist sentiments of the Japanese people. Within Japan, the issue concerning security ties with the United States was not whether the U.S. was credible, but whether an assertive America might drag Japan into an Asian conflict.

Sato posits the thesis that since the late 1960s, two far-reaching developments have heightened Japanese security concerns: first, the decline in the American capacity and will to maintain the international order; second, the rapid growth of Japan’s economic strength—a development bringing both new responsibilities and added complications in Japan’s relations with other nations. At first, Japanese leaders thought of security primarily in economic terms, with limited interest in increasing defense expenditures. By the end of the 1970s, however, worries were increasing, especially in the aftermath of the U.S. abandonment of Vietnam and the Carter administration’s announcement of U.S. troop withdrawal from South Korea.

As the Soviet military buildup in Northeast Asia progressed, more sophisticated weapons and equipment were brought into the region. The threat to Japan was increasingly perceived at home. At the same time, these developments bound Japan and the United States more closely together, since the Russian military thrust had both regional and global implications, with some weapons in the region capable of reaching the continental United States.

Not all of the trends of these years were adverse, Sato asserts. The growth of
closer relations between the United States and the PRC was beneficial to Japan's security. Similarly, the economic dynamism of the NICs and the ASEAN bloc promoted stability, and stood in sharp contrast to the generally dismal performance of the Asian socialist economies. And despite the growth of Soviet power in Asia, it was easier under the circumstances to contain the USSR in this region than in Europe.

Nevertheless, the uncertainties surrounding Pax Americana have been disturbing, according to Sato, especially since the Soviets steadily augmented their close-in forces, fortifying several of the islands in dispute off the Hokkaido coast, and engaged in flights near and over Japanese territory as well as large-scale military maneuvers in the region. Thus, the Japanese government began to devote increased attention and funds to the SDF. The agreement to conduct sea surveillance up to a distance of one thousand miles and air surveillance up to several hundred miles marked a significant change in Japanese defense policies, namely, an acknowledgement of some responsibility for the region.

Equally important has been the fact that in recent years the opposition parties have undergone changes of attitude. The Democratic Socialist Party and Kōmeitō have become supporters of the SDF and the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty. Even the Japan Socialist Party has begun to reexamine its foreign policy position. Sato outlines three broad principles upon which he feels there is a broad consensus in Japan: Japan should first undertake its own defense more effectively; it should then work to cement the alliance with the United States while cooperating with other nations; and finally, it should seek to reduce tensions with nations that could or do constitute a threat. On certain other important matters, he notes, there is not a consensus: the specific allocation of Japan's resources among programs directed toward economic development, political stability, and expanded military capacity; and the precise emphasis or priority to be given self-help, cooperation with the United States and others, and negotiations with adversaries. Yet, as Sato points out, this type of issue is to be found in all nations.

Tatsumi Okabe's essay deals with the foreign policies of another major nation in Northeast Asia, the People's Republic of China, focusing particularly on China's relations with Communist states and parties. Placing this topic in a theoretical and historical context, he provides a stimulating interpretation of differences—both past and present—between Soviet and Chinese attitudes toward the nation-state system.

Lenin, building upon Marxian theory, developed his well-known doctrine of capitalism in the age of imperialism. Liberation from the "imperialist" international system lay in the establishment of a global socialist federation. Thus Leninist internationalism, which Okabe labels Internationalism I, aimed at global revolution and the end of the nation-state system.

When it became apparent that the global revolution was not going to materialize, the Soviet leaders had to accept the challenge of building socialism in one country. While the old internationalist rhetoric was retained, Stalin and others now defined socialist internationalism in reality as determined by one's unquestioning support for the Soviet Union, the fountainhead of the global socialist movement. This combination of rhetorical internationalism and Russian nationalism Okabe labels Internationalism II, and he attributes its appeal to the lingering memories of In-
ternationalism I together with the ultimate prestige of Stalin as the leader of “the world’s sole socialist state.”

With the emergence of diverse socialist states after World War II, Stalinist internationalism came under increasingly stern tests as nationalism vied with the earlier internationalist doctrines for expression throughout the socialist community of states. China was a prominent example. The Chinese Communists, in Okabe’s view, had been strong nationalists from the beginning of their movement. However, he rejects the thesis that the Chinese leaders perpetrated or desired a break with the USSR. They were anxious to maintain political-ideological unity, learning from Soviet experience and benefiting from Russian aid. Yet the unity had to be based upon equality between two nation-states. Thus, Chinese internationalism was at root not different from the “bourgeois” internationalism of the West, being based on friendship and unity among sovereign nations and independent parties sharing common interests and principles. The Chinese version of internationalism Okabe labels Internationalism III. And it has been the basic irreconcilability of Soviet Internationalism II and Chinese Internationalism III, he argues, that caused the Sino-Soviet cleavage and that continues to make any restoration of the old ties impossible.

Meanwhile, however, China practiced its own version of Internationalism II at an earlier point. When the PRC and the USSR were still aligned, Internationalism II resulted on occasion from a desire to support socialist solidarity as in the case of the pressure upon the Japanese Communists in 1950 to adhere to a militant line. Later, “command” tactics toward others stemmed from a desire to strengthen legitimacy at home and compete with the Soviets for leadership of the international movement or to bolster China’s security by creating a global revolutionary storm, thereby distracting the United States. An additional factor in some instances was China’s traditional “middle kingdom” complex—its feeling of superiority toward the “barbarians” surrounding it.

A few Chinese efforts at control over other parties were successful, usually in cases where ethnic and geographic factors were favorable, but Chinese “success” generally meant failure for the indigenous revolutionary effort. Moreover, it cost the Chinese heavily in their state-to-state relations, especially in Southeast Asia. After the debacle of the Cultural Revolution, therefore, when Chinese leaders placed a new premium upon survival and development within the nation-state system, the turn was away from the Chinese version of Internationalism II and toward Internationalism III.

That situation persists to the present. Okabe argues that in asserting that relations among socialist countries should be based upon the principles of peaceful coexistence; that revolutions cannot be exported; and that as Deng Xiaoping and Zhao Ziyang have assured, China will refrain from interference in the internal affairs of other states, while maintaining moral and political ties with comrade parties, the PRC leadership has gone as far as it can in adjusting to the normal practices of non-socialist states in their relations with each other.

This does not mean, Okabe continues, that China will not practice “big nation chauvinism” on occasion when Chinese national interests as perceived by its leaders dictate such a course—similar to the practices of other big states. Chinese treatment of Albania and Vietnam provide examples of efforts to coerce or punish another state,
but Chinese intervention or involvement in the domestic affairs of another state or party will rest upon universal, not uniquely Communist considerations. The reestablishment of conditions conducive to either Leninist or Stalinist internationalism is a remote possibility. In this sense, China poses orthodox, not special security problems for others.

The essay by Byung-joon Ahn deals with one of the most intractable problems bequeathed by World War II and its immediate aftermath—a divided Korea, the two states of which remain in hostile confrontation despite renewed dialogue. This situation has already produced one major war, a conflict that proved enormously costly to Koreans and also to Americans and Chinese. Ahn agrees with the thesis advanced by others that none of the major states want another Korean War and that their combined pressures together with the credible defense commitment of the United States to South Korea make war unlikely. Nevertheless, he asserts, with huge armed forces confronting each other in a relatively confined area and with poor communications between the two sides, the danger remains, especially if internal disruptions present a target of opportunity.

From the outset, Ahn places the issues pertaining to Korea in the context of changing major power relations. Each large state in the region has a vital interest in Korea, a situation that is both an advantage and a liability for the Koreans themselves. Russia and China have vied for influence over North Korea in recent decades as a part of their security concerns during a time of rivalry. The United States and Japan have found it easier to cooperate and share responsibilities in extending assistance to South Korea, having decided—not without difficulty—that defense and economic commitments are in their respective national interests. But the United States is clearly paying the heavier price and taking the greater risks.

Most important, however, is the fact that in recent years, continuous changes have been taking place in the relations among the four major states, with important consequences both for the region and for the two Koreas. Ahn concurs in the thesis that a soft regionalism is developing in Northeast Asia, with the United States, Japan, and China increasingly drawn into a loose network of economic, political, and security relations. In general, this development has served South Korea's interests, and Seoul has sought to take advantage of it, especially in expanding its informal ties with the PRC.

Recent developments, however, have served to lessen the isolation of the Soviet Union. The Chinese decision to reemphasize nonalignment has been accompanied by an effort to reduce tension with the Soviet Union and, through negotiations, test out a step-by-step approach to "normalization" of Sino-Soviet relations. Ahn believes that the potential for improvement in Soviet-American relations also exists at this time, although many difficulties lie ahead. If improvement does take place, it would smooth the way for tension reduction between Japan and the USSR.

Given the fluidity in four-power relations, the two Koreas have had an increased freedom of maneuver. They have used this freedom to engage in extensive competition—military, economic, political, and diplomatic. Militarily, North Korea has maintained an edge by dint of its early start and the enforcement of great sacrifice upon its people, making necessary the continuance of the American defense commit-
ment to the ROK. In recent years, however, the South has also made heavy defense commitments, and it is gradually closing the gap.

Economically, the South has scored a decisive victory. With a population twice that of the North, its productivity is currently more than four times as great. Indeed, it is primarily in order to regain some economic momentum that the DPRK is seeking to modify its autarkic policies and turn out for science and technology, hoping to increase economic relations with Japan and the West as well as with East Europe, the USSR, and China. There is little indication, however, that it is prepared to undertake the systemic reforms that would make it more competitive with the ROK.

Politically, the competition is complex and difficult to judge. The South, long combining an authoritarian polity with a pluralist society, is seeking to make a transition to greater political openness, albeit with certain restrictions likely to continue. The North, committed in theory to a one-party dictatorship and a monolithic society, and living in practice under a system where ultimate authority rests with one man, has already begun to face the succession issue, with Kim Jong Il, his father’s choice, clearly established as heir-apparent, indeed, already wielding power.

Yet future uncertainties cloud the horizon here too. In the short term, the South will probably face greater political instability since the government permits more freedom for dissidents and is committed to an extremely complicated transition, the success of which depends both on the government and the opposition. In the long run, the North may face graver tensions as a people are exposed to a world vastly different from that which they believe to exist. In both cases, whatever the outcomes, political trends will represent a crucial variable affecting the security of the state and that of the region as well.

Diplomatically, the early gains went to the North, especially in its relations with the Third World, but the South has made rapid advances recently. The North relied upon the politics of nonalignment, the South upon its growing economic power. Each Korean state has worked strenuously to retain the support of its major allies while seeking to expand its informal relations with the key nations associated with its opponent. Here too, the most notable advances have been those of the South in recent times, especially in its relations with China. The relations of the two Koreas with the four major states, however, will probably be subject to extensive, possibly dramatic changes in the decade ahead, Ahn believes.

In the immediate future, however, attention will be focused on North-South bilateral relations. Ahn suggests that recent trends offer the hope of reduced tension and the beginning of a new, more realistic relationship. It is yet premature, however, to predict the course of events. One can only assert that at present, opportunities exist for fresh approaches to old problems.

Karl Jackson challenges some of the long-held theories about rebellion and its causes, drawing upon his research and that of others on Southeast Asia. He notes that such assertions as “only economic and social justice can restore peace” ignore the fact that reform programs in troubled areas need military and police power to protect them. (One might note the fate of the second land reform program in South Vietnam.) Jackson also criticizes the dichotomy set up by some writers between wholly indigenous versus externally supported one-country conflicts, noting that very few
insurgencies can sustain themselves in the long run, or at any rate, seriously threaten the government in power, without external aid.

One of Jackson's central themes is that much of the misunderstanding regarding insurgencies results from a failure to understand that one must deal with both preconditions (the creation of social dynamite, in James Scott's terms) and initiating factors (its detonation). The former may be present, and yet no uprising will occur if the latter are absent, and the reverse is also the case. Using evidence drawn from recent rebellions, Jackson points out that the Western-held thesis that rebellions flow from increasing levels of poverty, corruption, and inequality is seriously flawed as a general principle. There can be problems from pockets of poverty in a prosperous national environment (Thailand's northeast). But more importantly, rebellions are ordinarily the work of small minorities, and very frequently, noneconomic factors play a significant role in the recruitment of rebels. Moreover, grievances are culture-bound. Thus, corruption as defined in Western terms may not be regarded in the same light in Asia, and the acceptance of inequality may be much higher. Only the Westernized urban intellectuals may respond to these conditions in a manner similar to that of their Western counterparts.

Jackson argues that the force of religion as a disintegrative force has been somewhat overstated, at least in Southeast Asia, partly because most religions in the region have had syncretic features enabling adaptation to the broader cultural base. They have also had a traditional quality, making modern organizational techniques difficult to acquire. Ethnic differences have been a more potent force underwriting insurrections, with nearly two-thirds of the recent insurgencies in the region harboring ethnic features. But while ethnicity is an important precondition for rebellion, a broader appeal is necessary if the insurgency is to succeed.

At this point Jackson turns to the ignition factors, and here, he places strong emphasis on political elements: leadership, local grievances and authority patterns, organization and ideology. It is through a combination of these elements that recruits can be mobilized and converted into dedicated fighters, thereby sustaining rebellions and providing a chance for victory.

Even with some or all of these factors operative in a positive manner, however, external assistance is a critical variable, as Jackson demonstrates from developments in the histories of the Khmer Rouge, the Communist Party of Thailand, the Moro National Liberation Front, and the Darul Islam among others. He acknowledges that the New People's Army of the Philippines currently appears to be an exception, but casts doubt on its ability to attain ultimate victory without outside support unless the Philippines army collapses.

The final section of the essay deals with the differences between Western and Soviet counterinsurgency strategies in Asia. Jackson argues that Western theory rests on the proposition that the political, social, and economic roots of the conflict are primary and thus, programs to deal with governmental failures in these respects must be given top priority, with military operations a necessary but inherently inadequate means of winning over insurgencies. It also assumes that external assistance is important but not nearly as critical as internal problems in feeding the insurgency.

Soviet theory on counterinsurgency is more difficult to summarize since such a
condition is mainly characterized as dealing with “reactionaries” and “feudal elements.” In practice, however, Soviet campaigns are targeted on long-run objectives with resources carefully husbanded. The efforts, moreover, are very largely military, according to Jackson, with limited emphasis on civic action or “winning the hearts and minds of the tribesmen.” Using scorched earth tactics, Soviet forces are prepared to drive out or exterminate those who oppose them through terrorism. And they take external assistance seriously.

Jackson asserts that both theories have their merits. The Soviet emphasis on the importance of external intervention is exaggerated but probably nearer to the truth than the Western deemphasis. And Soviet acceptance of a long war is more realistic. But the largely apolitical, primarily military approach used by Soviets together with the insistence upon Communist Party dictatorship may create long-term crises for the Soviets and, in any case, is likely to be costly, politically and militarily.

Three essays follow that deal with the political-security issues confronting Southeast Asia, each of them contributed by a scholar indigenous to the region. Likhit Dhiravegin focuses on the complex relationships between ASEAN and the major powers, dealing with the former both as a collective entity and as a group of individual, diverse states. He also provides a balance sheet on ASEAN strengths and weaknesses, with some concluding remarks on requirements for the future.

On balance, ASEAN perceptions of and attitudes toward the major states are a reflection of two considerations: the economic-political values and structures of the member states, and their perception of threat, immediate and long-term. Being quasi-authoritarian polities, strongly anti-Communist, operating pluralist social and economic systems, these states tilt toward the United States and Japan and adopt a reserved attitude toward the Communist states. Yet this generalization is subject to important qualifications and must be painted in detail with all of its nuances.

The Philippines and Thailand have close relations with the United States for reasons relating both to history and security concerns. Indonesia, on the other hand, is extremely cautious in its relations with any major power, seeking to cultivate an image of nonalignment. Singapore and Malaysia, having been members of the Commonwealth, stay within that framework while counting upon U.S. military and economic support. Yet for all of the ASEAN states, the appeal of ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality) and “national resilience” or self-reliance have grown, and will probably continue to do so.

Traditionally, the Soviet Union has been seen as both distant and foreign by the ASEAN members, but in recent years, with the advent of the USSR-Vietnam alliance, that perception has been subject to some change. In turn, Moscow at first denounced ASEAN as a “capitalist group” aligned with the United States and Japan. Later, in an effort to cultivate ASEAN, it acknowledged its independence but accused the United States of seeking to turn it into a military bloc aligned with the U.S.-Japan-PRC entente.

Again, individual ASEAN members have somewhat different positions. Thailand, confronting Vietnam, views the Soviet Union at present as an increasing threat. Singapore has substantial economic relations with the USSR but stands far from Moscow ideologically and politically. The Philippines has formal relations with
Russia but appears to value its connections with Beijing more. Malaysia and Indonesia offer the best opportunity for the Soviet Union because of their concern about China, but current relations are minimal.

The People’s Republic of China in contrast to the USSR is regarded as a neighboring, massive state with strong historic interest in the region and with continuing ties via the overseas Chinese. Likhit makes the point that all of the ASEAN states view China with some degree of apprehension. For Thailand, however, the immediate problem is Vietnam, and the PRC is the most effective power in curbing Vietnamese expansion. Malaysia and Indonesia, on the contrary, have been very suspicious of China’s intentions based upon past relations (although there has been a modest thaw in the recent past, largely through economic channels).

Likhit summarizes ASEAN views regarding the two big Communist states as follows: the USSR is considered an outsider with whom ASEAN has to deal but wishes to keep at arm’s length, and the PRC is seen as a major power and a potential problem in the long run; hence, ASEAN hopes that the Sino-Soviet rift will continue, with the two states primarily concerned with offsetting each other.

ASEAN relations with Japan remain complex if, on balance, favorable. Japan represents an indispensable source of trade and investment, critical to the region’s economic development. But as Likhit points out, there has been a growing unhappiness with Japanese trade and investment policies, and this interacts with the concerns about a Japanese political and military presence in the region stemming from World War II experiences. Again, variations among states are significant. Despite annoyance, Singapore and Malaysia each has held up Japan and Korea as models of economic development in recent years, urging emulation. In Thailand also, admiration for Japanese methods, such as quality control measures, is widespread. In some regions, however—among them, the Philippines and Indonesia—wartime memories linger on, notwithstanding ever more intensive economic interaction. Likhit generalizes about the ASEAN attitude: “While Japan seeks the image of an Asian state, it behaves in many ways like a Western power.”

In his assessment of the strengths of ASEAN, Likhit emphasizes the degree to which collective decision making within the organization has acquired acceptance, the influence that small states banded together have been able to exert on the major nations, the increased sense among ASEAN members of common interests and as a result of these developments, the growth of regional cooperation in a variety of fields. The Cambodian issue has been a source of strength up to date, since it has produced a unity that might not otherwise have been forthcoming, but Likhit wonders whether it might play a reverse role at some point in the future, stimulating disunity, given the different positions on this issue of the ASEAN members.

ASEAN weaknesses relate in part to the continuance of historic issues between and among members; the differences of political views regarding the major powers, especially China; and, one might add, the fragile economic underpinnings of the organization. Likhit sees the future of ASEAN as dependent to some extent upon trends with respect to leadership and political structure within the region. He also believes that global politics, particularly relations among the major nations, will influence ASEAN as will economic conditions, regional and worldwide. Like many
ASEAN scholars, he wonders if the efforts to construct some larger Pacific Rim organization might dilute ASEAN.

In his conclusion, he writes that there is an ASEAN way today, but as the organization has grown more meaningful, it must guard against inherent problems from within itself and its environment; and the individual efforts of each member state on the economic, social, and political fronts at home will be critical to the strength or weakness of the organization as a whole.

Juwono Sudarsono deals precisely with the subject that Likhit raises in his closing paragraph. The Sudarsono essay explores the sources of internal dissension in the states comprising ASEAN. He finds three basic elements in the patterns of rebellion within the region, usually in some combination: religion, ethnicity, and ideological-political conviction.

For Thailand, one perennial problem has been the Muslim-populated southern provinces where the subculture lends itself to closer identification with Malaysia than with the dominant Buddhist culture centered upon Bangkok. Sudarsono traces the emergence and development of militant Islamic organizations dedicated to “liberating” the south, and the varied responses of successive Thai governments. Gradually, sheer repression mixed with neglect has given way to more enlightened policies such as an emphasis upon bringing Thai Muslims into local administration and the fostering of modern education. Economic difficulties within the region, including high unemployment, present continuing problems, as do bureaucratic officiousness and corruption. An underlying problem, moreover, lies in the reluctance of the Thai Buddhists to accept others as equals and to commit themselves to policies of integration. Nonetheless, the Muslim insurgencies are currently at low ebb.

The Thai Communist movement had its origins in initiatives of ethnic Chinese, and thus established close connections with the Chinese Communist movement from the beginning. Playing upon official neglect, corruption, and ethnic discrimination, the CPT (Communist Party of Thailand) sought to build its chief bases in the northeast, north, and south—rural regions distant from the capital. With local grievances made a focal point in membership recruitment, the party has long faced the question of whether a network of local grievances and ethnic issues can be transformed into a coherent national program.

It is Sudarsono's view that CPT fortunes have always been determined in the final analysis by the programmatic and doctrinal shifts transmitted by urban Marxist leaders centered in Bangkok. In recent years, the CPT leaders have sought to move from their historic preoccupation with the countryside (surround the cities) to an emphasis on urban-centered united front work, with linkages outward to the rural revolutionary movement.

Just as this shift was being attempted, however, the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia occurred, gravely damaging the Thai Communist movement. The powerful forces of Thai nationalism and ethnicity arose in response to the Vietnamese threat. In addition, the bitter hostility between Chinese and Vietnamese Communists that ensued thorough demoralized and confused Thai Communists. By 1983, the movement was in disarray, with mass defections taking place.

Sudarsono sees 1976 as a dividing line in assessing the Thai government’s
responses to the CPT. Earlier, the emphasis was almost exclusively upon repression via military power. Subsequently, the government employed a broader, more sophisticated series of approaches: greater attention to economically backward regions and ethnic minority interests, leniency to repentent rebels, and foreign policies that encouraged the PRC to turn from an emphasis on comrade-to-comrade relations to a primary interest in state-to-state relations. Thus, external assistance to the Thai Communists virtually ceased. At the same time, military measures continued to be employed against the hard-pressed Communist guerrillas who remained active. By 1983, external conditions and internal policies had combined to bring the Thai Communist movement to low ebb.

For the Malaysian government, the CPM (Communist Party of Malaysia) has always been the main internal security problem, not merely because of its militancy but also because its predominantly Chinese composition underlines the enormously delicate racial issue in this multiethnic society. Sudarsono traces the evolution of the CPM, including its efforts to unite Marxism, Islam, and ethnicity so as to obtain a broader base in Malaysian society—efforts that have been largely unsuccessful. Nonetheless, the movement has challenged the Malaysian government to find ways of protecting the Malay without discriminating against the Chinese and Indian minorities in a way that would provoke open dissidence.

For years, limited cooperation between the Malaysian and Thai governments permitted the Communists of both nations to operate in border regions with relative ease. In the late 1970s, cooperation increased, putting much heavier pressure on the Communists and inducing disputes between the CPT and CPM. These developments together with the declining support of the PRC have greatly weakened the Communist Party of Malaysia and abetted the intense factionalism within the party that now exists.

Yet Malaysian government responses to the insurgency have been complicated by the need to wage a two-front campaign—against the militant Islamic movement on the one hand and the Communists on the other. Thus, accommodation to the Malays via a variety of programs designed to favor them has been mounted to meet the increasingly vigorous campaign waged by the Parti Islam against the government on behalf of a “truly Islamic state.” At the same time, the government looks nervously at its citizens of Chinese and Indian background, especially the younger generations, to determine how far their unhappiness with “pro-Malay” policies goes. Thus far, the government has been able to walk the tightrope with reasonable success, coopting many young militant Malays into its party and administrative structure while counting upon rapid economic growth to placate the Chinese and Indians. But accelerating socioeconomic changes themselves produce recurrent conflicts within a society still harboring strongly traditionalist forces.

Sudarsono turns next to the most troubled state within ASEAN, the Philippines. He begins with a comparison between the Muslim problem in that country and in Thailand. He notes that in both states, grievances, initially based on religious and ethnic grounds, have been manipulated by various elements and exacerbated by misguided governmental policies. A detailed discussion of the Islamic movement, focusing upon the Moro National Liberation Front and its various factions, follows.
Important issues have always divided the dissidents, particularly the issue of autonomy within the Philippine state versus a separate Moro nation. International involvements, however, further complicated Manila's problem: Malaysia winked at the guerrilla use of Sabah, and Libya provided financial and training support. With the Tripoli agreement of December 1976, reconciliation seemed at hand, but later developments have kept the Moro movement alive, albeit divided, with very limited external assistance and considerably less powerful than at its peak.

In recent years, the Communist movement has been the rising threat to the Philippine government. Aided by serious political fissures throughout the society, depressed economic conditions, and the excesses of the government's constabulary and military forces, the National People's Army has gained a strong foothold in a number of the rural barrios. The current CPP-NPA policy is one of proclaiming independence from any foreign movement, using nationalism along with pledges of social and economic reform in an effort to win mass support. The tactics are very reminiscent of those employed by the Chinese Communists many decades ago, and they have resulted in considerable success in a context ideal for rebels.

Singapore provides a model of how a government can effectively counter militant dissidence, in this case, a Communist movement. Lee Kuan Yew, himself a part of the Left in his early political career, understood Communist tactics fully and did not hesitate in using tough measures in removing Communists from key mass organizations and progressively choking their chosen political instruments. At the same time, the People's Action Party and the government it operated acquired strong popular support through its social, economic, and political policies. Some slippage in PAP popularity has been noted in the recent past, but extremism has very limited appeal in Singapore. This city-state, to be sure, does not face ethnic and religious problems of the same magnitude as Malaysia.

Sudarsono deals finally with Indonesia, one of the world's most complex societies. Once again, the two primary sources of serious dissidence have come from the Islamic fundamentalists and the Communists. President Sukarno's effort to blend nationalists, Communists, and Islamic political forces into a coalition under his leadership ultimately failed. According to Sudarsono, the disparate groupings were too independent to hold together. Thus, in the aftermath of the abortive coup of September 1965, the Indonesian army was able to take control with relative ease.

Under Suharto, the leadership has continued to view Indonesia as a multi-communal, multi-religious state, not an Islamic theocracy. It has used Pancasila as a political-ideological expression of this position, making it the counterpoint to both militant Islam and communism. As in Malaysia, the Suharto government has been able to contain Islamic extremism by a subtle combination of coercion and cooptation, although the rise of terrorism in the recent past poses a new problem. Sudarsono believes that military men first trained in the Sukarno era and now having had lengthy service in the Suharto period will pursue the present pattern of conflict management against Islamic extremism for the foreseeable future.

The Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) was crushed in the abortive 1965 coup and, despite sporadic efforts, has not been able to regroup effectively. Various factors contribute to Communist weakness: the devastating blows struck against PKI leader-
ship and organization in the aftermath of the coup; the army’s skillful use of infiltration and intelligence gathering; the geographic configuration of Indonesia, making guerrilla warfare in areas critical to such a movement difficult; and the reasonably successful policies of economic growth of the past. Sudarsono raises the question, however, whether the economic difficulties that appear to lie ahead will permit the stability of the 1970s to continue.

He concludes that among the ASEAN states, Singapore stands out as the nation most able to deal effectively with religious, ethnic, and ideological dissension. Thailand, he believes, will also be able to contain internal threats with minimal difficulties, notwithstanding the external threat. Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines have a greater potential for trouble, he asserts, given the complex social, political, and economic issues that face these societies in an era of rapid change.

Khien Theeravit treats the primary regional security problem of Southeast Asia—that of Indochina. His essay starts with a presentation of an overview of the current conflict, its foundations, and the manner in which its evolution took place. He notes that from the moment of victory in 1975—indeed, long before this—Communist elites within and among the three states comprising Indochina were in varying degrees of conflict. Overhanging these conflicts, moreover, was the rivalry between the Soviet Union and China.

The idea of an Indochina federation, advanced by the Vietnamese Communists in their earliest days, never died. When the United States abandoned South Vietnam and Communist victory followed, Hanoi quickly claimed that the three countries shared “a common destiny” and sought to create a “special relationship” among them under Vietnamese aegis. Friction with the Pol Pot government mounted swiftly, culminating in the January 1979 Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the establishment of the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh—a government that Khien views as weak, unpopular, and almost totally dependent upon Vietnam down to the present.

In seeking international support for its position, Vietnam has capitalized on anti-Pol Pot and anti-Chinese sentiment. Khien argues that the Chinese role in Cambodia during the Pol Pot era has been exaggerated. He also asserts that the Vietnamese claim that control of Laos and Cambodia is necessary to offset possible Chinese encirclement is baseless, since China shares a long border with Vietnam itself and could easily strike south without the need to be paramount in the two smaller Indochinese states. He finds greater merit in the thesis that Vietnam has economic reasons for wanting control over the region.

Vietnam would never have dared to attack the Chinese-supported Pol Pot regime, Khien asserts, without the support of the Soviet Union. The Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, signed in Moscow on November 3, 1978, paved the way for the Vietnamese invasion. The Russians may have been concerned about the possibility of a large-scale Sino-Vietnamese conflict and about the hostility of the ASEAN states but—having long supported Hanoi—they took the risks involved, realizing that at a minimum, their policy of containing China would be forwarded with the addition of a tough, seasoned, well-equipped ally.

Both the Soviets and the Vietnamese have paid a price for their policies, Khien

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asserts, with the Vietnamese in particular faced with a dilemma. While their dry
season offensives have scored successes, especially recent ones, they cannot elimi-
nate the anti-Vietnam Khmer forces, at least as long as China and Thailand provide
assistance in various forms. Khmer nationalism and traditional animosities between
the Khmer and Vietnamese, moreover, make it exceedingly difficult for the puppet
regime in Phnom Penh to achieve the support of the Cambodian people. Hence, a
large occupational army is required. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese economy is in a
shambles. Hanoi, moreover, is heavily dependent upon the Soviet Union and the East
European bloc. Pressure from China is constant, adding to the difficulties. Vietnam is
not in danger of collapse, he states, but the situation is far from favorable, especially
since international support is very limited.

Khien then turns to a more detailed examination of the sources of external
opposition, commencing with China. He sees little likelihood that the PRC will
accept the status quo since, from Beijing’s perspective, a Vietnamese empire on its
borders—especially one holding close ties with the USSR—is completely unpalat-
able. Thus, he believes, China will continue to oppose Vietnam using whatever
instruments are at hand. Thailand has occupied a pivotal position among the ASEAN
states in challenging Vietnamese hegemony over Indochina because of the threat this
poses to Thai security. But after highlighting the contributions of other members of
ASEAN, Khien questions the thesis that ASEAN is in danger of splitting over the
Indochina issue. He acknowledges that Malaysia and Indonesia have a concern about
China, but he feels that the media and certain scholars have blown this matter out of
proportion, encouraging Hanoi to seek to exploit such differences as exist.

The United States and Japan will continue to work for ASEAN unity and will
support whatever position an ASEAN consensus produces. Washington, still affected
by the Vietnam debacle and by the strongly negative image of the Pol Pot government
among the American public, has played a low-key, indirect role up to date, but it
shows no signs of accommodating to Hanoi’s views. For Japan, the interest in
ASEAN is primarily commercial, but there is a growing recognition in Tokyo of the
strategic importance of the region to Japan’s sea lanes. Since the Cambodia invasion,
Japanese grant aid to Vietnam has been suspended, and economic sanctions have been
imposed in accordance with ASEAN recommendations. Australia, Canada, and
France have taken similar measures.

Khien concludes by discussing an “ideal solution” for the Indochina problem.
He would like to see a restructuring of the Southeast Asian security system in
accordance with the spirit of ZOPFAN. This would require that primary consideration
be given the nationalist aspirations within the region, including the restoration of
Cambodia’s territorial integrity and national independence; at the same time, the
legitimate interests of both Vietnam and China would have to be considered. A neutral
Cambodia would best serve the interests of neighboring states, he argues. It might be
possible as well to reduce the military presence of all external powers, slowing down
Japanese rearmament, removing Russian bases in Vietnam and American bases in the
Philippines (the latter he regards as a growing political liability for the United States).
Yet he recognizes that this solution “may be utopian,” and the prospects for any
comprehensive settlement of the Indochina issue seem dim in the near future.
Our essays conclude with a contribution by Leo E. Rose and Walter K. Andersen on South Asian security problems. They begin by observing that among South Asian states, there is no common threat perception; hence, security policies both toward each other and toward external powers vary greatly. The major perceived security threat to India’s neighbors remains India, despite recent improvements in some relationships. India in turn is primarily concerned with insulating the subcontinent from external intrusion—a task complicated by the fact that some of its neighbors seek outside support to strengthen their bargaining position against New Delhi. In addition, the proximity of two large external powers, China and the Soviet Union, further complicates the Indian goal of reducing outside influence, as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan demonstrates so graphically. Periodic surges of U.S.-USSR tension affecting the region add to the problem.

South Asian politics, both domestic and regional, are deeply influenced by the maze of subcultures within each state. Occasionally, the authors note, external powers have sought to exploit the existing cleavages to advance their own interests. Cultural variations among the political elites have also influenced foreign policy: the Muslim elite in Pakistan stress ties with the Islamic states of Southwest Asia; the high-caste Hindu elite in Nepal identify with India; and the Sri Lankan Buddhist elite turn hopefully to Southeast Asia.

Perhaps the most critical fact, however, is the vast difference in size, population, and resources between India and all other South Asian states. Thus, it is natural that the smaller states fear Indian domination and that India’s primary concern is to keep these states from external alliances.

Historically, the primary external security concern of South Asian societies was invasion via the Central Asian land routes. Western imperialism of the sixteenth to nineteenth century was an aberration, the authors assert, and one not likely to be repeated. While India has expressed concern about the buildup of superpower navies in the Indian Ocean recently, the authors believe that the most difficult political and security problems are once again those related to the vulnerable land frontiers of the northwest. Until recently, however, the chief security threats in this region for India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan were from each other: India versus Pakistan, and Afghanistan versus Pakistan. There has always been some concern about the USSR, but until the late 1970s, a combination of moderate governments in the region and external alignments kept that threat within bounds. The movement of the USSR into Afghanistan and the subsequent willingness of the United States to renew a security relationship with Pakistan posed new problems for all South Asian states.

The Himalayan states were assumed to be virtually impenetrable by external forces and India took over the role of the British in this area in 1949-50, but China’s firm military control over Tibet after the 1956–1959 rebellion, the subsequent border dispute leading to the Sino-Indian war in 1962, and the growing collaboration between China and Pakistan caused rising Indian concern—at least until after 1971, when it became evident that China was not prepared to take major risks in aiding Pakistan. On India’s northeast frontier, the security problem was perceived to be essentially internal in the 1950s, but here too, the porous Indo-Burmese border, Chinese assistance to dissident tribal groups, and the problems between India and
Bangladesh in later years provided an external dimension of increased proportions.

The authors then provide rich detail to illustrate the themes initially set forth. India's Soviet policy, they suggest, has always been influenced by that nation's strategic weakness in the northwest. India has regarded it as imperative to prevent intimate Pakistan-Soviet relations, and that is one reason for the decision to forge close ties with the USSR. Even the subdued public Indian reaction to the 1979 Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, they argue, was conditioned in part by the fear that Pakistan might exercise its "Soviet option," an option of closer ties with Moscow which had been left open by the Russians. But India's failure to condemn Russian policies in Afghanistan not only shocked other South Asian states but also confronted India with the possibility that its interests would not be taken seriously in the future by the USSR. The authors speculate that recent Indian moves to improve relations with the United States and China may in part be related to the effort to gain greater leverage with the Soviet Union.

For Pakistan, the original concern was that of a dual threat on its eastern and western frontiers from India and Afghanistan. To meet that perceived threat, Pakistan sought external support, but had great difficulty in finding reliable allies. China, while lavish in its rhetoric, failed to provide concrete assistance both in 1965 and in 1971. Further, the U.S. decision to impose an arms embargo on Pakistan in 1965 when Islamabad was almost entirely dependent upon American arms underscored the U.S. unwillingness to assist Pakistan against India, at least when the initiative in confrontation was taken by Pakistan.

Pakistan now finds itself faced with a more serious two-front threat, with a superpower on one side and India on the other. Yet it is not currently seeking a military alliance, memories of past experiences being still vivid. Nevertheless, India has reacted sharply to the U.S.-Pakistan agreement calling for $3.2 billion in military and economic assistance concluded in 1981 and the separate agreement to sell forty F-16 fighter bombers to Pakistan. But the Indians had previously upgraded their military forces with Soviet assistance, and it is difficult to envisage a Pakistan strike against India under present circumstances. The development of a Pakistan nuclear deterrent is a more serious possibility. Meanwhile, the fear that Pakistan will link itself with the Middle East states on the one hand, and the United States and PRC on the other, causes India to exaggerate the "U.S. problem," ignoring the fact that the USSR is the only external power to be physically present in South Asia.

The authors believe that the likelihood of a Soviet move against Pakistan is low, not merely because of the risk of graver confrontation with the United States, but also because such a move would greatly antagonize India. The Soviets would be more apt to undertake destabilization by giving assistance to dissidents in Baluchistan and the northwest frontier. But none of these actions is likely to resolve the Afghanistan crisis for them. Their desire there is for another Outer Mongolia, but the requirements for that are not present in Afghanistan. Thus, the problems of the northwest will remain volatile and unresolved.

The Himalayan states have varied in their response to Indian policies since 1950, as the authors detail. Nepal has moved toward greater independence, but its problem lies in the fact that China cannot serve as a countervailing force to India,
either economically or strategically. Bhutan has moved closer to India, abandoning its earlier isolationist policies and accepting consultation with New Delhi on most matters, while taking an independent stance on some issues such as Cambodia that do not challenge India's security interests. Sikkim, the least independent of the old Himalayan states, was absorbed into India in 1975. Meanwhile, according to the authors, the long-standing Sino-Indian border dispute, which affects relations throughout the Himalayan region, could probably be settled roughly along the lines of the present de facto border except for a fear of strong political repercussions within India.

Superpower rivalry in the Indian Ocean has caused India to be more concerned about its relations with the two island states of the region, Sri Lanka and The Maldives. India has always resented any move on the part of the former state to strengthen its ties with China or the United States. Sri Lanka in turn has been deeply concerned in recent years with evidence that its rebellious Tamil minority was receiving support from south India.

The authors conclude by stressing that the major security problems in South Asia have their roots in regional instability. The proximity of the USSR and the PRC, however, guarantees that these major states will have a strong interest in events on the subcontinent and, in varying degrees, seek to exploit regional instabilities if such a course is perceived to advance their broader foreign policy objectives.

After the Bangladesh War of 1971, India had realistic hopes of being considered the preeminent power in South Asia, by both regional and international forces. But developments beginning in the late 1970s have revived old problems and engendered new ones. It is now clear that India cannot insulate South Asia from major-power influence. However, no South Asian nation is formally linked to an outside security system at present; no state in the region wants to antagonize India and, as noted, Pakistan doubts the reliability of such agreements. For India itself, this is a time of reflection. USSR policies in the region are fundamentally incompatible with Indian interests for the first time in several decades, and the United States—in addition to being less of a threat—has much to offer economically as India acquires a greater need for high technology.

What generalizations concerning security—using that term in its broadest sense—and relations among states today can be drawn from the essays contained in this volume? The following concepts, some set forth explicitly, others implied, seem to me most important. First, despite the high and steadily increasing level of armaments, and the proliferation of sophisticated weapons, possibly including nuclear weapons, to an ever larger number of countries, the risks of global war do not appear to be as high as at various times in the past. Indeed, there has been a reduction of tension between and among the major states or, at least, a start in that direction.

Why? The complexity of domestic problems has never been greater. In one way or another, every nation is being drawn into the most profound socioeconomic revolution in the history of mankind. This revolution is global and accelerating, and it poses vital questions: can structural and cultural changes in individual nations keep pace with the demands of the years immediately ahead without resulting in the serious psychological and political trauma that threaten when people are abruptly torn from
their moorings, with familiar landmarks suddenly swept away? And even if the intensified pace of change can be accepted, can elites devise institutions and reshape values appropriate to these times?

Under these mounting pressures, there is a natural inclination toward foreign policies of a lower risk and some degree of accommodation, notwithstanding an absence of trust and sharply differing perceptions of national interest. In addition, there is the commonly recognized "balance of terror" factor. Major nations in particular are more cognizant than at any time in the past that an all-out conflict between or among them would be a disaster for everyone concerned.

This does not mean, however, that we shall witness a sharp reduction of political violence. There have never been so many sophisticated techniques for escalating peaceful competition into conflict while still keeping the risks relatively low. In recent decades, a wide range of methods of camouflaging or limiting conflict involvement has been refined, with the major powers leading the way and others following suit: arms transfers; surrogates, trained and supplied, either openly or covertly; "volunteers"; and even direct, open participation but with limits placed on military operations to avoid escalation. By some combination of these means, states—large and small—seek to advance their perceived national interests while limiting the risks and costs. Cambodia and Afghanistan are two current examples in the Asian theater. Terrorism, moreover, being the cheapest and least risky method of effecting political change, is destined to flourish in a myriad of forms as this century draws to a close.

A second fact has equally broad implications: relations between and among states are in a very fluid phase at present, not merely with respect to specific issues, but also with regard to the basic nature of the relationship. In broad terms, the movement is from alliance to alignment, from a relationship in which the major power had fixed obligations and the minor power had a firm sense of duty to a relationship in which the major power's obligations are more limited and conditional, and the minor power's allegiance is less absolute, with greater independence being exercised. This trend has within it the prospect of reducing the burdens of the so-called superpowers (and the thrust, as we have seen, is such a demand on their part), but the management of alignments is far more difficult than the handling of patron-client relations.

If traditional-type alliances with some exceptions are being transformed, one should not be misled by the widespread proclamation of "nonalignment" on the part of states from the developing world. Few if any nations today are truly nonaligned. In Asia, only Burma (which withdrew from the "Nonaligned Conference" because it was not nonaligned) has deserved that appellation—and Burma, having paid a heavy price for past policies, is itself in the process of cautiously altering its stance in the world. In actuality, the "nonaligned states" overwhelmingly engage in "tilted nonalignment" with the direction and extent of the tilt varying considerably and changing within a given state as perceptions of needs and threats are revised. The differences between "alignment" and "tilted nonalignment" are often slight, but together these two conditions help to explain both the fluidity and the complexity of current international relations. They also help to explain why in an age when the world is characterized more than at any time in the past by a concentration of global
military power in the hands of the United States and the Soviet Union, both superpowers are enormously frustrated in the limited uses to which they can put that power to realize their interests.

Yet another broad trend that can be perceived is a slight movement away from the anarchism that has essentially characterized regional relations. We have noted the "soft regionalism" that is emerging in Northeast Asia, the political and strategic influence of ASEAN in Southeast Asia, and the first embryonic efforts at regional organization in South Asia. Along with this trend and related to it is the process of "Asianization" whereby an increasingly complex network of economic, political, and strategic relations are being built among Asian states. Not all of these are positive. Witness the hostility that engulfed the Indochina issue among Asians after the U.S. withdrawal. But for the most part, Asianization is taking constructive forms. In any case, if the process continues over time, as seems likely, the centrality of the superpowers to Asian issues—at least to certain issues—will be reduced.

At the same time, however, a contrary trend is running, namely, the infusion of global strategic considerations ever more deeply into this and other regions. Today, the Soviet Union along with the United States is effectively present—at least militarily—in virtually every part of the world, and that is certainly the case in the Pacific-Asian region. While a portion of the newly emplaced Soviet military power in Asia is directed against regional targets, a significant portion is directed against the United States, defended as necessity to counterbalance American forces within the region having similar capabilities. No Asian state can isolate itself today from the global strategic considerations that must preoccupy the U.S. and the USSR. Moreover, those preoccupations naturally affect superpower policies toward states and issues within the region. Economic requirements also promote continuing American involvement of substantial degree in the Asian region.

Finally, and for a majority of the world's people, most importantly, security begins at home. If one's village, urban neighborhood, or district is not safe, more distant threats seem of lesser importance. But beyond this, the breakdown of the legitimacy of a government has international as well as domestic implications. When this is threatened or happens, the state concerned becomes a target of opportunity. Dissidents from within seek assistance from without, since lacking such assistance, the chances of their success are significantly reduced. And external sources of aid are usually available, for a variety of reasons. Under these conditions, the conflict escalates, and represents a mixture of civil and international war.

How great is this danger? The simple answer is "very considerable, and growing." It has become increasingly difficult for all governments to effectively administer to the needs or desires of their people or, in many cases, to maintain effective control over the people nominally under their jurisdiction, despite the vast increase in the coercive power at their disposal. The range and complexity of the problems in this revolutionary age, the speed with which problems become major issues, the difficulty of controlling communications even in highly authoritarian states—these and many other conditions constitute supreme challenges for political leadership, irrespective of the political values and institutions to which homage is paid.
The threat of instability, moreover, is generally greatest in newly minted democracies or quasi-authoritarian societies undergoing rapid socioeconomic change. The governments of such societies permit a considerable amount of pluralism, sufficient to enable dissidence to be generated and to spread. For a variety of reasons, moreover, they employ coercion with some degree of ambivalence. And frequently, their political pledges exceed their performance—and possibly, the current capacities of their society. In any case, the gap between a traditional polity and a dynamic, changing society grows.

This situation fits some Pacific-Asian states. Political authoritarianism in varying degree has been coexistent with social and economic pluralism. Economic development has been rapid, resulting in the emergence of a relatively affluent, educated middle class, no longer satisfied with the old political order. Yet governments and oppositionists alike continue to search for political values and institutions that will serve the nature and needs of societies like these, Western models—whether Marxist or liberal—being questioned.

While it seems unlikely that any Asian state will soon cross the fault-line that separates self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist systems from a continuum of authoritarian-pluralist-liberal systems, within all categories, the nature of current problems and the absence of easy solutions suggest the likelihood of rising instability in a number of societies in the years ahead. To embrace the concept of comprehensive security, with its emphasis upon economic and social as well as military components and, at the same time, to seek means of strengthening those international institutions operative in the economic and social fields, would thus seem to be an investment in security far more valuable than has yet been recognized.
1. Major-Power Threats to Security in East Asia

Allen S. Whiting

THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN EAST ASIA: BACKGROUND

The record of Russian and Soviet experience over the past century of East Asian relations provides an illuminating background against which to examine Moscow’s military presence in the region. This contribution is not designed to justify that presence, much less predict its future role, but rather to sketch history as it is selectively recalled by the present Soviet leadership for whom the past fifty years are living memory.¹

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 established a sense of Far East Siberia as a highly remote and vulnerable part of Russian territory. Japan’s surprise attack and its destruction of the tsarist fleet, which sailed halfway around the world, underscored the disparate power balance between Russia and Japan, as measured in local terms.

This imbalance proved even more threatening after the Bolshevik Revolution, when Japan, together with other powers, intervened on the side of the White armies and occupied parts of Siberia and all Sakhalin, not evacuating the latter until 1925. Then, in the 1930s, Japan seized Manchuria, expanded into North China, and mobilized for a “Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere” through military conquest and political intimidation. With a growing threat from Germany on his European front, Stalin tried to placate Tokyo by selling it the Soviet interest in the Chinese Eastern Railroad across Manchuria and accepting the puppet state of Manchukuo.²

Local Japanese generals, however, challenged the Red Army, weakened by Stalin’s paranoid purges. In 1938-39 they launched full-scale attacks along the Mongolian and


Soviet Far Eastern fronts, but suffered sufficient defeat to deter them from further effort in this direction. Instead, Japan turned eastward and southward to attack the United States and European colonial outposts after concluding a neutrality agreement with Moscow in 1941. Nevertheless, Stalin maintained a sizable military garrison to guard his Far East flank throughout the devastating war with Hitler, who overran all European Russia.

Victory in World War II did not eliminate the potential for threat to the Soviet Far East. After disarming its former enemy, Washington laid the groundwork for a revived Japanese defense force and locked Japan into the American military treaty system. During the 1950s that system grew to include South Korea, Okinawa, Taiwan, and the Philippines with associated allies and facilities available through SEATO and ANZUS.

By comparison, the USSR established a satellite state in North Korea, only to see it overrun by the United Nations armies that counterattacked Pyongyang's invasion of June 1950. Chinese, not Soviet, forces restored the status quo ante, thereby providing an alternative influence which permitted Kim II Sung in subsequent years to play off both sides in the Sino-Soviet relationship without strategic benefit to the Kremlin.

Meanwhile Stalin's gains in China from the Yalta agreements, designed to reward the USSR for joining the war against Japan, melted away in time. In 1954 his successor, Khrushchev, agreed to withdraw from Port Arthur and Dairen, thereby losing the one warm-water base then available to the Soviet Pacific fleet. Similarly, shared management of the Chinese Eastern Railroad gave way to Beijing's exclusive control. The Sino-Soviet alliance eventually proved more of a debit than an asset for Moscow, draining large amounts of money, personnel, and material assistance without compensatory gains in access to bases or other facilities. By 1958 disagreement over these aspects of the military relationship provoked a personal argument between Khrushchev and Mao at a secret summit meeting in Beijing. One month later Mao launched an abortive blockade and bombardment of the off-shore island of Quemoy without Khrushchev's prior knowledge, much less agreement.

The Quemoy affair forced Moscow into a verbal confrontation with Washington as each side expressed public support of its respective Chinese ally, albeit without risking actual contact in the area. According to an authoritative Soviet source, Mao's unilateral action prompted Khrushchev to suspend Soviet assistance in China's nuclear-weapons development, communicated to Beijing in June 1959. Withdrawal of all Soviet economic advisors and aid in mid-1960 virtually ended any prospect of a working alliance.

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Finally the wheel turned full circle, if in a different groove, when China emerged as an incipient threat to the USSR in the latter 1960s. In 1964 Mao, in a provocative interview, identified Siberia, Vladivostok, and the Kamchatka peninsula as having been torn from China by the tsars, a score which allegedly had yet to be settled. The Cultural Revolution violence of 1967-68 led to a siege of the Soviet embassy in Beijing and sparked increasingly serious incidents along the 4,500-mile Sino-Soviet border, many points of which were claimed by Beijing to be “in dispute.” Actual fighting in 1969, initially over Damansky Island (Chenbao) in the Ussuri River and subsequently occurring on the Xinjiang border, accompanied public alarms in both countries over the possibility of war. These alarms were underscored by an intensive and extensive buildup of forces behind the frontier, especially on the Soviet side, with Moscow doubling the 1965 troop level and deploying nuclear-capable missiles and aircraft. The rate of buildup slowed somewhat after a brief meeting between Zhou Enlai and Kosygin in September 1969. However, it ultimately encompassed one-fourth of the Red Army with continual modernization of weaponry, including Backfire bombers and SS-20 missiles.

FACTORS AFFECTING SOVIET DEFENSE PLANNING

This historic record gives ground for defensive concerns in Moscow but those concerns are complicated by geographic and demographic factors. The only landline of communication from the Soviet industrial and population base west of the Urals is the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Built at the turn of the century, it falls far short of meeting the demands of an expanding civilian and military economy in Far Eastern Siberia. In addition, floods on the Amur River can interrupt it for months at a time. Air transport is uncertain because of weather, including dense winter and early spring fog in much of the area.

The long ocean voyage from Baltic and Black Sea ports is time-consuming and vulnerable to enemy interdiction. Major ship access to and egress from Vladivostok is dependent on three straits, all of which may be hampered or wholly blocked by Japanese-American action. Absence of a warm-water port in Soviet territory has become less troublesome since the advent of nuclear-powered icebreakers, but still presents logistical problems not faced by any potential Far East foe. Cam Ranh Bay offers valuable facilities for Soviet activity in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean but remains subject to Vietnamese agreement.

Finally, the Soviet Far East is vastly underpopulated in comparison with neighboring China. Nor does it have the potential for significant change in this regard except with an investment of money and technology well in excess of that likely to be available. The construction problems posed by permafrost, which extends through

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7 Information from official sources available to the author in 1969.

most of the region, the impact of earthquakes in one of the worst seismic areas in the entire USSR, and the rigorous demands of climatic extremes have made building the Bakal-Amur Mainline (BAM) extremely difficult. Its completion in 1985-86 will significantly relieve the Trans-Siberian Railroad of the last 2,000-mile burden. However, these same obstacles will deter voluntary mass migration and inhibit development of the region as an industrial base.

Objectively the absolute measurement of military power balances should provide no cause for anxiety to the Kremlin. Japan's 250,000-man Self-Defense Force can protect the home islands for only a brief time, so weak is the command, control, and coordination of its minuscule air and sea capability as compared with that available to Moscow. Soviet nuclear power alone is more than sufficient to deter an avowedly nonnuclear Japan from posing any credible threat. Similarly, China's huge but obsolescent military force is two decades behind its Soviet counterpart in ground, air, and sea weaponry. Nor does Beijing's emphasis on the modernization of its economy provide high priority to upgrading the People's Liberation Army (PLA) through the massive purchase of foreign weapons so as to reduce this gross imbalance of power in the near future.

Yet the historical background sketched above shades subjective calculations of what is necessary to guard against possible future contingencies in the Far East as viewed afar from Moscow. Japan's astonishing growth from a totally devastated country to a preeminent world power in technology and trade poses the potential for a sudden and rapid military rise should the fiscal restraints on defense spending be lifted and the self-imposed nuclear prohibitions be renounced. Moreover, Washington seems determined to achieve the first, if not the second change in Tokyo's Self-Defense Forces. Joint Japanese-American maneuvers and the promised extension of Tokyo's naval protection to 1,000 nautical miles could foreshadow a Japanese assumption of American defense responsibility in East Asia.

Meanwhile, Sino-Japanese relations have steadily improved in tandem with Sino-American relations. Although China remains aloof from formal military ties with both countries, reciprocal visits by military officials of the three governments has provoked widespread speculation of covert cooperation in matters of intelligence and technological exchange. Prudence may prompt Soviet concern over the prospect of a

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secret Sino-Japanese-American understanding on coordination of military actions in the event of a global conflict.

This larger context makes it difficult to separate the import of Soviet deployments to East Asia in terms of regional versus global calculations. During the Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin faced foreign intervention at both ends of the Eurasian land mass. Japan's rise in the East fifteen years later coincided with Hitler's in the West. The 1936 Anti-Comintern Pact and the 1940 Tokyo-Berlin-Rome pact confronted Stalin with a possible two-front war, which, had it materialized in 1941-42, might well have overwhelmed the Red Army.

Thus contemporary Soviet defense planners must contend with a series of scenarios that are rooted in past reality and not merely hypothetical constructs of a far-out future. Their conceivable responses pose a problem for the outside observer of inferring intent. How, for example, is a deterrent presence distinguishable from a war-fighting mission? How are Backfire bombers, SS-20 missiles, and nuclear submarines targeted and under what contingencies are they programmed for alternative arenas of action? How fungible are the functions of the Soviet Pacific fleet as between global combat with the United States and regional foes in East Asia?

China's growing nuclear capability raises the possible threat of Beijing taking advantage of a Soviet-American strategic exchange to hit nearby targets. China's estimated inventory of four ICBMs with a 13,000 kilometer range and 5-megaton warhead, ten IRBMs with a 4,800-5,600 kilometer range and 2-3-megaton warhead, and fifty IRBMs with a 2,700-3,200 kilometer range and 1-megaton or less warhead could cause concern in Moscow.11 With only three cities of more than 500,000 population throughout the Soviet Far East—Irkutsk, Khabarovsk, and Vladivostok—and all within ready range, China could destroy the base of Soviet power in Asia. Should passage across the Indian Ocean, through the straits of Malacca, and into the Sea of Japan, be cut by coordinated American and Japanese actions, Moscow's ability to safeguard the USSR east of the Ural Mountains would be severely crippled.12

This "worst case" scenario may have sufficient plausibility in the Kremlin to account for some of the expansion of Soviet military power in Asia during the past decade. Given the lengthy and vulnerable logistics of supporting land, sea, and air systems in Far East Siberia, the more local force in being, the more certain is the capability to cope with whatever contingency might arise.13 Also, the more overwhelming is the demonstrable response to attack, the more effective the deterrent. The conservative tradition of Soviet military thinking underscores both points, dramatically demonstrated by Moscow's massive tank deployment in East Europe.

11 *The Military Balance, 1983-84*, p. 84.
12 The Japanese Defense Agency announced that a destroyer would be stationed in the Soya Strait, between Hokkaido and Sakhalin, "to collect basic data needed for a possible blockade of the straits around Japan, to confine Soviet ships in the Sea of Japan in case of emergency." FEER, June 16, 1983, pp. 72-73.
13 Lensen, *op. cit.,* terms the "double blow" a penchant for massing superior force capable of giving "two for one" as evidenced in Soviet military deployments and behavior in response to a perceived threat against the Chinese Eastern Railroad in the 1920s and the Soviet-Mongolian borders in the 1930s; see his note 20, p. 456.
In addition, Soviet analysts probably have seen little to lose by a military buildup in the Far East. Increased deployments could hardly make Mao Zedong more anti-Soviet than he was already. China’s hostility was viewed as independent of Soviet behavior because it helped to mobilize unity at home and align support abroad, evidenced in the transformation of Sino-American relations after more than twenty years of confrontation. Similarly, Japan’s position in the American orbit appeared fixed after the 1970 renewal time for the security treaty passed without difficulty. Moreover, Prime Minister Fukuda’s willingness to sign an “antihegemony” clause in the 1978 peace treaty with Beijing signaled a tacit anti-Soviet accord between the two regimes, according to Moscow’s publicly expressed view.

Ultimately, however, the goal of rivaling American power in the western Pacific undoubtedly spurred the continued expansion of Soviet air and sea capability throughout the region. The reduced American presence after the Vietnam War and Hanoi’s granting of base facilities to Moscow combined to offer promise of a qualitative shift in the Pacific power balance, favorable to Soviet political as well as military objectives. Symbolically the arrival of the Minsk followed by the drawdown of American aircraft carriers to a single unit suggested success in this objective, although Washington’s ability to mobilize and deploy a much larger armada in East Asia still surpassed that of Moscow, depending on respective obligations elsewhere in the world.

What Next?

In simple terms, Soviet military deployments in Asia may increase, stabilize, or decrease. The factors which will determine which of these postures emerge, however, are far from simple, being global, regional, and country specific in addition to being influenced by Soviet domestic politics.

Soviet strength in Asia confronts China on the one hand and American-Japanese forces on the other. The rate of deployment slowed in the latter 1970s, but a major upgrading of equipment, support systems, and troop readiness continues to bolster Moscow’s military power throughout the area. In 1983, informed foreign estimates put the ground forces there at 52 divisions of which one-third were at full to half strength, the rest being appreciably weaker, for a total of roughly 480,000 troops. More than 120 SS-20s can be targeted on both American bases in Japan and on China’s major industrial cities in the north and northeast. The size and nature of this deployment contrasts with China’s inability to do more than amass the PLA in deep defensive positions facing the border, with approximately 600,000 in mainline units and perhaps another 300,000 in more lightly armed local force divisions.

The stalemate in high-level Sino-Soviet political discussions during 1984–85 cautions against expectation of any major reduction in the two force postures, much

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14 These motivations were standard explanations from the less alarmist Soviet analysts during the 1970s, such as B. Zanegin and L. Gudoshnikov.
15 Langer, op. cit., p. 251.
17 Ibid., pp. 84–5.
less of a return to the 1965 *status quo* as demanded by Beijing. But Moscow may not add significantly to its existing ground strength, which is already far more than necessary to deter a Chinese attack. It is also somewhat superfluous in the context of improved relations, the most relevant manifestation being the resumption of cross-border trade in northeast China (Manchuria) with the adjacent Soviet Far East and in Xinjiang with Soviet Central Asia.\(^{18}\)

A limited détente between Beijing and Moscow could result in a modest reduction of troops. However, this would not affect air and missile units that confront American and Japanese forces linked to the regional and global confrontation. Even an agreed troop drawdown could be circumvented by camouflaging military units as engineering, construction, and labor battalions assigned to civilian projects while maintaining a ready response capability should Sino-Soviet relations suddenly deteriorate.

The remaining air, missile, and naval forces, as already indicated, comprise part of Moscow's global strategic system, which is certain to be continually upgraded and expanded, partly in response to parallel American actions and partly because of bureaucratic inertia and Kremlin politics. The Pacific fleet growth parallels that of the overall Soviet navy. A further stimulus to its expansion occurred in April 1983 when three American carrier groups centered on the nuclear-powered *Enterprise*, the *Midway*, and the *Coral Sea*, sailed within a few hundred miles of the Soviet base at Petropavlovsk.\(^{19}\) The ships enjoyed the accompanying support of B-52 bombers, early-warning radar and antisubmarine aircraft, cruisers, destroyers, submarines, and smaller Canadian units.

Under the circumstances there is no reason to anticipate any important change in the small but symbolically significant forces assigned to the southern Kurile Islands. Claimed by Tokyo but held by Moscow since World War II, Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan, and the Habomais contained a constabulary force for local control until 1978.\(^{20}\) Then in apparent response to Tokyo's readiness to sign the long-delayed treaty with Beijing, a buildup began which resulted in approximately one division of 10,000 troops, an airfield, tanks, and long-range artillery capable of hitting Hokkaido. By 1983 a dozen MiG-25s had been added.\(^{21}\)

Despite considerable Japanese criticism, including official involvement in an annual "Northern Islands Day," Moscow refuses to reduce these forces. Most likely the Soviet navy has succeeded in establishing its claim that militarization of the small islands helps to close the Sea of Okhotsk to possible enemy penetration.\(^{22}\) So long as

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\(^{18}\) *New York Times*, June 5, 1983; according to a Reuters dispatch from Kashgar, two points on the Xinjiang border will handle state-to-state trade only, while one point on the Heilongjiang border will be confined to local trade.

\(^{19}\) Murray Sayle, *op. cit.*


\(^{21}\) *International Herald Tribune*, August 31, 1983.

the military interest prevails in Kremlin policy debates, at least with regard to Japan, the forces will remain.

A major recent change in the Soviet presence, however, took place in Southeast Asia, where a qualitative expansion in sea and air power occurred during the past six years. Ships stationed in Cam Ranh Bay have more than tripled since 1980, including two to four submarines, four to six surface vessels, and a dozen support ships. In addition Bear and Badger reconnaissance and strike aircraft, some equipped with stand-off air-to-surface missiles, extend Moscow’s military reach over a wide arc that was heretofore exclusively American controlled.

This presence remains vulnerable to the superior force mix at Clark Field and Subic Bay in the Philippines. It lacks a wider panoply of supporting air bases and secure logistical systems for fuel, ammunition, and spare parts. But it is more than enough to back Hanoi should Beijing thrust across the South China Sea from the Paracels to the Spratleys or elsewhere. It also casts a political shadow over ASEAN’s effort to win a Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea.

Finally, access to these facilities compensates Moscow for the high cost of supporting Vietnam’s military hegemony over Indochina and its domestic economic blunders. This support, in turn, mutes Vietnamese nationalism, which might otherwise grow restive over a foreign military presence after so much blood was spilled to oust Japanese, French, and American troops. Hanoi’s determination to control Laos and Kampuchea, particularly the latter, compels its acceptance of Moscow’s demands so long as China challenges that control by backing Kampuchean insurgents through Thailand and maintaining sizable forces on the Sino-Vietnamese border. Thus the triangular Sino-Soviet-Vietnamese relationship includes two bilateral antagonisms, Sino-Soviet and Sino-Vietnamese, that must be defused for détente to occur on all three sides.

Only if Hanoi abandons control over Kampuchea, or China acquiesces in Vietnamese hegemony over Indochina, will the necessary conditions exist for Hanoi to expel Soviet forces from Cam Ranh, Danang, and Haiphong. Neither of these conditions appears likely at present. On the contrary, the costs of continuing the present confrontation seem sufficiently tolerable for all parties, particularly when weighed against the costs of compromise, as to argue for intransigence for the indefinite future.

Yet despite these tensions it is difficult to envisage a major regional conflict except in the context of a global war. A Soviet attack on Japan in isolation is virtually ruled out by the presence of American forces on the islands and in the region, committed by treaty to Japan’s defense. No apparent gain is worth the certain risk. In 1969 a Soviet attack on China may have been considered, perhaps as a so-called surgical strike on incipient facilities for production of nuclear weapons, but China’s

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possible retaliatory capability rules this out for the future. No other motive would justify placing in jeopardy the entire Soviet Far East where only eleven million inhabitants face more than eighty million in Manchuria alone. A Chinese attack on the Soviet Union is even less credible in view of the enormous disparity in conventional as well as nuclear weapons.

It is possible to imagine an indirect involvement of the key countries should war erupt on the Korean peninsula, perhaps in a power struggle after the death of Kim II Sung. Treaties pledge Beijing and Moscow to Pyongyang's defense as Washington is pledged to Seoul, although American troops in South Korea—approximately 39,000—backed by local American air power, give greater credibility to the latter pledge. But in view of existing Sino-American relations and the risks of uncontrolled escalation, should this unlikely war occur, the major powers will make a major effort to avoid a direct confrontation while endeavoring to protect their respective Korean clients from annihilation.

Thus short of a global conflict there is no plausible scenario for a major war in East Asia. Of course, in the context of World War III, or more specifically war between the U.S. and the USSR, the "worst case" contingency could become reality. Each side might try to strike a preemptive strategic blow by hitting nuclear-capable forces at the earliest opportunity, wherever they might be. This could expose Vietnam, the Philippines, Okinawa, Korea, China, and Japan to attack.

Alternatively, East Asia may be spared direct involvement except where strategic weapons systems of the U.S. and the USSR interact with side effects on other countries. If, for example, the initial nuclear attacks are mutually targeted on the respective capitals and interior zones, the two main combatants may suffer such damage as not to engage each other further, much less bother with targets outside of their proximate European-alliance systems. There is some reason, therefore, for hope that most, if not all, of Asia may be spared the catastrophe that seems certain to engulf the main centers of action should World War III erupt.

To sum up, Soviet military deployments are multiply purposeful, simultaneously serving deterrence, defense, power politics, and domestic politics. They do not appear to augur a serious Soviet effort to change the present alignment in Asia, whether neutral or allied, much less to wage war there independent of a global conflict.

However, they are not a benign presence. They back Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea. They raise widespread concern and defense expenditures. They pose a potential threat to the sealanes, particularly for Japan. Finally, they alter the regional power balance, both real and perceived.

It is this last aspect that properly focuses attention on the expansion of Soviet military power from the western Pacific to the Indian Ocean. The game of international relations is largely played in the minds of decision-makers with the pieces representing potential power rather than its actual use. "Showing the flag" traditionally justified a fleet that could sail around the world, regardless of its cost or how much more would be required to back it up with a deployable army sufficient to conquer and hold distant lands. Today instant reporting and television can transmit images of military movements worldwide, accompanied by convincing commentary on their
dire implications for national and international security.

The simplistic depiction of allegedly comparable combat capability represented in the numbers of ships, aircraft, missiles, and troops graphically portrayed in media charts has come to replace the actual dispatch of forces for public view. Aggregate tonnage, warheads, firepower, and budgetary expenditure are arraigned in adjacent columns, purportedly weighing the balance of power. It matters little that Soviet coastal ships have no blue-water capability, that minesweepers have no offensive mission, and that such vessels together with support ships comprise more than half the Pacific fleet. All are subsumed in a summary depiction of who is threatening whom, often so as to induce a crisis of self-confidence in the party that feels on the defensive.

This enhances the political impact of weapons beyond their actual military value, requiring countermeasures that include demonstrable matching capabilities. American deployments, recent and programmed, have responded to this Soviet expansion through the refurbishing of mothballed ships and the planned construction of new ones. But insofar as one strikes an informed and prudent estimate of threat so as to allocate scarce resources against it, the actual balance of power in East Asia seems quite sufficient to assure stability so far as Soviet military activity and intent can be taken into account.

THE CHINESE THREAT

From 1949 to 1971, American foreign policy focused on the threat from China, against which Asian nations were to ally in bilateral or multilateral treaties with Washington. Initially identified as a function of Moscow’s control over Beijing, this policy was expanded upon in terms of Beijing’s support for revolution. After the Sino-Soviet split, China appeared more dangerous than the Soviet Union because it advocated people’s war as opposed to the parliamentary path to power. Mao’s cavalier dismissal of the atom bomb as a “paper tiger” and his Cultural Revolution ethos of violence combined to heighten the official public alarm voiced to justify intervention in the Indochina War.

However, beginning with Henry Kissinger’s secret visit to Beijing in 1971 and President Richard Nixon’s meeting with Mao in 1972, Washington steadily muted its own concern over China’s intentions. By 1978, Zbigniew Brzezinski would call for a strong and secure China as in not only American but also world interest. In June 1981 Secretary of State Alexander Haig followed in his footsteps, declaring a readiness to sell weapons on a case-by-case basis. Beijing backed away from a proposed military mission at that time, but the door remained open to such transactions under the Reagan administration. By 1985, exchanges of view had advanced both sides toward an agreement but without actual sales of weapons.

Meanwhile, China’s posture changed drastically from the heyday of Cultural

25 Barry M. Blechman and Robert P. Berman, Guide to Far East Navies (London: Brassey’s Publications, 1978) notes, “As it always has been for the Soviet Pacific Fleet, the primary mission must be to secure the regional waters that wash Soviet Siberia, particularly the Sea of Japan. The numerous small combatants assigned to the Pacific Fleet would be good for little else” (p. 46).
Revolution rhetoric. Relations with ASEAN stressed governmental ties to the virtual exclusion of all but moral support for Communist insurgents. Beijing approved Japan's security treaty and limited Self-Defense Force capability. It applauded American deployments to the region, except in Korea, and pledged unspecified support for Thailand were it invaded by Vietnam. Finally, the PRC formally declared that peaceful means were a "fundamental" policy in its commitment to unite Taiwan with the mainland while informally indicating to Hong Kong that its socioeconomic way of life will not be disrupted for at least fifty years when Chinese sovereignty is reestablished in 1997.

This quick overview of the past thirty-five years illustrates the changing nature of Chinese policy in Asia as well as foreign perceptions thereof. PRC rhetoric, at times accompanied by action, has shifted considerably over time, depending on the emphasis given to revolution versus the united front in advancing foreign-policy goals, the degree of self-reliance versus dependence on foreign trade and technology in advancing the domestic economy, and the extent of China's acceptance by and involvement with the international system.

As with the Soviet Union, image, myth, and memory frame Chinese perceptions of the outside world against a background of bitter experience encapsulated in the often-cited phrase, "a century of shame and humiliation." The hundred years spanned from the Opium War to World War II when extraterritoriality finally ended. Taiwan was taken by Japan in 1895. It remains outside PRC control today as a Nationalist civil war refuge protected against attack in principle, albeit no longer through treaty, by the United States. China's concessions, whether political, economic, or territorial, went to foe and friend alike as Japan, Russia, Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States took advantage of the imperial decline and the republic's weakness to dilute its sovereignty and divide its territory.

On October 1, 1949, Mao declared that "New China has stood up." One year later Washington ignored Beijing's warnings and permitted General MacArthur's forces to sweep over North Korea to the banks of the Yalu River. China's counterattack restored the status quo ante but at enormous cost. The Sino-Soviet alliance transformed Mao's guerrilla legions into a conventional army, but Moscow reneged on promised nuclear-weapons assistance and publicly expressed neutrality when Sino-Indian incidents flared. This violated Beijing's sense of the behavior to be expected from an ally.

Meanwhile the American CIA cooperated with Taiwan to support Tibetan rebels and anti-Communist dissidents elsewhere on the mainland. By 1962 an extreme economic crisis internally coincided with evidence of potential dissident support externally, prompting Beijing to perceive a virtual encirclement of threat from Taiwan, India, and the Soviet Union with American support in the background. A brief Sino-Indian war resulted.

The Soviet buildup in the latter 1960s evoked rising concern in Beijing, openly

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articulated after Moscow’s invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The American
deescalation of attacks on North Vietnam permitted a massive redeployment of
ground and air power from southeast to northeast and northwest China, accompanied
by public warnings over the possibility of a Sino-Soviet war. These warnings gradually
lessened during the 1970s, but the threat remained manifest in the continued
improvement of Soviet power, both in quality and quantity.

A potential threat from Taiwan disappeared when the normalization of relations
with Washington removed American forces from the island as well as the treaty relationship. However, China acquired another adversary in Vietnam where Soviet deployments added a new dimension to a problem that previously was confined to China’s northern border. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan also extended the line of perceived threat further on the southwestern frontier, although geography made this a minor addition to that which already existed on the Xinjiang border.

These various developments were sufficient reason for military modernization, but they also accompany a long list of territorial disputes, on and off shore, which involve most of China’s neighbors to one extent or another. Beijing’s claim that “disputed areas” exist along the Soviet border in the northeast and southwest has not been resolved in twenty years of intermittent discussion. PRC protests against Japanese-Korean exploration for oil on the continental shelf have failed to have effect for a decade. The Philippines government has likewise sidestepped Beijing’s claims to the Reed and Macclesfield banks in the South China Sea.  

China’s sovereignty over the Paracel Islands was forcefully implemented in 1974, when the PLA quickly overrun a small South Vietnamese contingent there and sealed the situation before Saigon fell to Hanoi. However, Beijing’s claim to the Spratleys, still beyond its reach, clashes with that of Hanoi, Manila, and Taipei, all of whom maintain a token military presence there to signify their jurisdiction in this lower part of the South China Sea. Malaysia also takes exception to the extent of PRC professed sovereignty in the area.

On land, minor border disputes exacerbated Sino-Vietnamese tensions in 1978 and were subsequently exploited by both sides to justify continued clashes. Although the Sino-Indian border has been quiet since 1962 except for insignificant incidents, it remains the subject of major differences between the two countries despite the recent renewal of negotiations. Finally, China’s general stance on the ownership of ocean resources makes it uncertain whether Beijing will abandon its claim to the entire continental shelf extending under the Yellow and East China seas and accept the median-line principle. Acquisition of Taiwan by the PRC would add a further complication to this question, especially for Japan where the dispute over the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu Tai) northeast of Taiwan remains inactive but unresolved.

In short, the PRC is not a status quo power insofar as its professed territorial claims are incongruent with its present area of control. Only Mongolia, Afghanistan,
Nepal, and Burma appear free of pending problems in this regard. Fortunately, however, other policy considerations do not permit Beijing to pursue its claims with force in the foreseeable future. At present the highest priority is given to economic rather than military modernization. Thus dependence on Japan, the United States, and the international economic system both for credits and markets on the one hand, and for technology and advice on the other hand, is necessary to assure a smooth, reliable, and balanced exchange of badly needed goods and services.

This need in turn requires a low posture to make credible China's insistence that it wants a peaceful environment within which it can develop domestically and become strong without any risk to friends and neighbors whose cooperation is essential at this juncture. For instance, in 1982 thirty-three foreign companies bid to explore and exploit China's off-shore oil during the remainder of this century. Their participation in this costly and difficult venture would be jeopardized were Beijing to actively pursue its claims throughout the South and East China seas.

In addition to policy ruling out the use of force, at least during the next decade, Beijing's military weakness also poses a severe constraint. Beijing cannot oust Soviet troops from disputed areas, particularly where they have strategic importance as on the islands opposite Khabarovsk at the Amur-Ussuri river junction and in the Pamir mountains joining the USSR, the PRC, and Afghanistan. Nor does the PLA yet have the requisite air and naval power to contest rival claims over the Spratley Islands. Isolated rigs and exploration vessels might be harassed in the Yellow and East China seas but it would be difficult to enforce Beijing's protests against the Korean-Japanese project. A blockade of Taiwan remains a complicated operation, especially so long as Sino-Soviet border differences prevent the redeployment of modern aircraft to the Taiwan front.

While power does not constrain support for revolution, the same policy considerations that preclude the forceful pursuit of territorial claims also inhibit covert aid to insurgents in Southeast Asia. It is true that none of the likely targets for Beijing-sponsored insurgency are important to China's economic modernization. However, flagrant involvement in armed revolts in Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, or the Philippines would arouse opposition elsewhere against strengthening a civilian economy that could ultimately improve the PLA. This could make weaponry and dual-use technology unavailable for military modernization.

What Next?

Projecting from the present to the future is more hazardous than with the Soviet leadership because of past radical shifts in PRC policy and recurrent power struggles. Beijing successively espoused a tilt toward the USSR against the U.S. in the 1950s, opposition to both superpowers in the 1960s, a tilt toward the U.S. against the USSR in the 1970s, and absolute independence while attacking the "hegemony of the two superpowers" in the 1980s. Domestic politics from 1965 to 1976 frequently entangled foreign policy in factional fighting. Support for revolution versus dependence on foreign trade became alternatively symbols of legitimacy and targets of attack.

Despite these previous swings of policy, it is possible to forecast the likely
limits of Chinese threats to security in Asia. Foremost in this regard is the question of Indochina. Embittered nationalist passions poisoned Hanoi-Beijing relations to the point of bloody conflict in 1979. The heritage of historical Vietnamese hatred and Chinese hegemony was set aside by Ho Chi Minh and Mao Zedong for the sake of solidarity against French colonialism and American “imperialism” during the 1950s and 1960s. However, it won new life once the Vietnam War ended. China’s patron-client relationship with Cambodia became intolerable in Hanoi as Kampuchea under Pol Pot harassed border villages. Hanoi’s tilt toward Moscow infuriated Beijing as did the expulsion of ethnic Chinese from Vietnam, particularly after China’s military and political aid during the war.

Beijing has not endeavored to teach Hanoi “a second lesson,” having suffered some embarrassment and considerable casualties in its initial effort. But its support for the guerrillas operating from Thailand and its deployment of sizable forces along the Vietnamese border challenge Hanoi’s hegemony in Indochina. Symbolic of Beijing’s opposition to the Hanoi-regime is sponsorship of Hoang Van Hoan’s public call for its overthrow. Hoang, an aged colleague of Ho and former Politburo member, ranks with Leon Trotsky as a high Communist leader using refuge in a hostile country to contest his former associates’ rule.

As discussed earlier, the bilateral situation is enmeshed in the larger contest of Sino-Soviet and Soviet-Vietnamese relations. The spillover effect of these relations impact on the security of Thailand in particular, but also on peace throughout the region. Should a Sino-Vietnamese war erupt in the South China Sea, Japan’s oceanic lifeline would be in jeopardy unless it were diverted to a more costly and lengthy route.

So far, “worst case” scenarios have failed to become reality despite preliminary alarms being sounded in 1979 during the Sino-Vietnamese conflict, in 1980 when the Vietnamese hit refugee camps in Thailand, and again in 1983–84 when similar situations resulted in the shooting down of Thai aircraft, recurrent clashes between border troops, and Vietnamese intrusions into Thailand in pursuit of retreating Khmer. Related but separate threats to domestic security for Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia emerged with the mass migration of “boat people” in 1978–80. This problem continues to cause concern as political and economic refugees still flee the three Indochinese countries.

Logic argues against the prospect of Hanoi significantly expanding its area of military operations beyond that evident to date so as to threaten Thailand with invasion. The burden of still another military campaign on a population and budget already strained to meet necessary civilian economic needs is coupled with the likely prospect of a strong Chinese reaction. Nor could Hanoi be confident that an offensive deep into Thailand would end the threat from guerrilla camps presently based along the border. The guerrillas could simply disperse and regroup later to resume their attacks. This being the case, China is unlikely to engage in major hostilities with Vietnam.

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Other potential Chinese threats are less pressing. The Indian border dispute dates back to the 1950s. The status quo is tacitly accepted, being observed in practice. None of the mentioned ocean disputes require resolution so long as drilling occurs in uncontested areas, an option certain to be chosen by all parties under the circumstances. In the meantime there is ample time for the PRC to adjust its stand on the continental shelf to satisfy Korean and Japanese needs for access up to the median line.

Less likely, however, are Chinese concessions on contested island claims. Not only are these more tangibly associated with the concept of national unity and territorial sovereignty, but they also link with the question of Taiwan. The Taiwan issue and American involvement therein have been a source of deep frustration and division within the Chinese leadership. Unification is formally identified as one of three major goals to be pursued in the 1990s. The use of force is specifically threatened should the island be declared independent, a possible contingency when President Chiang Ching-kuo leaves the scene. Yet so long as his rule and that of his Nationalist successors maintains the status quo Beijing will probably continue its passivity and not resort to blockade or invasion, despite occasional verbal threats of such action.

This indeterminate combination of Taiwan politics and time leaves uncertain the longer-run future, but the Republic of China has so far proved of amazing durability as a symbolic claimant to legitimacy. It outlasted the Sino-Soviet alliance, the mainland acquisition of nuclear weapons, ouster from the United Nations, the death of Chiang Kai-shek, loss of recognition by the United States, and termination of the American security agreement. The past does not predict the future, but it does caution against the word “inevitable” in forecasting Taiwan’s coming under mainland rule.

American interest in a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue has been reiterated in bilateral as well as unilateral statements on Sino-American relations issued under presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, and Reagan. This raises the likelihood of economic sanctions if force were to be applied. Such sanctions could be critical, for example, in China’s off-shore oil program. Thus, aside from the feasibility of taking Taiwan by force, a highly problematic endeavor for at least the next five years, the potential political and economic consequences almost certainly will dissuade the Chinese leadership from attempting it during that time.

Should Taiwan politics subsequently move toward independence, however, or enter a prolonged period of instability marked by recurring violence, PRC policy will become less predictable. The leadership could calculate that an historic moment was at hand, which made action, or at least the threat thereof, necessary lest developments pass a point of no return. Acquiescence in whatever outcome occurred might be felt to doom forever gaining the island. Political opposition or opportunism could make this a highly contentious issue, depending on the degree of factionalism in Beijing.

Hong Kong presents a similar problem should internal turmoil become so serious as to trigger a takeover by China before 1997, the date now officially designated as the termination of British rule. But there is no risk of Hong Kong declaring independence; hence Beijing is likely to remain content with British control
under the treaty signed in 1984, especially since the Chinese together with Hong Kong citizens will determine the future form of governance. While the two cases are dissimilar on several important counts, Taiwan and Hong Kong may well react similarly to the means and consequences of a mainland takeover of either one. Therefore, PRC policy will aim for a minimum of force and a maximum of persuasive diplomacy, safeguarding to the extent possible the considerable economic value inherent in both. This consideration is explicit in the formal and informal statements emanating from Chinese Communist officials in recent years.

In sum, China's relations with neighboring regimes offer considerable potential for dispute but little prospect of actual threats to their security. Between 1949 and 1979 Beijing used force on at least twelve occasions to assert its interest on or across its borders. During the same period it provided training, money, and weapons to insurgents throughout Southeast Asia. Yet the priorities of the present regime make it unwilling to pursue foreign-policy objectives through force, least of all in support of revolution abroad. A partial détente with the USSR and a modus vivendi with Vietnam might further reduce the security threat both for China and for its neighbors. But even should one or both of these developments not eventuate, the alternative prospect of escalation into serious conflict on either front is highly improbable during this decade.

KOREA AND MAJOR-POWER INVOLVEMENT

Despite the absence of a peace treaty and the presence of powerful military forces on both sides, the divided Korean peninsula has remained relatively quiet for more than thirty years. Border incidents and small incursions occur periodically, but the extensive local and foreign investment which has expanded Seoul into a modern metropolis only minutes by jet fighter from the DMZ testifies to the sense of confidence at home and abroad in the status quo.

Recurring alarms to the contrary, internal and external factors converge to secure the peace. North Korea suffered total destruction during three years of United Nations air and sea bombardment. Kim Il Sung's near-fatal miscalculation of Washington's response to Pyongyang's attack will not be repeated in his lifetime. This is especially so with a treaty commitment backed by thousands of American troops and aircraft in South Korea, none of which were present in June 1950. Moreover, Beijing and Moscow undoubtedly encourage restraint. As for Seoul, no leader there has defied Washington's adamant opposition to uniting the country by force. Concentrating on economic development instead has made accepting American policy pay off handsomely for both the regime and the populace.

As a consequence of Sino-American détente in 1971, contact began between North and South Korea, which resulted in a short-lived series of discussions on establishing minor informal and individual exchanges. Until 1984, little occurred of a positive nature, and Pyongyang's polemical attacks rarely varied their shrill, hostile

tone. In 1983 the annual South Korean-American military exercises purportedly provoked a “semi-war alert” in the North but nothing further transpired. The accompanying mass rallies emphasized mobilizing for greater productivity more than for war. In 1984, however, the prospects for a renewed North-South dialogue brightened, and the first meeting in more than a decade took place at the end of that year. Further negotiations in 1985 won partial agreement on family reunion and economic interchange.

Reassuring as is this record, some cause for concern exists over future North Korean behavior after Kim II Sung dies. His son, Kim Jong II, is the apparent successor, following an established Korean tradition, but unprecedented in Communist systems. Whether the son will emulate his father’s passive behavior with respect to South Korea is open to question. He has been groomed for the job over much of the past decade and is presumably privy to the senior Kim’s thinking. Therefore, the logic which argued against testing American resolve a second time should prevail in the future so long as Washington’s treaty commitment is backed by American troops in the South. This logic should also be shared by North Korean military leaders for whom the devastating firepower of 1950–53 must be a searing memory. That experience is reinforced by the belief that nuclear weapons stored in the South will be used in extremis.  

Against this positive analysis stand two negative cautions. First, outside of the Communist world little is known of Kim Jong Il’s views or behavior. Second, North Korea seems singularly submissive to a personalized autocracy. The cult of personality surrounding Kim II Sung has no counterpart elsewhere. These two facts in combination constrain a conventional forecast of decision-making in Pyongyang based on the perceptual, organizational, and bureaucratic framework applicable to other regimes.

But this does not necessarily justify an approach that emphasizes unpredictable irrationality. The attribution of these characteristics to Kim II Sung, coupled with assertions abroad of a compulsion to unite Korea by force before his sixtieth—subsequently his seventieth—birthday proved wholly misplaced. Pyongyang’s propagandistic eulogies may induce megalomania, but this did not prompt Kim to further adventurism where there was a serious risk of war.

Nevertheless, the unique circumstances attending analysis of the Korean case justify prudence for all major powers associated with either side in the peninsula, lest misleading signals prompt Kim Jong II to think that subversion in the South combined with invasion from the North can deliver so swift and stunning a blow to Seoul as to

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30 North Korean charges to this effect are standard propaganda; American officials refuse to confirm or deny non-Communist as well as Communist stories to this effect.
31 Chong-Sik Lee, “Evolution of the Korean Workers’ Party and the Rise of Kim Jong II,” Asian Survey, May 1982, pp. 434–48, traces the son’s rise and speculates on his prospects, but offers no information on his personality or outlook. Authoritative sources in Beijing claim confidence in Kim Jong II’s intelligence, knowledge of world affairs, and judgment, based on their association with him over many years, including in one instance a classmate.
preempt an American response and prompt a surrender. A token American military presence backed by treaty with demonstrable deployment of American forces in the western Pacific should suffice to deter this threat so that eventually Korea, like Germany, may become divided on a *de jure* as well as a *de facto* basis.


2. Continental Stalemates and Pacific Irritations in the Western Pacific

Takashi Inoguchi

INTRODUCTION

The region of the western Pacific consists of countries of enormous diversity (from the USSR through China and Japan to ASEAN and Australia), but two features, increasingly important during the past decade, call for a look at the region as a distinctive entity. The first feature is the strategic inseparability or the increasingly tightly knit security relations of states within the region. The other is the rapid growth of economic interdependence or the increasingly interrelated nature of national economies. Although the western Pacific region is far less integrated than western Europe, these two features justify an examination of security and development in regional terms, in addition to a country-by-country discussion. Thus, this contribution attempts to delineate major trends in regional security and development.

The U.S.-USSR conflict has been the dominant security dimension of the region, interlinked with local security relations both on the continent and along the Pacific rim. The U.S. bases in key countries of the Pacific rim (Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines), the increasingly intense naval activities of the U.S. and the USSR in the region, and the newly introduced Soviet intermediate-range nuclear

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forces (INF) in Soviet Asia constitute the basic components of the Soviet-American rivalry in the region. The confrontations in the Korean peninsula and the Straits of Taiwan, which have been constant since the height of the Cold War of the 1940s and 1950s, demonstrate the tenacity of this rivalry. More recently, the scope and impact of the conflicts on the continent have increased: the Chinese-Soviet conflict of 1969, the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea since 1978, the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in 1979. These continental conflicts have greatly complicated the nature of the security relationships in the region.

To illustrate the character of intra- and inter-regional security relations, a few recent instances that have occasioned security alignments can be noted. First, the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam in 1975 aroused the apprehensions of many countries in the region including China. Second, President Carter’s plan to withdraw U.S. forces from South Korea significantly lessened U.S. credibility with many countries in the region including Japan. Third, the Brezhnev doctrine of 1968, enunciated after the intervention of the Warsaw Pact Organization’s forces in Czechoslovakia, has been connected by some scholars to the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1969. Fourth, through the events of 1978–1979 and thereafter, the Kampuchea-Vietnam-China-USSR security linkage has become firm and seemingly indissoluble. Fifth, the U.S.-USSR talks in Geneva showed the inseparable nature of Europe and Asia through the Soviet introduction of INF in Soviet Asia.

The interrelated nature of national economies has also been recognized recently. First, the region’s high economic performance for the past two decades has increased economic ties within the region and with extraregional industrialized economies. The new vital link within the region, developed and expanded since the mid-1970s, can be found in the relations among the petroleum-exporting economies (Indonesia, Brunei, and, to a lesser extent, Malaysia) and the industrialized and industrializing economies (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong). More recently, South Korea and Taiwan, emulating the forerunner, Japan, have started to penetrate the Southeast Asian market by exporting manufactured goods and industrial plants. The region’s tie with extraregional industrialized economies has also been reinforced. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and, increasingly, Malaysia and some other ASEAN economies have exported significant amounts of manufactured goods to the United States and, to a lesser extent, to western Europe and Australia. Second, since several economies in the region are relatively

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small in terms of gross national product (GNP), with a heavy dependence on the export of manufactured goods to industrialized countries (most importantly, the U.S.), the prolonged recession in those countries has also affected the region. As Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew noted, “The Singapore economy can stand recessions in the United States and Europe for one or two more years, but no longer.” Debt financing has become a source of concern in some countries, most notably in South Korea, the Philippines, and, to a lesser degree, Indonesia. However, increasing optimism has been expressed over debts owed by less developed countries (LDCs) as the world economy has steadily recovered. Many western Pacific countries have been able to service their debts by vigorous state-led industrialization efforts. Third, in addition to these capitalist countries, most Asian socialist countries (including the USSR, China, Vietnam, and North Korea) have been more exposed than before to capitalist world economic forces, learning slowly how to deal with deepening economic interdependence especially since the mid-1970s.

Economic interdependence during a period of recession often means conflict among countries in trade, investment, aid, technology transfer, finance, research and development (R&D), and macroeconomic management. Protectionism has been creeping forward or, in some instances, accelerating globally and regionally. Both “the Japanese problem” and also the problem of “many Japans” have been widespread topics of conversation. The economic disputes between Japan and the United States have been pronounced, and have serious implications. Japanese-South Korean

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12 Many of these problems are competently discussed in Robert F. Dernberger, “Economic Development and Models in the Present and the Future,” in the first of these conference volumes.

relations have produced issues pertaining to security assistance, technology transfer, and market access. In other words, economic dynamism has linked the economies of the region and in doing so, has generated or exacerbated frictions.

Observing the region at the systemic level, a measure of stability in the 1980s is apparent, compared with the decade of the 1970s. The major transition from the “golden era” of Pax Americana to the era of a new, more complicated power configuration beginning in the late 1960s through the 1970s was a source of instability in Asia as elsewhere. By the early 1980s, however, the basic patterns of political/economic relationships in the region seem to have been set, after having passed a decade-long structural readjustment. At least a temporary equalization has been attained.

This essay examines two salient patterns as of the early 1980s: the dynamic stalemates on the continent and the structural irritations along the Pacific rim. On the continent, military stalemates have been the most outstanding feature after the confrontations at the Sino-Soviet border, the Korean peninsula, the Straits of Taiwan, the Sino-Vietnamese border, and Kampuchea. These stalemates are dynamic, however, with the potential of a conflagration being rekindled at any moment. Along the Pacific rim, the economic irritations have been most pronounced, with the region’s economic dynamism causing increasing friction with the less dynamic industrialized countries, especially at the time of recession. These structural irritations are related to the shift of dynamism in the world economy.

STRUCTURAL TRANSITION

The structural transition in the 1970s took place in two areas: security relations and economic relations. In the security area, the main developments were the relative American decline and the armed conflicts on the continent that followed, leading to the USSR-China-Vietnam-Kampuchea security linkage. In the economic area, the main developments were the upward movement of most economies within the region in terms of production and trade, and the conflictual relations with the U.S., especially the Japan-U.S. competition.

Relative American Decline and Continental Splits

U.S. global and regional hegemony suffered a relative setback from the late 1960s through the 1970s. The relative decline becomes clearer if the time span is extended back to the 1940s and 1950s.

The brief Japanese security hegemony over most of the region in the first year of

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the 1941–1945 war was replaced by the U.S. rise to hegemony by 1945. Although North Vietnam, North Korea, and China were to be placed outside its hegemonic orbit, what was called the Pax Americana seemed at the time to have achieved a semipermanent existence in the region. Most regional states had recently become independent, with weak power bases and insufficient experience. Although the population had grown since the colonial period and especially after independence, regional GNP was minuscule compared with that of the U.S., which accounted for 34 percent of world GNP in 1950.17 American diplomatic recognition gave the governments the legitimacy helpful or necessary to establish and consolidate their rule. The U.S. guaranteed the survival of governments in some strategically crucial states with a massive flow of aid for both defense and development. Although this portrayal of the U.S. as the hegemonic state in the region may exaggerate the real strength of the U.S. during that period, the extent to which allies in the Pacific complied with the wishes of the U.S., a nation then endowed with more leverage vis-à-vis its allies, was certainly greater than at present. However, that condition remained intact only until the mid- or late 1960s.

By the late 1960s, troubles in the U.S. economy arising in part from overcommitment at home and overextension abroad became so serious as to threaten the basic hegemonic posture the U.S. had held.18 It is useful to recall three economic policy actions taken by the U.S. government to alleviate the heavy burdens of international economic management in the early 1970s. First, the dollar was taken off the gold standard in 1971.19 Second, protectionist measures to redress the American negative trade balance with Japan were also taken in 1971.20 Third, anti-inflation measures were put into effect.

With the advent of the first oil crisis and the world recession, the U.S. economy was further troubled. To revitalize the economy, various measures were attempted intermittently, with mixed results. U.S. efforts to manage macroeconomic and international economic issues jointly with major industrialized countries did not work well, and left the impression of U.S. ineffectiveness in the 1970s.21 Adjustment to this relative decline was the first major factor underlying the structural transition in the Asian region. The second oil crisis of 1979–1980 hit the United States hard, and both inflation and unemployment soared simultaneously. On his assumption of the

chairmanship of the Federal Reserve Board, Mr. Paul Volcker implemented the high-interest policy, which resulted in the fairly effective suppression of inflation, but a steady increase in unemployment, a worsening trade performance (especially with Japan), and the prolongation of the world recession, which lasted till mid- to late 1983.22

It is also useful to recall three security-related policy actions taken by the U.S. government in the early 1970s: to disengage itself from the Vietnam war, to “play the China card” to augment the perceived diminishing military gap between the U.S. and the USSR, and to achieve a détente with the USSR in terms of strategic nuclear forces. However, the events in the mid- and late 1970s in Indochina, Angola, and Iran tarnished the U.S. image and reinforced the widely held impression of the country’s relative decline. The withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Vietnam, Kampuchea, and Thailand was seen as a major victory for Hanoi. The new relationship with the PRC produced a withdrawal of U.S. forces from Taiwan, which was gradually implemented in the 1970s and completed by 1979 when the United States formally established diplomatic relations with China. The events in Iran and neighboring countries in the late 1970s prompted the American government to create the Rapid Deployment Forces (RDF) for the Middle East at the partial sacrifice of the U.S. forces stationed in other regions, particularly in Asia and the Pacific.23

Because the withdrawal of U.S. forces in the mid-1970s coincided with the global U.S.-USSR stalemate, it was assumed by many observers at the time that the withdrawal was in basic harmony with a global trend toward an American-Soviet military balance and a global reduction of tension. It was discovered afterward, however, that the Soviet military buildup continued throughout the 1970s, notwithstanding the détente that the American government believed to have been achieved. Thus, when a substantial portion of the U.S. Pacific forces was earmarked for the RDF in the Middle East, the reduction became critical, causing concern and alarm in some quarters.24 It now appears, however, that the vacuum in the Pacific created by redeployment to the Middle East is not going to be a continuing problem. The steady military buildup of the United States since the late 1970s coupled with the pressure directed at allies to shoulder more military burdens seems likely to end any military imbalance.

Linked to the security-related U.S. actions in the region have been the continental conflicts among the four Communist powers. In part, these represent responses to the structural transition in the regional power configuration as evidenced by the relative American decline and the absolute Soviet military growth. This is not

22 See, for instance, Nichon Keizai Shimbun, June 20, 1983.
meant to imply that a direct causal link existed between the relative American decline and the military conflicts among the continental Communist powers. Rather, the structural transition was one of the prerequisites to the eruption of the continental conflicts. Many endogenous factors may also be listed as causal factors—from history and geopolitics to economic forces and perceptual interactions. In order to see this point more clearly, the major conflicts from the late 1960s through the 1970s will be discussed.

First, the Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969 reflected the confusion on the part of the Chinese concerning the best strategy to cope with its principal enemy during the period of relative American decline and relative Soviet vigor, a situation highlighted by the American setback after the Tet offensive of 1968. The so-called Brezhnev doctrine limiting the sovereignty of socialist states by refusing them the right to leave socialism, enunciated in the course of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and the Vietnamese endorsement of the Soviet action, reminded the Chinese, as R. Wich argues, of the ominous implication of a possible Soviet-Vietnamese encirclement of China. The question of what kind of relationship China should maintain with the USSR when the United States was exhibiting a decreasing “will to power” when compared with the USSR, a state which seemed to the Chinese to be rapidly catching up with or even surpassing the United States in its military capacity, was the primary motive that led China to the events of 1969 and to the rapprochement with the United States in 1971.

Second, the complex and fluid Soviet-Chinese-Vietnamese-Kampuchean interactions since the late 1970s reflected the efforts of each state to adjust to the changes in regional security issues brought about by the withdrawal of the United States from Vietnam. The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in 1978–1979 and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in 1979 were attempts to shape the military-political balance in the region after the Vietnam war. The power vacuum resulting from the U.S. withdrawal from Indochina was filled by local Communists in each of the three Indochinese countries. When the strong foreign enemy was forced to withdraw, the traditional animosity between Kampuchea and Vietnam was easily revived, leading them to engage in border clashes shortly after 1975. China did not want Kampuchea—and, as its extension, the rest of Southeast Asia—to become Vietnam’s sphere of influence nor was it pleased with the persecution of ethnic Chinese in Vietnam at the hands of the Vietnamese government. The establishment of a formal military alliance between Vietnam and the USSR in November 1978, the Vietnamese

27 Wich, Sino-Soviet Crisis Politics.
28 Chang, “Beijing versus Hanoi.”
invasion of Kampuchea starting in the following month, and the Chinese intervention in Vietnam in February-March 1979 took place as a chain reaction. Put differently, the continental splits represent billiard-ball-like interactions related to the decade-long tectonic transformation in the American-Soviet balance in the region. Since American-Soviet relations had been basically kept under mutual constraint throughout the early 1970s, the onus of “adjustments” by force now fell upon the continental powers. As a result of these adjustments, the following complicated security map has emerged on the continent.

On the global scene, the U.S. and the USSR have been intermittently trying to reach some modus vivendi concerning strategic and semistrategic (intermediate) nuclear forces. Agreements on strategic nuclear weapons in the 1970s, the negotiation on intermediate nuclear forces in Geneva, and newly scheduled talks in 1985 illustrate the way in which these issues alternately arise and are deadlocked, providing a regularized and routinized pattern of interactions between the two global powers. The recent phase of the U.S.-USSR relationship (up to 1985) represents a cold-war phase rather than a détente phase. Regardless of the question of who initiated the Second Cold War, that phase constitutes part of the competitive game between the two powers, and we may be witnessing a shift toward some degree of accommodation in 1985 as a result of multiple pressures.

On the regional scene, the pattern is more complicated. On the Korean peninsula, the locally generated conflict and the global American-Soviet conflict have been intertwined since the last months of World War II. The animosity between the two powers has been so intense for years that the potential for a major conflict always exists. Recently however, some economic transactions have been practiced, either directly or through third countries (such as Japan-North Korea, South Korea-China, and South Korea-USSR). Two events that occurred in 1983—the Soviet shooting of the Korean Airlines plane off Sakhalin Island and North Korea’s attempt to assassinate the South Korean president, Chun Doo Hwan, in Rangoon—have done some damage to this trend. Given the strong economic demands for interactions, however, it seems that the basic trend will continue despite these events, possibly assisted by the new turn in North-South relations.

In the straits of Taiwan, the picture changed dramatically in the 1970s. First, the United States, Japan, and other countries shifted their formal diplomatic relations to the PRC during the 1970s. At the same time, all these countries have continued their economic relations with Taiwan and Hong Kong as well as China, often with an equal or higher amount of trade and investment in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Thus, while rhetoric over the Taiwan issue has been high, tension has been minimized.


In Indochina, skirmishes are still going on, on the borders between Vietnam and China and those between Thailand and Kampuchea. The United States, China, ASEAN, Japan, and other countries support the antigovernment forces in Kampuchea against the Heng Samrin government supported by Vietnam, which has been allied with the USSR since 1978. The degree of support given the anti-Vietnam Khmer differs substantially, however, as has been revealed by the intermittent Indonesian dialogue with the Vietnamese.32

Meanwhile, the American-Soviet military competition has been gradually stepped up in the vicinity of Japan. Perceptions of the Soviet military threat held by the U.S. and the Japanese governments differ in many ways. Whereas the American government tends to see the gradual Soviet military buildup as part of its global drive toward hegemony, thus requiring a coordinated counterbuildup shared “fairly” by the United States and its allies, the Japanese government—and even more, the Japanese people—see it as less threatening, thus not requiring an immediate and large-scale buildup, which the Japanese government fears would only result in an equally vigorous Soviet response.33

To recapitulate the broad security relationships, the most important factor has been the change in the American-Soviet military balance in the region. However, since American-Soviet relations have been managed thus far without either party directly resorting to force against the other, and since the Pacific countries have been preoccupied with economic development, the continental powers have gradually made adjustments to the transformation in the American-Soviet military balance without major conflict. The transformation of security relations along the Pacific rim has not occurred. Although steady alterations have taken place in the Pacific security balance between the United States and the USSR, especially since the late 1970s, there has been no significant structural adjustment; rather a gradual “fine tuning” policy has prevailed for many governments in the region. The most noteworthy examples of this trend can be found in Indonesia, South Korea, and Japan—the three countries that the 1983 Reagan visit to the region initially was to cover as the top-priority countries in the Pacific rim.

Indonesia has pursued two lines in its foreign policy—to be a friend of the United States and to remain a nonaligned nation. In recent times, however, a slippage in U.S.-Indonesia relations appears to have occurred. The slight to the Indonesian government as perceived in Jakarta when President Reagan cancelled his 1983 visit following the assassination of Benigno Aquino had adverse repercussions. The Indonesian government was not interested in having Reagan visit the country after his trip to the People’s Republic of China in April 1984.34 More fundamental, perhaps, have been differences over economic matters and over the Vietnam issue. Thus, the Indonesian tilt in the recent past has been more strongly toward nonalignment.

South Korea has been a staunch U.S. ally since its creation as a state, and that continues. In the past several years, however, the ROK has campaigned vigorously to develop informal ties with the Soviet Union and, most particularly, with China. It has also reached out increasingly to the Third World, seeking to compete with North Korea, which once had a substantial lead among these nations. With these developments has come a growing sense of the importance of diversifying contacts.

Japan also has been one of the most stable and reliable allies of the United States. Yet a new or enlarged feature has entered Japanese foreign policy. Under the slogan, "sharing international responsibilities," that nation has begun to extend its political as well as its economic influence in the world arena. Two examples are the strong support of the Japanese government for a NATO counteraction in western Europe against the emplacement of Soviet missiles and the Japanese assistance in Pakistan's move to extend diplomatic relations to South Korea shortly after the Rangoon massacre.

More basically, a gradual shift in the tone and emphasis in Japanese foreign policy is noticeable. Ironically, the shift may be most noticeable in the new direction being taken by the largest opposition party, the Japan Socialist party. The JSP's official policy has been that of unarmed neutrality. However, the recent emphasis is on "nonnuclear armament and nonalignment," while retaining the security ties with the United States. The Japanese government's efforts on the one hand to enhance its regional ties in the western Pacific and its prestige in the Third World and, on the other hand, to strengthen its capacity to resist the Soviet threat in greater conformity with the JSP's new "nonnuclear armament and nonalignment" policy, suggest at least a modest degree of convergence.

The increasing self-confidence of these three countries, their growing economic strength, and their recent difficulties with the United States lead them to associate more actively with many different countries. This type of fine tuning will result in some important transformations in the regional power configuration in the longer term. With this in mind, it is interesting to look at the recent voting record of countries in the United Nations, noting the ranking of countries in accordance with the percentage of votes there that accorded with the vote of the United States: 93.3 percent for Israel, 84.2 percent for Britain, 82 percent for West Germany, 69 percent for Japan, 64.6 percent for the other NATO countries, and 24.7 percent for ASEAN countries (the highest being 30.4 percent for the Philippines, the lowest being 21.4 percent for Indonesia.)

Global Economic Downturns and the Regional Competitive Edge

The second aspect of the structural transition in the 1970s was the combination of the world economic downturn and Asia's regional competitive edge. The world economy underwent an upswing in the third quarter of the century and then entered
into a downturn in the fourth quarter. During the third quarter, when American-led
business activities advanced throughout the world, some countries attained higher
growth rates than the United States. In the 1950s and 1960s, western Europe and
subsequently Japan were such examples. In the 1970s and 1980s the examples are
most importantly in the western Pacific region. We will discuss the world economic
trend first.

Even a cursory comparison of the 1950s to 1960s with the 1930s to 1940s and
the 1970s to 1980s illustrates the overall differences between these time spans. However, it may be useful to recall the four criteria that Kondratieff used to identify
long-term conjunctural changes (Kondratieff cycles), namely wars, technological
innovations, gold production (or in a more contemporary context, money supply),
and agricultural production (or in a more contemporary context, resource con-
straints). The third quarter of the century represented an era of distinct economic
upturn measured by most of these criteria. World War II, the Cold War, the Korean
War, and the Vietnam War all played an important role in initiating or accelerating an
upward trend, and by the same token, precipitating its end. Waves of technological
innovations and their rapid diffusion over the globe were unprecedented in history in
terms of their variety and the enormous impact on production. Money-supply expan-
sion was very high in many countries, serving to support flourishing business
activities and accelerating inflation in the last phase of the period. The prices of
commodities remained very low for the most part, and resource utilization reached
new heights by the end of the third quarter of the century.

In the fourth quarter, the picture changed. Not only the United States (in Central
America, the Caribbean, Lebanon), but France (in Chad, Lebanon), the USSR (in
Afghanistan) and Britain (in the Falklands) have shown a strong propensity to
intervention. The impact of these actions on the economies, however, seems to have
been limited. Money supply has been kept fairly low after high inflation was reduced.
The search for resources has been intensified in many areas including nuclear and
nonnuclear energy supplies, nonferrous metals, seabed resources, and food. With
the advent of the world economic downturn, competition in the international eco-
nomic arena has become increasingly fierce. Concomitant with the world economic
downturn, however, was the relative upturn of some developing economies. One of
the most notable regions of this occurrence was the western Pacific.

In contrast to the relatively poor economic performance of most industrialized
countries after the oil crisis, a majority of countries in East Asia registered a
remarkably high growth rate. The average growth rate measured in real GNP for all

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the developing economies in 1976–1982 was 2.8 percent while the figure for the developing western Pacific countries (Taiwan excluded) in 1975–1982 was 6.9 percent.\textsuperscript{42} These countries were thus able to take advantage of the decreasing competitiveness of industrialized countries.\textsuperscript{43} Foremost among the strong performers were the Asian newly industrializing countries (NICs)—South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Each of these export-oriented economies became adroit at adjusting to the changing markets in the industrialized countries. Among the industrial states, Japan was able to perform significantly better than other states in this category. ASEAN countries also achieved remarkable growth.

The oil crisis and the subsequent economic recession brought about the relative decline in competitiveness of industrialized countries. The decline cannot be attributed primarily to the differences in labor costs. It has more to do with the ingenuity and adroitness of the NICs in placing their emphasis on labor-intensive, export-oriented industrial goods and rapidly developing machinery, electric, and chemical industries as well as the rigidity of the pioneer industrial nations in restructuring themselves. A social and political pressure against change prevails in most industrialized countries. Government resources are often committed to extensive social services and related policies with only meager budgets available for innovative programs devoted to structural changes in the economic field. In addition, various interest groups are determined to keep the privileges previously accorded. Paralyzed by these realities, governments are forced to move toward protectionism, accompanied by the formation of regional blocs and/or an autarkic policy of “capitalism in one country (region)” covering the trade, energy, and other policy areas.\textsuperscript{44}

Japan is one of the industrialized countries faced with all these problems. Japan, however, has had an acceptable inflation rate, a low unemployment rate, and an enormous balance-of-payments surplus during most of the recent period. It has shown ingenuity in industrial restructuring, in some cases even abandoning the much-vaulted permanent-employment practice adhered to for decades by large-scale enterprises.\textsuperscript{45}

The Far Eastern NICs—South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore—took advantage of the decline of industrialized countries accentuated by the oil crisis. Their strength, already accumulating, manifested itself in the export market despite many disadvantages such as the lack of natural resources. With great effectiveness,

\textsuperscript{42} U.N. ESCAP, \textit{Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific} (Bangkok, 1982).
\textsuperscript{43} This portion is adapted from Takashi Inoguchi, “Politics Should Help Economics Take Command: Political Dimensions of the Emerging Prosperity in East and Southeast Asia,” \textit{Korea-Japan Relations} (Seoul: Korea University Asiatic Research Center, 1980), pp. 25–51. Also see Norman MacRae, “Two Billion People,” \textit{The Economist}, May 7, 1977, pp. 7–67.
\textsuperscript{44} These features are more apparent in western Europe and North America than in Japan. See also Mancur Olson, \textit{The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation and Social Rigidities} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). Also see Zysman and Tyson, eds., \textit{American Industry}.
they demonstrated ingenuity and aggressiveness in turning the global crisis into an opportunity and advantage.  

ASEAN’s performance in the recent past has also been good, if less spectacular than that of the Far Eastern NICs. Despite the problems of political instability and internal insurgencies, ASEAN countries made steady advance in economic development, partly because of strong American and Japanese economic influence. They were shrewd in using their combined diplomatic skill to meet the economic challenges and opportunities coming from Japan, the United States, the European community, and Australia, and in maneuvering among major powers, including China, the USSR, Japan, and the United States.  

In tandem with the region’s entry into the world market, financial institutions rapidly developed. Singapore and Hong Kong have developed as the two international financial centers of the region, although Hong Kong’s uncertain future has been a somewhat negative factor. With the economies of most of its customers thriving, the Asian Development Bank has played an increasingly active role in financing growth. Moreover, Japan, possessing the largest regional economy, has come to be active in international financial transactions. The combination of the high savings rate of about 20 percent and the sluggish demand for investment at home since 1974 means that capital outflows are inevitable. Furthermore, the relatively good performance of the Japanese economy has attracted a large amount of Eurodollars into Japanese banks. The results are increasing Japanese activities in direct foreign investment, foreign aid, and Eurodollar loans.

Foreign direct investment by Japan registered $7.7 billions in 1982, signaling a radical departure from the time up to a decade ago when that nation was an insignificant investor. More than one-half of that investment goes to countries that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a drastic change from the pre-oil crisis period when Japanese foreign direct investment was predominantly directed to developing countries, especially in the western Pacific. The Japanese concern about trade disputes concerning manufactured products and the secure supply of raw materials have accelerated this expansion.

In foreign aid, too, Japanese achievements are significant. The absolute amount of Japanese official development assistance (ODA) was second to that of the United States by 1983. The expansion has been startling. During 1979–1981 ODA was

46 Besides relevant reference in note 8, see also Chalmers Johnson, “Political Institutions and Economic Performance” in the first of these conference volumes.
47 As for various aspects of ASEAN, see Robert A. Scalapino and Jusuf Wanandi, eds., Economic, Political, and Security Issues in Southeast Asia in the 1980s (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1982).
tripled, and the accumulated ODA for 1981–1985 is expected to be more than 1.5 times as large as the accumulated ODA for 1975–1981, which was approximately $11 billion. Besides ODA, government lending, of which three large-scale loans to South Korea (1982) and China (1979 and 1984) are the best-known examples (the total amounting to more than $6 billion), and contributions to such international organizations as the IMF, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank have been expanding rapidly.

In terms of geographical coverage, Japan has become the number-one aid donor to most countries east of Pakistan. In addition to East, Southeast, and South Asia, Japanese ODA flows to the Middle East and North Africa, South and Central America, and, to a lesser extent, sub-Saharan Africa. In terms of the kind of aid, Japan's emphasis on infrastructure is in marked contrast to the American emphasis on basic needs (health, education, and agriculture) and weapons. Aid expansion has been influenced by the increasing foreign criticisms of Japan as a free rider in the international system. In this context, security-related aid to Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, and Central America represents an effort to play a more active role in shaping the regional or global balance of power.

More significantly, Japanese overseas loan assets have reached $58 billions. It was only in 1976 that Japan started almost from scratch in this area. This, however, is parallel to the phenomenal growth of Eurodollar lending in the whole world, which in 1982 became 4.3 times as large as the foreign reserves broadly defined (that is, foreign reserves narrowly defined, SDR, IMF position, and gold). Eurodollar lending ($20 billion in 1980) has become about three times as important as direct foreign investment in less-developed countries (LDCs) that are not members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ($7.2 billions in 1980).

Noteworthy of Japanese Eurodollar lending for development are two aspects. First, Japanese Eurodollar lending is on the average characterized by low spreads and high maturity. Second, it is noted for its adroit debt-rescheduling operations with some developing countries, replacing high spread/low maturity loans with low spread/high maturity loans of its own.

Elements of more serious Pacific structural irritations are found not in these areas but in the liberalization of the Japanese financial markets. The U.S. government has become aggressive in pushing the accelerated liberalization of the yen as an international currency so that yen can be used as one of the key reserve currencies along with the dollar, deutsche mark, pound sterling, ECU, and SDR. One of the American aims of doing this is to alleviate the burden of the dollar as the key currency and thus to ease domestic macro-economic management in the United States in view

53 Ibid., June 20, 1983.
of the relative U.S. economic decline. Clearly in this area as well, Pacific structural irritations have become strong. American pressures for Japanese concessions have been stepped up from automobiles and beef to advanced technology such as telecommunications and to the liberalization of the yen.

Despite problems and controversies, by the early 1980s the western Pacific region has become a center of economic dynamism in the world, while the continental countries, which were engaged in mutual acrimony, lag behind in their economic development. Only slowly are the Sinic Communist countries (China and especially North Korea and Vietnam) moving toward open and pragmatic intercourse with their more prosperous neighboring countries. Common to most countries of the western Pacific, however, is their rising thrust into world production and trade. The quest to enlarge their share of the market rapidly has caused increasing frictions with the advanced industrialized countries of other regions. This may be called "the Pacific structural irritation."

Among the competitive advantages acquired by the western Pacific countries, the most important is that of Japan vis-à-vis the United States. The Japan-United States relation is important for a number of reasons. First, the two economies are the two largest in the world. Second, the volume of economic transactions between the two is gigantic; these transactions thus affect the general pattern of international trade, including the opportunities to use the United States and Japan as major markets for their exports. Third, because of Japan's increasing competitiveness, the United States has become irritated, with general protectionist policies threatened. Fourth, the troubles in U.S.-Japan economic relations have had ramifications affecting security relationships maintained since 1945. Fifth, a close security relationship is a corner-


58 On the structure of Japan-U.S. relations, see Takashi Inoguchi, "Japan: Foreign Policy Backgrounds."


60 This portion is adapted from Takashi Inoguchi and Gary Saxonhouse, "Japan in a Changing International System," a paper presented at Japan's Political Economy Research Conference, Honolulu, July 25–29, 1983.


62 The "linkage" policy as applied to Japan from the late 1960s throughout the 1970s was toned down somewhat by President Reagan during his 1983 visit to Japan. See, for instance, "The Reaganite Formula," FEER, November 24, 1983, pp. 14–15. But a longer-term problem remains. In fact, the recent pressures of the U.S. government, from beef to capital-market liberalization, evidence the difficulty lying ahead between Japan and the United States. For U.S. foreign policy in general, see Kenneth A. Oye et al., eds., Eagle Defiant (Boston: Little Brown, 1983).
stone of the U.S. global hegemony and at the same time the most important premise of Japan's foreign policy.

The relation between Japan and the United States, according to the U.S. ambassador to Japan, Mike Mansfield, is "the most important bilateral relationship in the world—bar none." Yet the relation is troubled by a combination of two conditions: the American security hegemony over Japan and the increasing competitiveness between the U.S. and Japanese economies. Bilateral problems did not threaten to become serious conflicts of interest when U.S. global power was unchallengable as in the 1950s and 1960s and when the Japanese economy was a miniscule, newly industrializing economy up to the mid-1960s. In the course of development in the 1960s and 1970s and into the 1980s, new forces have changed the nature of the bilateral relationship and with that change have come conflicting perceptions of Japan's role in the world: American strategic supremacy has been challenged by Soviet military power. The USSR now enjoys strategic parity and a global reach. In addition, Japanese economic power and competitiveness can no longer be handled with benign neglect or some ad hoc action.

The bilateral relationship is all the more uneasy because these two structural conditions seem to undermine the basic premises under which both countries have been operating. For the United States, Japanese industrial competitiveness seems to damage the foundation of what the U.S. government regards as its self-sacrificing attempt to prevent Soviet military superiority, an effort undertaken for the benefit of all states outside the Soviet bloc. For Japan, U.S. efforts to obtain concessions in trade and defense from Japan, capitalizing on its security commitments to Japan, seems to jeopardize what the Japanese government regards as its no less worthy effort to make positive contributions to the world by vigorous nonmilitary, predominantly commercial ties, building a network based on interdependence. Thus, the heavy security burdens of the United States in comparison with Japan in an environment of an expanding Soviet military buildup and the increasingly competitive position of Japan during a time of global economic downturn have created the frequently strained relations between the two countries during the past decade.

Three factors, however, argue against a pessimistic diagnosis of American-Japanese relations. First, the continuing military strength of the United States tends to discourage Japan from abandoning the 40-year-old security ties between the two countries. Second, the Japanese part of the U.S. military network is too vital for the United States to scrap its ties if it is to adequately confront the alleged Soviet threat. Third, the overwhelming economic interdependence between the two countries makes it irrational for their governments to pursue courses directed against each other.

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Uneasiness and uncertainty, however, will remain prominent features of the relation as long as both economies compete fiercely in size and productivity. The frustrations of the past fifteen years are destined to continue.

Meanwhile, the economic relations of the four Asian NICs and China with the United States now provide additional irritations in the Pacific. However, the NICs have not gone so far as Japan because their economies are not yet large and because their competition has not been as wide-ranging as Japan’s. The national security concerns of South Korea and Taiwan vis-à-vis their Communist counterparts and their security relations with the United States responding to these concerns tend to keep the resentments over U.S. economic policies under control. However, South Korea and Taiwan will probably contribute to Pacific irritations significantly in five to ten years. Already the United States has been reducing these countries’ preferential access to its market. China’s trade disputes over textile exports to the United States intensified when American restrictions triggered a strong reaction from the Chinese government. China’s limited détente with the USSR and the American priority given Japan have both contributed to making Sino-American trade disputes more delicate.

To recapitulate, the most important feature of Pacific-Asian economic relations has been the phenomenal increase in the competitive gains that some countries, most notably Japan, have acquired vis-à-vis the major industrial countries in North America and western Europe. This change has increasingly caused economic frictions among them. The upward movement of the western Pacific region in world production and trade has been steady, with Japan spearheading the race. Next to Japan come the four NICs and the ASEAN countries. Further down the list are the three Sinic Communist countries—China, North Korea, and Vietnam—and the non-Sinic Communist countries—Outer Mongolia, Laos, and Kampuchea. While Japan-U.S. economic relations are the major cause of irritation, the security component has had both a “magnifying” and a “minimizing” effect with respect to economic issues—“magnifying” because the strategy of linking defense and economic issues can be used to put pressure on countries like Japan because of the decisive American influence over the security of many Pacific-rim countries, and “minimizing” because the NICs and Pacific-rim countries know the limits of conflict with each other beyond which they cannot go.

CONCLUSION

The two major elements involved in the current structural transition are the relative decline of U.S. power and the crisis in the global economy. These developments have contributed to key structural adjustments: the tension and conflict

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66 With respect to China’s foreign-policy dilemma, see Edmund Lee, “Beijing’s Balancing Act,” Foreign Policy, no. 50 (Summer 1983), pp. 27–46.
among the four Communist states of the Asian continent and the growing irritations between the two economic giants of the Pacific region.

The security contest between the United States and the Soviet Union on the whole remains favorable to the United States. But the disparity of power has diminished during the past decade, especially since the late 1970s, tending to widen the gap in the threat perceptions of the United States and its allies and also induce a more cautious response from American allies when the United States has called for joint anti-Soviet action. Japan is an example of a relatively relaxed threat perception. ASEAN countries have their own threat perceptions, which are far more complicated both in terms of their time horizons and the origins of threats. Even China seems to perceive a lessened threat from the USSR if only because it is determined to seek a peaceful international environment for its economic modernization. South Korea has become concerned about the Soviet threat only in so far as North Korea's relations with the Soviet Union and China affect the alleged North Korean aggressiveness toward South Korea.

More uncertainties and fluctuations can be expected in the future. The security balance on the continent has more unpredictable elements than those between the United States and the Soviet Union or between the United States and its Pacific allies. This is why the continental balance is called "a dynamic stalemate." The rapidity with which the Soviet Union, China, and Vietnam resorted to force or the threat of force among themselves in the past fifteen years casts doubt on any prediction of a stable interstate relationship emerging among them in the near future. Uneasy movements toward limited rapprochement are the most likely features of their relationship.

The world economy has been gravitating steadily from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The U.S. economy has increasingly found its greatest opportunities in the Pacific. Although economic transactions among the developing countries of the region have been modest and more directed toward the industrialized countries of North America, Japan, and western Europe, the time is not distant when their intraregional transactions will account for more than half of their trade. The economic achievements of most of the western Pacific countries have been so remarkable—and so rapid—that economic adjustments in industrialized countries have tended to lag behind, especially in manufacturing sectors. Speedy development and keeping abreast of high technology while making industrial adjustments have become the two major foci of today's policy makers in the advanced industrial world. And the ability of a society to achieve these two requirements could determine its future position in the global economic spectrum. The rise of the western Pacific countries to higher positions in the world economy is bound to cause more serious structural "disturbances" in international relations in the years ahead.

For the time being, the likelihood of what might be called theater militarization may not be great. Such a possibility, however, cannot be precluded. The increasing Soviet military buildup and the counteraction of the United States together with the creeping protectionist tide may, within the next few decades, convince the governments of the western Pacific countries that they need stronger military shields around themselves if only to defend their economic accomplishments, which will be
even greater. Already ten western Pacific countries are among the top forty-three military spenders of the world for the period 1960–1981.\(^6\) This prospect does not imply that the western Pacific will become an actual theater of war among states. Rather it means that, with the economic growth of the region as a whole, its increasing militarization in terms of high military spending and the political and economic implications associated with this trend must occupy the attention of thoughtful people in the world.

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3. The United States and the Security of Asia

Robert A. Scalapino

In this age, when our globe is contracting and our universe expanding, issues of regional security are ever more closely intertwined with those of larger dimensions. Thus, the factors determining Asian security encompass the volatile, constantly changing relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and, more specifically, the effort of each "superpower" to make certain that its power suffices to provide credible defense for itself and its allies in regions important to it.

The Pacific-Asian area is one such region. Both the United States and the USSR rightly consider themselves Pacific nations with national interests deeply affected by developments in a part of the world that promises to be increasingly significant economically, politically, and strategically in the decades ahead.

THE USSR AND ASIA

For the Soviet Union, the trends in Asia during the past several decades have been generally disconcerting, although a change of fortune may be at hand. The Sino-Soviet alliance, which once gave promise of exerting a commanding influence on the Eurasian continent, disintegrated amidst great bitterness after 1959. The nadir was reached a decade later, when conflict threatened, with a border controversy serving as the immediate issue, but with the underlying reasons for hostility being much more fundamental.

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In recent years, a new stage in Sino-Soviet relations has been reached. Both sides have committed themselves to an effort to reduce tension. Dialogue has been resumed, and modest improvements in economic and cultural relations have been achieved. Such a course is in the national interests of both countries. Conflict between them would be disastrous not only to those immediately affected, but to many others. Yet true normalization of Sino-Soviet relations is precluded at present by what the Chinese refer to as “the three obstacles”—namely, the close-in presence of massive Soviet military power in Outer Mongolia and along other parts of China’s northern and western borders; the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan; and the extensive Soviet military aid to Vietnam. Collectively, these issues reflect China’s concern over the continued Soviet encirclement of its territory.

In addition to its ground and air forces, the Soviet Union has been steadily augmenting its naval strength in the western Pacific, along China’s vital east coast. The Soviet ground forces stationed in the four military districts subordinated to the Far Eastern theater command at Ulan Ude now represent approximately one-fourth of total Soviet ground forces, numbering some one million men in 52 divisions. One-fourth of the Soviet air force is also in the Far East, with about 2,200 combat aircraft. Both naval and air force Backfire bombers have been deployed to the region along with other modern aircraft. The Pacific fleet, moreover, is now the largest of the four Soviet fleets, with around 90 major surface combatants, 135 submarines, a naval infantry division, and assorted amphibious ships. But the most significant trend in recent years has been the substantial increase in Soviet strategic forces in the Pacific-Asian region. These forces fall into two broad categories: those suitable for use within Asia and those designed with U.S. targets in mind. In the former category are 135 SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) deployed in East Asia, mainly near the northern Mongolian border, and capable of reaching China, Japan, and parts of Southeast Asia. In the latter category are submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). Some 30 percent of all Soviet SLBMs are on submarines in the Pacific. According to one source, approximately 35 to 40 percent of the total Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force and more than 30 percent of its strategic bombers are now deployed east of the Urals.

Thus, while Soviet military power in Asia is partly directed toward meeting American military forces in the region, it serves to confront the PRC in a manner far more formidable than did U.S. military power in the 1950s when the American aim was the containment of China.

To be sure, the Soviets do not have the strength to wage a successful conventional war against China, nor do they have any intention of becoming engaged in...

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such a conflict. In the unlikely event of a Sino-Soviet war, the Russians would certainly want to avoid a protracted, limited conflict of the type now taking place in Afghanistan. Thus, a resort to nuclear weapons would be very tempting, although it would risk retaliation from China's admittedly limited and relatively primitive nuclear force.

Mikhail Gorbachev, the new Soviet leader, may be able to develop new initiatives toward China, or more broadly, toward Asia. The Chinese are waiting to see, expressing public hope and private doubt. Meanwhile, Soviet relations with Japan remain at low ebb. Since World War II, Soviet policies toward Japan have been unremittingly harsh despite occasional suggestions of a potential mutual interest in closer economic interaction, especially in connection with the development of Siberia. Those suggestions have been recently reiterated, and at some point they may bear fruit despite indications that Japan's need for Siberian resources has waned. However, the political and strategic climate could scarcely be less propitious at present. The Soviet Union not only refuses to consider a return of the disputed Four Northern Islands, but has moved some 10,000 troops onto two of the islands. Meanwhile, naval maneuvers and air sorties, including flights over Japanese territory, have accelerated.

Behind Soviet military activities lies not only Moscow's concern over the increase of U.S. power in the Pacific (including F16 aircraft at Misawa Base in Hokkaido), but also its perception of a Northeast Asian military entente among the United States, Japan, and South Korea, with China on the periphery. Soviet leaders are also aware of the structural limitations placed on their military operations by the geographic position of the USSR. The Soviet Pacific fleet is based essentially in the area of Sovetskaya Gavan and Nakhodka-Vladivostok on the Siberian coast and Petropavlovsk on the Kamchatka peninsula. Much of this fleet must pass through three choke points—the Tsushima, Soya, and Tsugaru straits—making the ships extremely vulnerable. Any threat that these straits might be closed strikes a Soviet raw nerve.

If Soviet relations with China and Japan have ranged from neutral to hostile, the smaller states of the region present a scarcely more comforting position from Moscow's perspective. No relations, official or otherwise, exist with Taiwan, and the Soviet Union is not likely to be drawn into ties with that government—even if Taipei were receptive—unless relations with the PRC were to reach conflict. Soviet unofficial relations with South Korea have been set back in recent times by the shooting down of the KAL passenger plane and, in a more general sense, by the frigidity in Soviet-American relations. The DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) represents for the USSR a complex challenge. The Soviet Union has remained important to Pyongyang, both economically and militarily, and that importance has recently increased. In the early 1980s, approximately one-third of North Korean trade was with the USSR, with China accounting for one-fifth of that trade and Japan one-sixth. The Soviet Union continues to provide North Korea with assistance in

industrial modernization and, most importantly, in military equipment. Yet in recent
decades, China has generally had greater influence with DPRK leaders despite
Pyongyang’s repeated assertions of balanced friendship for the two socialist giants. In
truth, the North Koreans have intimate relations with no one, and in both Moscow and
Beijing private reservations about their policies and actions abound. But Chinese
spokesmen insist that persistent Soviet efforts at wielding a baton over Pyongyang
and their own cultural and geographic proximity to North Korea are key factors in
causing DPRK leaders to tilt toward them. In the recent past, however, North
Korean–Soviet relations have warmed, with indications that Moscow has agreed to
MiG-23 sales and additional economic assistance and in return, obtained additional
military privileges. Nevertheless, North Korea is not likely to accept the status of a
client-state in the manner of Outer Mongolia. The affinity for China persists,
notwithstanding recent doubts about Chinese policies, product of culture, history, and
geography.

In Southeast Asia, the most notable Soviet achievement of recent decades has
been the consummation of a formal alliance with Vietnam, and, through this alliance,
the capacity to establish a position in Indochina, including the right to use military
bases at Cam Ranh Bay and Danang. These bases together with that at Ream in
Cambodia strengthen Soviet strategic surge capacities and give substantially greater
range to Soviet reconnaissance and antisubmarine warfare (ASW) operations. Such
bases would permit bombing operations against South China and against U.S. bases
in the Philippines, among other targets. In any conflict involving the United States,
however, the Soviet bases and the supply lines needed to sustain them would be
quickly eliminated.

A balance sheet on Soviet gains and losses derivative from the alliance with
Vietnam is complex, but the negative side of the ledger seems stronger, especially
when economic and political factors are considered. In addition to the costs of
assistance to Vietnam—costs that seem without end—the Soviet-Vietnam alliance
constitutes a primary obstacle to fundamental improvement in Sino-Soviet relations
and also inhibits most states comprising ASEAN from having closer ties with the
USSR. In the final analysis, moreover, Moscow must worry that, sooner or later,
Vietnam has to reach an accommodation with China unless it is willing to be a
permanently militarized society, heavily dependent upon an external power.5

The Soviet position in South Asia has been relatively stronger than its position
in Southeast Asia as a result of a combination of political and military developments.
To date, the Soviet ties with India have proved enduring. Here, Soviet policies have
been sophisticated, with economic and military assistance effective and Russian
activities sufficiently low-key to avoid charges of interference in Indian internal

5 Three significant articles relating to Vietnam and its future are in the work edited by Karl D. Jackson and
M. Hadi Soesastro, ASEAN Security and Economic Development (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian
Economic Intercourse” (pp. 225–237); Karl D. Jackson, “Indochina: War Without End” (pp. 238–251);
and Suthichai Yoon, “ASEAN Security and Economics: New Directions for the 1980s” (pp. 251–258).
affairs and to enable adjustments to successive Indian governments. Will this situation continue under the Rajiv Gandhi administration? Rajiv's personal proclivities appear to be away from the anti-Americanism of his mother and toward a strengthened private sector in the economy, but the economic and military links between India and the Soviet Union, fortified by pro-Soviet elements in the Indian bureaucracy, remain extensive. They will not be reduced quickly or easily.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan remains a Soviet commitment and burden. Soviet leaders intervened in this country with reluctance, suspecting that the political and military costs might be high but more worried about the prospect of an anti-Soviet Islamic government in Kabul when the weak and bitterly divided Marxist administration fell. Now, with the war dragging on, they must count on training new generations of Afghans and wearing down the resistance through a combination of punishing military campaigns and political cooptation where this is possible. Although some observers believe the Soviets are slowly gaining their objectives, no end to the struggle is in sight. Would the destabilization of Pakistan, which serves as a privileged sanctuary for Afghan resistance fighters, aid the Soviet cause—or would it merely extend the arena of conflict?

THE U.S. RESPONSE

In its global contest with the USSR, the United States takes close account of the Soviet position in the Pacific-Asian region. However, awareness of one central fact implicit in the foregoing discussion is high: while Soviet military strength in the area has steadily grown, most other instruments of power or influence—economic, political, and cultural—are weak. Indeed, in these latter respects the Soviet Union is generally in a less advantageous position at present than it was thirty years ago. Understandably, therefore, the extent and nature of the Soviet threat in Asia is debated, both in the United States and in Asia.

No one in Asia disputes that Soviet military power in the region has greatly expanded, whether the purpose be defensive or offensive. Most Asians, moreover, including virtually all governments except those aligned with the USSR, expect the United States to balance Soviet military power. When large-scale American withdrawal appeared likely after U.S. abandonment of Vietnam and Saigon's collapse in 1975, apprehensions were expressed privately and publicly throughout the region.

The United States, after some indecision, did not continue its military withdrawal from Asia. At present, the United States sustains defense treaties with both Japan and the Republic of Korea and maintains a network of bases in these areas, together with the augmented Seventh Fleet. Its carrier-based aircraft, substantial sea-lift capacity, and ASW strength along with its superior command, control, communications, and intelligence capabilities, greatly lessen the advantages that the Soviet Union possesses in Northeast Asia by its numerical superiority in land-based aircraft and submarines. In Southeast Asia, despite the recent Soviet acquisition of bases in Indochina, the American bases at Subic Bay and Clark airfield, together with facilities in Guam and other Pacific installations, provide continued American
superiority in military power. The military balance in the Indian Ocean, a region of growing contention, also favors the United States at present.6

Shortly, the United States will deploy into the Pacific the 2,500-nautical-mile-range Tomahawk cruise missile and the Trident II submarine launched missiles with a 6,000-mile range. It would be extraordinarily risky for the Soviet Union to turn any conventional war in Asia into a nuclear struggle if there were a reasonable chance that the United States would be drawn in.

In effect, the American nuclear umbrella extends widely over the entire region, whether formally or informally. As noted earlier, the distinction between regional and global strategic concerns is increasingly blurred for the United States and the USSR. If this complicates security issues for the “superpowers,” it also renders security policies for the Asian states more difficult, including those that pertain to their relations with the United States.

When the issue of Soviet withdrawal of SS-20s from Europe was under negotiation, the Russians suggested at one point that missiles withdrawn from Europe might be deployed in Asia. Japan and China immediately protested, insisting that no American-Soviet agreement be reached that adversely affected the security interests of Asian states. Of greater significance to American security policies, however, has been the delicate issue of U.S. nuclear weapons in Asian ports and bases. Naturally, this issue cannot be separated from broader questions of American strategy. After the Korean and Vietnam wars, any American president would be extremely reluctant to send large American ground forces into the Asian theater to fight. This position, indeed, was clearly signaled by the so-called Guam Doctrine promulgated by President Nixon in 1969. Asian allies were told that the primary responsibility for their defense rested with them, but that if they were attacked by an external power, the United States would honor its commitments, using air and naval power to the extent necessary. The Guam Doctrine also indicated that the United States would not intervene in civil wars, although the definition of what constituted a civil war was left unclear.

The Guam Doctrine remains in effect at present, and American credibility with an ally, a “nonaligned” state, and a potential foe rests upon the strength of American air and naval forces and the uncertainty whether any conflict involving the United States could be kept at the level of conventional warfare. Given the American strategic doctrine prevailing in the region, from Washington’s perspective—and from that of various Asian governments as well—the nuclear option must be kept open at this time, although doubts have accumulated as to the credibility of the threat to use nuclear weapons, and the call for a new strategic policy is growing louder.

As has now been made clear, the antipathy to nuclear weapons and the alleged threat of involvement of third parties in an American-Soviet nuclear war combine to render American strategy vulnerable to strong political opposition from within allied as well as “nonaligned” states. The issue has long been present in Japanese politics,

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with a precarious compromise reached. Japan supposedly abides by a “Three No’s” policy regarding nuclear weapons: no possession, no manufacturing, no presence in Japanese territory. Successive Liberal Democratic party (LDP) governments, however, have not asked whether American naval vessels entering Japanese ports possess nuclear warheads, “trusting” American authorities to abide by the three principles. By this transparent device, the issue is skirted except for periodic skirmishes in the Diet and demonstrations at the ports.

Given the delicate nature of the situation in Japan (and in Western Europe), the decision of the Lange government in New Zealand to insist that American authorities reveal whether American ships visiting New Zealand carry nuclear weapons, with a pledge to prevent such ships from coming into port, posed a challenge that went far beyond one country. Together with the oft-repeated calls for nuclear-free zones by various Pacific-Asian countries, the New Zealand confrontation raises additional questions about the future viability of current American strategy.

This matter, moreover, merges into a larger set of issues: what is to be expected of American allies in Asia or elsewhere, and what is to be expected of the United States? There is general agreement that the age of the Pax Americana is over in the Pacific as elsewhere. At a time when multipolarism is being widely proclaimed, the age of bipolarism has finally arrived. The Soviet Union has achieved a rough strategic equivalence with the United States. Moreover, American resources—economic and political—are no longer equal to the task of carrying the high quotient of the security burden previously borne. On this point, individuals who differ on the nature and extent of the threat can agree. A growing number of Americans are prone to paraphrase President Kennedy’s famous inaugural statement by asserting, “Ask not what the United States can do for you, but what you can do for the United States.”

American public-opinion polls indicate that at the grassroots, “withdrawalist” sentiment is strong, and likely to grow stronger. Such sentiment is not isolationist in the traditional American sense of that term. That we benefit from participation in the world economically and culturally is not disputed. But there is strong doubt about the wisdom of an American military commitment unless (1) the state or region concerned has a direct relation to U.S. national interests, (2) defense is possible without disproportionate costs, (3) the indigenous climate is propitious, with the bulk of the people and the government able and willing to contribute to their own defenses to the fullest possible extent, and supportive of an American presence, and (4) the principle of sharing the burdens is accepted, not merely with respect to the territorial boundaries of the single state but with regard to the region of which it is an integral part, and upon the stability of which it depends.

U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS

In this context, what are the issues confronting the United States in its security relations with major Pacific-Asian states and regions at present? It is perhaps ironic—but also symbolic—that at a time when the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty is more widely accepted in Japan than at any other time since the early 1950s, reservations about the fairness of our security ties with Japan have grown in the United
States. In a period when the United States is spending 5 to 6 percent of its gross national product (GNP) on defense and accruing huge budgetary deficits, and when hard-pressed Europe is allotting approximately 3 percent of GNP to security, Japan—with the highest growth rate in the industrial world—has made a ritual of staying within a self-imposed 1 percent limit, although that limit will be exceeded in all probability in the years ahead.7

The restraints on Japanese “burden sharing” in the security realm are numerous. One may begin with internal considerations: continuous budgetary deficits (only defense and overseas economic assistance were increased in the fiscal 1985 budget) and the skepticism of a substantial number of Japanese citizens that they face a threat. While antipathy toward the Soviet Union continues and a sense of threat from this quarter has increased, it remains below the threshold that would induce genuine sacrifice. And when the issue is posed in broader terms—namely, the responsibility of Japan for the security of the region with which it is intimately related—the reply is strongly equivocal. Do our neighbors want us to play such a role? And what is the role being assigned us? To the frustration of the United States, the legacy of the past remains alive, affecting relations between Japan and South Korea as well as those between Japan and most ASEAN states. These governments have repeatedly warned against Japanese militarism or substituting Japanese power for American power in East Asia.8

In fact, the threat of Japanese militarism is minimal. The Asia of the 1980s is not the Asia of the 1930s; no vacuum of Asian power or Western colonialism exists to be exploited. New generations of Japanese, moreover, dominate their society, products of a different education, living under different institutions, harboring different values. As testimony to these facts, Japanese military expenditures, if continued at roughly the present rate, will fall far short of meeting Japan’s current commitments for air and sea surveillance at the end of the present defense program in 1987.

American criticism of current Japanese security policies is muted because meaningful progress in the security arena has recently been made, notwithstanding the deficiencies. At present, joint defense planning and joint military exercises have been instituted. The Japanese commitment to conduct air and sea surveillance several hundred miles to the south and a thousand miles to the east remains intact, with implementation slowly under way.

Beyond these developments, there is perhaps a more significant occurrence: a “soft regionalism” is emerging, with Japan as the vortex. The primary emphasis within this regionalism is economic and political, not military—but it has implications for regional security. By means of government-sponsored or -supported loans, Japan is advancing substantial funds for development to South Korea and

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8 Two essays of interest relating to Japan’s relations with the ASEAN states are Jesus P. Estanislao, “Japan’s Strategic Need for Openness,” and Franklin B. Weinstein, “Japan and Southeast Asia,” in Robert A. Scalapino and Jusuf Wanandi, eds., Economic, Political, and Security Issues in Southeast Asia in the 1980s (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1983), pp. 177–194.
China. Japanese trade and investment are generally expanding with these countries and with Taiwan as well.

The political component has also become prominent. Nakasone has cultivated high-level visits to and from both the ROK and the PRC, with political issues discussed and, on occasion, with Japan serving as middleman and purveyor of information, including messages for the United States. The military element, while strictly subordinate, is not wholly absent. Regional defense officials, including PRC Minister of Defense Chang Aiping, have visited Self-Defense Headquarters in Tokyo, and information is also being exchanged between Japanese and South Korean defense officials.

This “soft regionalism” fits with a prominent Japanese view of how Japan can make the most appropriate contribution to Pacific-Asian security. The term “comprehensive security” was coined earlier to convey the idea that the security of the region rests heavily upon its economic development, hence political stability, and that Japan could make its major contribution in this realm. This will not completely satisfy the hard-pressed Americans, especially since it can be easily interpreted as aimed primarily at increasing Japan’s share of the international market. Some Japanese—Prime Minister Nakasone included—believe that Japan’s inability to defend itself adequately is a “national disgrace,” and, in addition, see Article 9 of the Constitution of 1947 (prohibiting Japan from having armed forces and outlawing war as an instrument of Japanese foreign policy) as a form of discrimination against Japan alone. But when all factors are considered, the increase in Japan’s burden-sharing in the military field will probably increase only incrementally. Since the Japanese people are overwhelmingly satisfied with the status quo, only sustained American pressure in combination with an heightened perception of threat is likely to induce major change.

The more serious problems between the United States and Japan, however, lie in the economic realm, as is well known. Japan’s massive trade surplus with the United States combined with the difficulties of access to the Japanese market have created growing resentment in the American business and labor communities. Remedial measures have been too little and too late. Hence, pressures for protectionist legislation have reached unprecedented levels, one among many evidences of renewed American nationalism. In this as in most situations, however, responsibility must be shared. Problems with the American economy including the massive debt, the overpriced dollar, the slow growth in labor productivity, and the low savings ratio contribute to a lowered American competitiveness internationally. The prospects are for a contained but continuing tension. In the broader sense, a similar challenge faces both the United States and Japan: how to adjust quickly to the global industrial revolution now sweeping over the world. And this challenge cannot be separated from considerations of security since it relates directly to the economic well-being of two major nations.

U.S.-PRC RELATIONS

U.S.-PRC security relations have been subject to many twists and turns and to a continuing debate in both nations. The thaw in U.S.-PRC relations beginning in the early 1970s rested on strategic considerations. Although the United States had signaled its receptivity to an improved relationship, the fundamental shift in policy came from China. Mao Zedong and his principal colleagues needed access to the world after the inanities of the Cultural Revolution and the Soviet threat posed in 1969. The United States was a key to that access as well as being the only countervailing force to the USSR.10

As the 1970s came to a close, U.S.-PRC relations had reached a stage where some Americans and Chinese entertained the idea of a strategic alliance against "Soviet hegemonism." Indeed, Deng Xiaoping himself proposed a global alignment directed to this end, with additional exhortations to the United States and West Europe to strengthen their defenses against Moscow. Within the United States the issue was debated publicly and privately. Proponents argued that the United States could no longer carry alone the burdens of defending the world against Soviet power and that China, given military assistance, could provide a "second front," tying down a substantial Soviet military force. Such an alliance would also provide the cement necessary to make firm the new American-Chinese relationship, it was said, and to preclude any reestablishment of a Sino-Soviet alliance.

Opponents argued that without American military support China was, in its own interests, tying down considerable Soviet forces. Entering into a strategic relationship would—in addition to raising further complications in U.S.-Soviet relations—create apprehension among other Asian states, some of whom believed that a militarily strong China would threaten them, not the Soviet Union.

As events turned out, the issue was restructured in Beijing. By the early 1980s, PRC leaders had fashioned a foreign policy of "nonalignment." Aware that a strategic alliance with the United States would be a high-cost, high-risk policy both militarily and politically, Beijing spokesmen announced that China would eschew alignment with either of the "superpowers," maintaining an independent foreign policy dedicated to global peace and development and associating China with the Third World.11

In reality, however, the PRC's current policy is one of tilted nonalignment, and the tilt is toward Japan and the West, especially the United States. Despite trenchant criticism of American policies in various parts of the world and frequent references to the United States and the USSR as equal culprits in threatening world peace, the present PRC leadership is committed to turning outward for science and technology, restructuring the Chinese economy with greater emphasis on the market and decentralized management, and elevating the technocratic-intellectual class. The thrust


of this program, and the continuing distrust of the USSR, cause China to tilt toward the advanced industrial world. And that tilt is also evidenced in low-level PRC-U.S. strategic cooperation, although Chinese authorities want this considered a commercial relation not a form of alignment. Nevertheless, agreement has been reached in principle for the sale of some defensive weapons such as tube-launched, optically-tracked, wire-guided (TOW) antitank missiles. Discussions regarding a transfer of naval technology, including ASW, have also taken place. It has also been announced that U.S. naval ships would be allowed to come to some Chinese ports on "ceremonial visits," although visits have been postponed over the nuclear weapons issue.

American authorities emphasize that strategic relations with China are being approached with great caution. Although differences of opinion within the U.S. government exist, a wary attitude prevails, partly because of uncertainties about future Chinese leadership and policies, partly because of deep concern on the part of other Asian countries. The next three to five years are likely to be a critical period for the PRC, with the most crucial tests for the domestic reform programs and political succession lying ahead. During this period, the PRC would not be likely to undertake a massive military modernization program, irrespective of U.S. policy. Meanwhile, Beijing has called for a halt to research, development, testing, and installation of space weapons, thereby setting itself in opposition to the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)—a program which if implemented would reduce the utility of the PRC limited nuclear deterrent.

U.S.-PRC relations were not advanced when Deng Xiaoping told visitors in the fall of 1984 that China might have to take military action against Taiwan, mentioning the possibility of a blockade. The United States proclaims its adherence to the August 17, 1982, communique that pledges to reduce military assistance to Taiwan gradually, with a peaceful resolution of PRC-Taiwan relations being the quid pro quo according to the American but not the Chinese interpretation of the agreement. There are no indications that the United States will abandon Taiwan militarily despite the absence of any formal diplomatic ties or a security treaty. Nor is the United States likely to be willing to play the role of facilitator in PRC-Taiwan negotiations, despite nudgings in this direction from Beijing. Only a major upheaval in Taiwan's internal politics might cause some shift in current American policies.

Relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China are sustained by the fact that neither nation currently threatens the other and both have a significant number of common interests with respect to Asia, notwithstanding a few important differences. In addition, as long as the Chinese government is committed to economic reform along the present lines, the policy of turning to Japan and the United


States for assistance and interaction is natural. One can imagine negative scenarios, such as a reversal of course on the domestic front. Certainly, this is a delicate period for China, economically and politically. And whatever the future, Chinese foreign policies will be marked by a very high quotient of nationalism, with a xenophobic tinge. Yet within this context, China’s interests will probably continue to be served best by the current tilt.

U.S.-KOREA RELATIONS

The Korean peninsula remains one of the regions of the world where the threat of a major conflagration cannot be dismissed as impossible. One and one-half million men, North and South, are permanently under arms. Incidents have been recurrent, and despite some recent, hopeful developments, intercourse between the two Koreas at this point continues to be very limited. Whether the dialogue on economic matters and the renewed Red Cross talks will lead to a long-term reduction of tension and a more peaceful future remains to be seen.14

North Korea’s decision to shift from its past intransigence and to deal with South Korea’s Chun government appears related in part to internal economic difficulties and the decision to take a leaf out of China’s book, turning outward for technology. A reduction of tension with the South would facilitate relations with Japan, and possibly with the United States. In any case, Kim II Sung and his son, Kim Jong II, seem unlikely to risk another frontal assault on the South given the opposition of all the major states to a new Korean war and the credibility of the American security pledge to the Republic of Korea. Americans and South Koreans responsible for security point out that in the recent past the North has moved troops, including commandos, closer to the demilitarized zone (DMZ); acquired new, sophisticated weapons, including Hughes helicopters (illegally, via Germany) and MiG 23s; and set the stage for a camouflaged involvement in conflict by charging the South with digging tunnels, infiltration, and other provocations. The Chinese, on the other hand, insist that the North Koreans have “neither the will nor the means” to carry out another invasion of the South.

The U.S.-South Korean strategy remains that of building up deterrence. Joint land, sea, and air exercises known as Team Spirit are conducted yearly. Some 40,000 American troops are stationed in South Korea, constituting a visible guarantee of the American commitment. These troops also serve to prevent incidents such as the North-South DMZ fire-fight in December 1984 from escalating into a major conflict. There is no current disposition within American political circles to remove U.S. troops from the ROK, despite North Korean demands, supported by the Soviet Union and, publicly, by China. American policy makers do not want to risk a miscalculation of American intentions on Pyongyang’s part of the type that contributed to the tragic Korean War.

By 1990, South Korea will supposedly have acquired the military capacity to defend itself against the North. Whether circumstances at that time will warrant a review of U.S. force deployment remains to be seen. Developments in North-South relations will be one important variable. Meanwhile, U.S. support of the ROK could be threatened only by serious upheavals of a political nature in the South, ones resulting in extensive repression and a retreat from recent liberalization. Toward the North, U.S. policies will be cautious, permitting some cross-contacts and continuing to signal U.S. support for cross-recognition and other types of reciprocity involving ROK-Communist state and DPRK—non-Communist state relations, but awaiting clearer indications of basic DPRK policies, domestic and foreign.

THE U.S. AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

If a renewed Korean war seems very unlikely under present circumstances, an expanded war in Indochina also seems improbable. Vietnam’s invasion of Kampuchea, abetted by Soviet aid, sustains the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh, but as long as China provides supplies to the anti-Vietnam insurgents and Thailand cooperates, the Vietnamese cannot end the conflict. To date, the United States has been unwilling to give military assistance to even the non-Communist insurgents led by Son Sann and Sihanouk, despite requests from various quarters. A fear of rekindling fires of renewed involvement in Vietnam, a desire to keep the primary responsibility with ASEAN, and doubts about the capacities and needs of the non-Communist forces provide the principal reasons. The United States, however, has increased military assistance to Thailand and has pledged support to Bangkok under terms of the old Manila Pact should Thailand be seriously threatened. Moreover, it has now signaled flexibility on the question of military aid to the Son Sann—Sihanouk forces, spurred by Congressional action. If the United States is still not fully credible in this setting, the Chinese pledges to Thailand, matched by a huge PRC army on Vietnam’s northern frontier, are completely credible to Hanoi and seem likely to deter the Vietnamese from any major escalation of the war. The Chinese, however—having found the first “lesson” they sought to teach Vietnam very costly—are probably not anxious to attempt a second lesson, especially with major Soviet forces on their northern border.

SECURITY AND INTERNAL STABILITY

The current situation in the Korean peninsula and in Indochina illustrates how military balances can preserve peace or keep conflicts limited, even when the stakes—and the hostility—among contending forces are very high. In one of the settings, the United States plays a major role; in the other, the burdens fall primarily

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15 See the essays by Khien Theeravit and Karl Jackson in this volume; and the essay by Douglas Pike, “Southeast Asia Today: Problems and Prospects” (paper prepared for a conference sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., December 4–5, 1984).
on the PRC and the ASEAN states, especially Thailand—the states whose national interests are most directly affected. In similar fashion, on a regional and global scale the United States and the USSR have contended for what each defines as a strategic balance and, at great and continuing cost, have made a global "superpower" war a remote if awesome prospect.

In other situations in Asia and elsewhere, however, security cannot be so easily handled by conventional balance of power means. Indeed, the most numerous conflicts of the future, as of the recent past, will be those that contain a mix of domestic and international ingredients. Typical is the case of a society in the throes of turmoil, with dissidents turning to violence. At this point, external forces enter the scene, sensing either a target of opportunity or a necessary point of resistance. Whether the aid is given to the government, to the rebels, or to both, the conflict takes on international proportions.

As frontal conflict between major states has represented higher costs and risks, the techniques of escalating politics to violence short of traditional war have been refined: arms transfers, covert action, the use of surrogates, and undeclared wars—all have been used repeatedly and are likely to continue to be employed.

The threat of states in turmoil to the security of others stems from the strong possibility of external involvement when that state or region is strategically important and from the fact that when external involvement takes place, the risk of escalation, with the involvement of others, grows. Obviously, the best course of action is to resolve or reduce the internal causes of dissidence early, thereby lowering the threat or extent of violence. Yet this is a course often easier to prescribe than to execute, and, in any case, the capacity of the United States—or other external states—to play a constructive role in such a process is limited and almost always fraught with danger.

In general terms, those Asian societies most at risk presently are what might be termed the soft authoritarian states where socioeconomic change is taking place very rapidly. The hard authoritarian states can surmount grave errors because they have ample coercive resources to crack down on dissidents and an organizational structure that usually reaches into the smallest units of their society. Moreover, their proclaimed goals and their performance are compatible. They both preach and practice one-party dictatorship and "democratic centralism." Soft authoritarian leaders, on the other hand, usually promise an evolution toward parliamentarism, competitive politics, and broadened civil liberties—and often move part way in that direction, but with retreats as well as advances. In some soft authoritarian states, moreover, the pace of socioeconomic change has been so rapid that the gap between traditional politics and a modernizing society develops within a few decades. Yet structural changes are complex, time-consuming undertakings, even in advanced societies. Indeed, as we have noted, as this century draws to a close, no challenge is greater for a nation such as the United States than that of making rapid structural changes, political as well as economic, to meet the accelerating technological revolution.

In what specific Pacific-Asian states is the legitimacy of the leadership or system most seriously challenged, with potential repercussions for the internal stability of the state? In Northeast Asia, two states—South Korea and Taiwan—give evidence of political fragility. Until recently, the Republic of Korea represented a classic case of
the growing gap between a relatively static polity and a dynamic socioeconomic environment. Recurrent efforts have been made toward the transition from military to civilian rule, from martial law to constitutionalism, from one-party rule to competitive politics, and a new attempt, seemingly promising, is now underway. Can a new order be successfully institutionalized in the years immediately ahead? The challenge is not merely to the government but also to the opposition, some elements of which prefer confrontation to solution since confrontation frequently sustains organization. In any case, for the ROK the years down to 1988, when presidential elections are scheduled, promise to be difficult and complex in political terms.16

In Taiwan, a strong leader is weakening because of advancing age and health problems, with no clear succession in sight and with the process of "Taiwanization" accelerating in the political realm. Some 85 percent of the citizenry are Taiwanese. Hence, democratic rule would most certainly bring elements of this group to power. The current trend seems irreversible, but the Taiwanese fall into many political categories as do the mainland refugees and their children. Can mainlanders and Taiwanese work together under the Kuomintang or some other political rubric, or will the politics of Taiwan be marked by escalating militancy and violence?17

South Korea and Taiwan together with Singapore and Hong Kong have been labeled the NICs (newly industrializing countries), symbolizing the extraordinarily rapid development they have enjoyed. In recent decades the ASEAN countries other than Singapore have also participated in the broad social transformation that goes with accelerating change. They too face difficult political transitions. Currently, the Philippines is in the throes of political crisis, with one byproduct the growing power of the National People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Philippines Communist movement.18 At present, the NPA may control or have significant influence in 20 percent of the villages or barrios in the rural Philippines. There is undoubtedly an underground organization in Manila and other major cities. Although there is no evidence of external assistance at this point, such aid might be obtained if sought. In the meantime, a shadow NPA government exists, collecting taxes, dispensing its brand of justice, and fighting for power. The fact that Ferdinand Marcos has lost the support of a sizable portion of his elite—and that his government therefore has precarious legitimacy—is a major part of the problem. The deep economic malaise, likely to continue for a protracted period, adds greatly to the difficulties. With its bases at Subic Bay and Clark Field of vital importance, the United States cannot avoid concern.

In other ASEAN states the immediate problems are not so critical, but issues similar to those presented in South Korea are present: the movement from military to civilian rule, or some greater sharing of power; the widening of the political process, enabling opposition voices to be heard more clearly; and the extension of political

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16 An article dealing with important political developments in South Korea is Chae-Jin Lee, "South Korea in 1984—Seeking Peace and Prosperity," Asian Survey (January 1985), pp. 80–89.
freedom. Everywhere in the ASEAN community, a newly emerging middle class is playing an increasing political role on behalf of these or similar causes. The situation is made more complex, however, by the pluralistic nature of most ASEAN societies, with ethnic, religious, and regional cleavages still substantial and potentially dangerous. Thus, a dominant party system with a military-civilian mix of leadership is likely to prevail in a majority of these states in the near term at least.

The role that the United States can and should play in fostering political openness in Asia continues to be hotly debated. Some advocate a firm, public posture linking American assistance or support to progress in democratization. They assert that the American people and Congress are not prepared to risk lives or expend monies on repressive regimes and that the governments (and peoples) with whom we are affiliated should be apprized of this fact. But critics of the hard-line policy argue that such tactics are usually counterproductive, take little account of the important differences between soft and hard authoritarian systems, and are perceived abroad as new manifestations of ethnocentric imperialism—an insistence that all states aligned with the United States can and should mold their political institutions after ours.

The advocates of private diplomacy supportive of human rights and political openness assert that their approach produces more concrete results, acknowledges the political facts of life in the world, and makes the necessary distinctions between the evolutionary potentialities of soft versus hard authoritarian systems. Critics assert that such tactics are too weak to produce the results needed.

Perhaps the most significant impact the United States can have on the issues relating to domestic security is in the economic rather than the political field. At this time, a number of Asian societies are seeking to move from heavy foreign borrowing to greater reliance upon private investment and from import-substitution policies requiring extensive capital investments to export-oriented production, with renewed attention to agriculture and agribusiness. The trends are mixed, and restraints on investment and free trade remain problems; but the basic trends seem favorable on balance, and the United States can play a constructive role in meshing its policies and commitments with these trends. One starts with the management of the American economy. No single factor is likely to affect the future health of the Pacific Asian economies more than this, and hence, few policies are as critical to Asian security—and to that of the United States—as the proper management of the American economy.

Beyond this, can we aid in the creation of some post-Bretton Woods financial order in the world and also of regional institutions that advance us beyond the bilateralism of the present? It is not appropriate to attempt any duplication of the European Economic Community, nor is it necessary to aim at a tightly structured organization; but if North-South, as well as North-North and South-South issues of trade, investment, and technological transfer are to be handled more comprehensively, the present institutions and programs scarcely suffice. The rising protectionist tides, not merely in the United States but in many nations, should signal the urgency of the problem. And once again, innovations in international economic institutions and policies can be considered investments in security quite as much as in economic growth.
Regionalism is still in an experimental stage in Asia. We have noted the development of a soft regionalism in Northeast Asia, without any formal institutional base and not likely to acquire one in the foreseeable future. In Southeast Asia, ASEAN has emerged within the past decade, its initial purpose being economic, but its subsequent development thus far being more prominently in the political and security fields. We are likely to see a further “Asianization” process, in which the countries of the region interact more closely with each other in various aspects. The United States should welcome this, assuming the interaction is directed toward constructive, peaceful goals. The old security ties with the United States are intact in some instances, gone or altered in others. For the most part, however, they remain bilateral, with the heavier burden falling upon the United States. As noted earlier, Americans are not apt to regard this as a satisfactory arrangement for much longer: the warning signals are already flashing. Ultimately, the security of the Pacific-Asian area has to be a widely shared responsibility and one that takes full account of the economic, social, and political elements that must be present with the military components if effective security is to be achieved and maintained. The United States must work toward these ends, but it cannot do so effectively unless there is greater cooperation from many others.

4. Japan and Pacific-Asian Security

Seizaburo Sato

PEACE AND PROSPERITY UNDER PAX AMERICANA

In post-Meiji Japan, the principal national security concern has been the threat from without. The nation has remained little concerned over the possibility of internal revolution or coup d'état. Certainly modern Japan was not wholly free of domestic violence including riots, coups d'état, and revolutionary movements. In all cases, however, these were suppressed or neutralized, being brought under control at an early point. After World War II in particular, the combination of democratization and rapid economic development served to underwrite the legitimacy of the government and reduce public grievances to the minimum. With human rights firmly established and all classes of citizens enjoying rapid material improvement, the political mood was one of moderation, not extremism.

By the mid-1960s, the appeal of Marxism among students and intellectuals, relatively strong in the pre-1945 period, had greatly declined. On the right, the old military establishment, which had periodically gotten out of control, had played a key role in various coups, and had steadily increased its power in the 1930s, was eliminated. Civilian control of the new Self-Defense Force (SDF) was firmly established, and a military coup is inconceivable, now or for the foreseeable future. Apart from fundamental institutional changes, public support for the political “right” in any form is almost completely lacking.

The situation regarding Japan’s external security was also extremely favorable in the years between the end of World War II and the late 1960s. The United States, then possessing a commanding military superiority, both globally and in the Pacific, provided Japan with a near total security guarantee. Contrary to the situation in West Europe, moreover, where the powerful Soviet ground forces posed a serious threat immediately after 1945, the Soviet troops stationed in East Asia, including Siberia, did not become truly powerful until after the mid-1960s, and the USSR naval force in particular was little more than a coast guard in those years.
Consequently, as long as the United States, with its global nuclear deterrent and its strong regional air and naval forces, maintained its firm defense commitment, the security of Japan—an insular nation—was adequately guaranteed militarily. In this era, the United States needed military bases in Japan for the forward development of her military forces in the Pacific-Asian region, but it was obviously not expecting Japan to provide further military cooperation. The United States was also a very powerful nation economically in these years and generously opened its domestic market and industrial technology to Japan while at the same time tolerating Japanese protectionist policies as the nation sought to rebuild its war ravaged economy. Thus, Japan had unparalleled access to the resources, markets, and technologies needed for its economic development while it protected its own “infant industries” assiduously.

So long as its internal security constituted no problem and its external security was guaranteed by a Pax Americana, Japan found little need to build and maintain a strong military force of its own. In addition, the memories of World War II were still vivid in the minds of neighboring peoples. A fear of Japanese militarism persisted, making any expansion of Japanese military strength hazardous to Japan’s regional position. Any government supportive of military strengthening, moreover, would have to confront adverse public opinion at home. In the Japanese people, deeply affected by their wartime experiences, pacifist sentiments were widespread. Consequently, the Japanese government kept its military forces at a low level during these years and deliberately restricted consideration of upgrading Japan’s military capabilities and extending the possible use of the Self-Defense Force. For the same reasons, no significant effort was made to alter the so-called peace clause (Article 9) of the Constitution.

A wide range of issues, however, gradually entered the arena of public debate: the defense-only strategy, the denial of Japan’s right of collective defense, the restraint on arms exports, and the ban on the overseas dispatch of Japan’s Self-Defense Force. In contrast to Europe, Japan was not required to arm itself with tactical nuclear weapons as a means of stemming the Soviet advance, and the United States did not expect Japan’s Self-Defense Force to join it in joint military action. Hence, it was not conceivable that the SDF would someday be asked to be sent overseas or request that Japanese arms be exported.¹

For most Japanese in these years the primary concern was less whether the U.S. capacity or will were sufficiently strong and more whether they were indeed too strong. There were misgivings that a powerful America might someday embark on a dangerous adventurism in Asia, with the result that Japan would become involved because of the American use of Japanese bases. More than a few Japanese in fact thought the “worst scenario” was unfolding when the United States got involved in the Vietnam conflict. To be sure, those who subscribed to the principle of unarmed neutrality based on a pacifist philosophy, while opposed to the military alliance with the United States, were nevertheless deeply convinced of the reliability of the U.S. commitment to defend Japan.

Since the end of the 1960s, international relations have undergone important political and strategic changes, both regionally and globally. The critical change affecting all others, as has often been signalled, has been the decline in the American capacity and will to maintain the international order. In the meantime, as one response to such a development, concern in Japan regarding national security has grown.

For Japan, the major changes of recent years have been in the economic sphere. As a result of sustained, high growth commencing in the 1950s, Japan has overtaken the advanced Western nations economically in various ways, and surpassed them in certain fields of production. In 1968, Japan’s gross national product (GNP) became greater than that of West Germany and ranked second in the non-Communist world (after the United States). Its foreign trade balance had also begun to register a growing yearly surplus: the overall balance of payments turned black in 1967.

With these changes, however, trade friction mounted at ever more frequent intervals between Japan and other nations, especially the United States, Japan’s largest trade partner. Meanwhile, the weakening of the American economy in relative terms was first revealed in a dramatic way with the abandonment of dollar-gold parity in 1971 and further indicated in the course of the 1973 oil crisis.

At that time, the United States and the Soviet Union had reached a rough nuclear parity, while the conventional military forces of the USSR continued to expand. The latter development, however, was not considered a particular threat to the West since the increases in development were primarily along the Sino-Soviet borders. Moreover, Soviet military activities in the Third World were also at a low ebb during the early and mid-1970s. As a result, the United States operated under the premise that détente continued. Meanwhile, the Vietnam War had become stalemated, with antiwar sentiment in America steadily growing and military expenditures reduced.

In East Asia, the conviction that détente was the wave of the future was strengthened by the progressive rapprochement between the United States and China. The combination of the relative decline of American power and new uncertainties in international relations raised in Japan the possibility of heightened economic difficulties. The oil crisis of 1973 in particular served as a pointed reminder to the Japanese of their nation’s economic vulnerability since its dependency upon imported oil was the greatest among the world’s advanced industrial nations.

Thus Japan’s concern with national security first manifested itself in the form of anxiety with respect to its economic security; the question of military security was seldom discussed during the first half of the 1970s, and increases in military expenditures evoked little support. For instance, the plan advanced by Yasuhiro Nakasone, then director-general of the Defense Agency, to expand Japan’s defense capabilities based on the so-called autonomous defense concept met with severe criticism within the Liberal Democratic party and the current government, and was
subsequently rejected. The 1976 National Defense Program Outline approved by the government set forth the thesis that "in spite of the persistent existence of a number of confrontational factors," the basic trend was still one of continuous progress toward détente; hence, the type of defense capability that Japan should maintain, it was asserted, should be based on the need to repel "a small-scale and limited conventional aggression."

The Japanese government in this period decided to establish a ceiling for defense expenditure at below 1 percent of GNP "for the time being," in line with the outline. In fact, defense expenditure during the 1970s registered a considerable nominal increase, reaching nearly 3.7 times the expenditures at the beginning of the decade, but the ratio to the GNP never reached 1 percent.

By the latter 1970s, however, the relative decline of American power increasingly came into evidence, especially in East Asia. The withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam and the subsequent collapse of the South Vietnamese government in April 1975 was followed two years later by a proposal of the Carter administration to withdraw U.S. troops from the Republic of Korea.

These developments evoked two disparate responses. The fear of some that the United States was prone to adventurism faded. But at the same time, misgivings about the reliability of the U.S. military commitment were nurtured. In the Middle East, the 1978 Iranian revolution also impacted adversely upon the image of American power and influence—and in a region of vital importance to Japan and the West.

In contrast to successive U.S. retreats, the Soviet Union accelerated its activities in the Third World. Soviet influences advanced in Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Afghanistan among other places, affecting the East-West power balance in East Africa and the Middle East. In the Pacific-East Asian region, moreover, Soviet military strength showed steady marked increases. In strategic weaponry, the USSR force was advanced by the deployments of SS-18s (submarines with intercontinental ballistic missiles [ICBMs]) and SS-N-18s (nuclear-powered submarines with submarine-launched ballistic missiles [SLBMs]), and in addition by intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF), with approximately one-third of Soviet SS-20s and an increasing number of Backfire Bombers deployed in the region. The INFs are capable of striking Guam and the Philippines, the U.S. forward military bases intended to counter the USSR. There has also been an impressive expansion of the Soviet Union's Pacific naval forces. Total Soviet naval expansion has exceeded 1,000,000 tons since 1970, and the Pacific fleet is now the largest of Soviet fleets. The fleet has also been qualitatively strengthened by the introduction of new warships such as Kiev-class aircraft carriers, the Delta III-class SSBN (ballistic missile–equipped, nuclear-powered submarines), and the Victor III-class SSN (nuclear-powered attack sub-

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marines). Of particular significance is the fact that the further extension of the SLBM's effective range has increased the strategic importance of the Northwest Pacific region to the Soviets, and with it, the importance of the Japanese archipelago. At present, the SS-N-18 mounted on a Delta III–class SSBN launched from the Sea of Okhotsk is capable of hitting any part of the United States.³

Thus, as Japan enhances the defense of its own territory and the surrounding waters, especially its air defense and antisubmarine warfare capabilities, the benefits accrue not only to Japan, but also to the United States. The strengthening of Japan's defense also strengthens the defense of the United States. The American requests for increases in Japan's defense capability in recent years are not only because it wants Japan to share more equitably in the defense burden but also because the heightened strategic importance of the Northwest Pacific has brought the strategic interests of the United States and Japan closer together.

It is erroneous to imply that Japan's security situation has uniformly deteriorated since the late 1960s. In fact, a number of improvements in the international environment have occurred, especially in the West Pacific–East Asian area. The most important of these is the improvement in U.S.–China relations. American rapprochement with China began in 1971, closely connected with the Sino-Soviet confrontation during the 1960s.

These developments produced a very favorable political–strategic atmosphere for both Japan and the United States. Among other things, it improved the bargaining position of the United States in relation to the USSR, at the same time reducing U.S. military burdens in the region by removing one erstwhile opponent. For Japan, U.S.–PRC rapprochement resolved the tension between the desire to have close ties with China based on both emotional and national interest considerations and the desire not to alienate the United States. It also eliminated a long-standing point of contention between the party in power and the opposition parties.

As relations with China improved, both the United States and Japan came to hold overly optimistic expectations during the 1970s regarding China's economic importance and strategic value. Romanticism, however, soon gave way to calmer, more rational evaluations, and by the beginning of the 1980s, the relations of both nations with China had evolved to normalcy and stability despite the fact that some issues of contention such as Taiwan remained.

It is difficult to predict the future changes of direction in Chinese foreign policy. The prospects for limited improvement in Sino-Soviet relations now seem good. Indeed, that has already occurred. There seems little likelihood, however, that China will break its growing ties with Japan and the United States and return to an alliance with the Soviet Union.

Another significant improvement in the international environment lies in the fact that in recent years both the Asian newly industrializing countries (NICs) and the

ASEAN states (the Philippines excepted) have demonstrated remarkable economic growth, as is well known. This has taken place, moreover, despite various crises adversely affecting the international environment. On balance, rapid economic development has supported political stability in the region. Further, as indicated by the dynamism of ASEAN and the modest but sustained trend toward some type of Pacific cooperation including both the advanced and developing nations of the area, a growing network of economic ties is being created. In contrast, Asian socialism is generally in crisis. China’s leaders, recognizing the inadequacies—indeed, disastrous results—of many former economic policies, have undertaken a series of bold reform measures. Initial results are favorable on balance, with high growth rates ensuing. The immediate future, however, constitutes a very delicate period, with major problems to be overcome, not the least of which is to find means of enabling socialism and a market economy to coexist in this vast, overpopulated land. North Korea is in considerable economic trouble, and it too is cautiously seeking changes in an effort to reverse the pattern of falling behind the South. And Vietnam’s economy is in a shambles. The Asian Communist states, moreover, in striking contrast to the non-Communist states, have hostile to “correct” relations with each other, with confrontation more prominent than cooperation, as witness China-Vietnam and Vietnam-Cambodia relations as well as the complex relations between the USSR and China.

In sum, communism is no longer an attractive model, either economically or politically. Ironically, however, the states and leaders supposedly dedicated to “proletarian internationalism” are far less united and cooperative than those committed to some form of parliamentarism and pluralism.

Despite the increase in Soviet military power in Asia, including the USSR’s new base at Cam Rahn Bay in Vietnam, moreover, Pacific-Asian states remain in a more favorable position with relation to a Soviet military threat than West Europe. The countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have perpetually remained inferior in conventional force strength to the USSR, and efforts to offset this with superior nuclear forces have now been confronted with augmented Soviet INF. But in Asia, the Soviet Union, despite its military gains, has limited deployable conventional force strength. Hence, these countries feel less threatened by the Soviet Union’s additional INF deployment than do the West European nations. This is one important reason why the antinuclear movement has been relatively limited in Japan despite Japan’s being the only nation to have experienced nuclear bomb damage. The West Europe antinuclear movement has been much more potent, partly because of the sense of threat. (An active Soviet campaign to influence Europeans has certainly been an additional factor.)

After taking all of these positive factors into account, however, one cannot deny that the uncertainties surrounding Pax Americana have been disturbing, especially since Soviet actions have been scarcely reassuring. Since 1978, the Soviet Union has placed one division of troops on several of the four islands close to Hokkaido and periodically upgraded the military equipment there. As is well known, these islands are claimed by Japan although in recent years the USSR has refused even to discuss
the issue. Soviet air and naval activities near and occasionally within Japanese territory have steadily accelerated, with large-scale naval maneuvers now taking place. In the broader arena, the shooting down of the Korean Air Lines trans-Pacific passenger plane in 1983 as well as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan earlier added to the deep popular mistrust of the USSR in Japan. These developments, it should be noted, took place against a background of “tough” Soviet policies toward Japan throughout the post-World War II era. It is not surprising that the concerns of the Japanese people with respect to military security, and specifically the Soviet threat, have greatly increased. Between 1975 and 1981, the percentage of those who regarded a Soviet invasion of Japan as a real danger, measured by public opinion polls, almost doubled, jumping from 15 percent to 28 percent. Popular support for the Self-Defense Forces and the Mutual Security Treaty has increased to the point where even a majority of Socialist and Communist party supporters favor these.4

In response to such changes in the national and international environment, the Japanese government has strengthened the military component of its security policies. The defense budget has been given greater priority in the budget. Under conditions of serious fiscal constraint, when expenditures for social security, education, public works, and similar social policies have been curtailed, only defense and foreign economic assistance expenditures have continued to grow, with the former advancing annually between 3 and 4 percent. In 1985, with the salaries of military personnel increased, the so-called 1 percent (of GNP) barrier was breached.

In 1981, Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki announced that Japan must not only defend the seas and skies in the immediate vicinity of Japan, but must also conduct surveillance by sea for a thousand nautical miles and by air for several hundred miles. This commitment was subsequently reiterated by his successor, Yasuhiro Nakasone. Since the issue of surveillance and defense of sea lanes and airspace in these dimensions was not anticipated in the National Defense Program Outline, these commitments, whatever the precise intentions, signalled an important change in Japan’s defense policies with significant implications for the future.

Beyond this, Japan has greatly increased its military cooperation with the United States, and more generally, with the entire Western alliance. In 1978, the governments of Japan and the United States adopted the “Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation” under the terms of which the American armed forces and the Japanese SDF began mapping out joint operations. At approximately the same time, the air SDF and the ground SDF began participating in joint exercises with U.S. forces. Before this time, such exercises had only been conducted between the U.S. Navy and the Japan maritime Self-Defense Force. In 1980, moreover, the latter force began to take part in the multinational Pacific naval exercise called RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific exercise).

Since the time of the Ohira administration (1978–1980), Japanese governmental leaders have been unequivocal in enunciating Japan’s status as a member of the

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Western alliance and in proclaiming the security of Japan and the West as indivisible. This articulation of policy, moreover, has been accompanied by positive implementation. Japan has extended economic assistance to such nations as Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan, and a number of Latin American states—nations where economic ties with Japan were not particularly important but deemed strategically significant for the security of the non-Communist world.

In the meantime, the attitude of the opposition parties in Japan has also undergone a considerable change compared to the past. By the beginning of the 1970s, the Democratic Socialist party and the Komeito (Clean Government party), both part of the moderate opposition, had shifted course, joining the supporters of the SDF and the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty. The change within the Democratic Socialist party was especially pronounced. By 1980, its own Special Committee on National Security had been set up in both houses of the Diet, and even more actively than the Liberal Democratic party, it voiced the view that the 1 percent ceiling (of GNP) should be reviewed. Finally, the Japan Socialist party, long committed to unarmed neutrality as a central plank in party policy, has recently begun to reexamine its foreign policy position. It has moved to the point of de facto acceptance of Japan's SDF and the mutual security treaty by the curious logic of asserting that they are “unconstitutional but lawful.”

IN SEARCH OF A COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY POLICY

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that a broad national consensus on security policy has been created or is forthcoming. There is a consensus within Japan that national security policy has both a military and nonmilitary aspect, and that these two elements deserve at least equal attention. It is also generally agreed that to protect Japanese security, the nation must first undertake its own defense, then work to cement the alliance with the United States while cooperating also with other nations, and finally, where possible, seek to reduce tensions with those nations that could or do constitute a threat. It is further agreed that all three of these activities are equally important in securing Japanese security goals, and that by definition, therefore, an effective security policy for Japan must be comprehensive.\(^5\)

When it comes to the concrete question of what should be the specific allocation of Japan's limited resources among economic development, political stability, and expanded military capability, and how Japan should strike a balance among self-help, cooperation with friendly nations, and negotiations with adversaries, diverse and often conflicting views prevail within Japan.

In the first place, regarding the area of cooperation with the United States, there are two opposite views, one that places the emphasis on the military and the other on

the nonmilitary aspects (especially the economic). The difference between the two stems from the way one interprets the nature of what is considered the major threat. Those who consider that the Soviet Union’s growth of military capability is the main threat and also that the principal counter-method can only be military power itself (being unable either to control the Soviet Union by economic sanction or to tame it by economic cooperation) would naturally emphasize the military aspects. In contrast, their opponents emphasize economic cooperation because they believe that economic means can be effectively used to deal with the threat that comes from the Soviet Union, or because they view as the primary threat, rather than the Soviet Union, such nonmilitary issues as the disturbance of the existing order of international finance and trade, the decline of the growth capability of the Western nations’ economies, the rise of protectionism in the West, and the growing uncertainties of the world’s commodity market with respect to raw materials supply. Those who consider the economic aspects as the more important security consideration include men who think an international division of labor is desirable within the Western camp, such as a scheme under which the United States, the military titan, takes charge of the measures to meet the military threat and Japan takes on the task of economic cooperation. At present there are as yet more people in Japan who think the country should make its contribution to the collective Western security principally in the economic field. Even within the Japanese government, outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Defense Agency, such economic ministries as the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and the Economic Planning Agency lean toward this school of thought. The expression “comprehensive security” is often used in Japan primarily because of this tendency to attach importance to the nonmilitary aspects of Japan’s national security.

However, it would be wrong in this writer’s opinion to deal with the subject of national security as if military and economic means were mutually exclusive. It should be noted that the substance to be used as the method of countering military threat is not necessarily limited to military means alone. For instance, the loss of political stability in a developing nation as a result of economic trouble can provide an enticing opportunity for the Soviet Union to come in and increase its influence, while on the other hand the military strength of the developed Western nations can obviously provide only a limited help in solving the developing nations’ economic and political problems. It is known to us that military threat often breeds, and aggravates, economic hardship. For instance, if the present military balance in the Middle East should tilt in favor of the Soviet Union, a serious threat to the sea line of communication (SLOC) from the Middle East to Japan could result. This situation points to the obvious wisdom that we ought to have a combined military and nonmilitary (economic) strategy to counter a military threat and there should also be a combined nonmilitary (economic) and military strategy to deal with an economic problem.

It is also my opinion that such a “burden-sharing” scheme as would require the United States to take on the military burden and Japan to assume the economic burden is neither feasible nor desirable. Such division of labor would cast the Americans in
the role of Japan’s mercenary, while for the Japanese it would be an act of relegating the matter of their own national defense to the discretion of the United States. The military strength of a nation depends in the long run on its economic resourcefulness, and more importantly on its capability in scientific research and technological development. It is for this reason that I regard it as undesirable for the United States to specialize in strengthening its military capability, just as I object to Japan’s becoming a military big power.

Second, regarding the degree of cooperation between Japan and the United States, opinion can again vary significantly depending on how one assesses the alleged threats as well as on how one evaluates the specific security interests of a given nation. It is obvious, however, that Japan and the United States (therefore the West as a whole) share a common security interest with regard to the threat posed by the Soviet Union.

However, it is also a fact that Japan’s security interests will not overlap fully with those of the United States. Whereas the United States has the most concern over, as well as the primary responsibility in maintaining, the global military balance with the Soviet Union, Japan regards the military balance in the East Asia–Western Pacific theater as most important. Therefore, while a Russian military incursion into the Japanese archipelago may be regarded by the United States merely as a “threat that cannot be disregarded,” such Russian action is highly likely to become a fatal turn of events for Japan. Regarding how serious and imminent the Soviet threats actually are, there are any number of different assessments. Therefore, there are divergent views on how much of what type of military strength Japan should possess and what type and scope of U.S. military deployment are needed in East Asia, as well as what method of cooperation is desirable in the so-called C3I (Command, Control, Communication, and Intelligence), in arms production, and in the research and development of military technologies. In this respect the position of the Japanese government cannot be called adequately clear. The National Defense Program Outline (NDPO), formally adopted in 1976, acknowledges that the existing balance in the power relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union and the U.S.-Japan Security System have “continued to play a large role in preventing a full-scale aggression of Japan by the Soviet Union” and further defines its aim as “repelling by its own means as a principle” such attacks considered as “small-scale and limited conventional aggressions,” but “depends on the support of the United States” when faced with “large-scale aggressions.” As long as U.S.-Japan relations are maintained in good order and the U.S.-Japan Security System continues to function as expected, the Soviet Union is certainly unlikely to single out Japan and attempt an invasion. However, in the case of a regional conflict such as a head-on military clash with the United States (in the Middle East for instance), the chances of the Soviet Union’s launching an attack on Japan to strengthen its global strategic position will greatly increase if and when the United States and the Japanese armed forces deployed in the East Asia–Western Pacific region are judged to be vulnerably thin. Consequently, it must be concluded that the concept of Japan’s self-defense embodied in the NDPO—
single handedly meeting the Soviet Union's "limited and small-scale" aggression, but depending on United States support in case of a large-scale invasion—is unrealistic in a dual sense. First, Japan and the United States must agree to total cooperation from the beginning to discourage the Soviet Union from using an act of aggression; the two must also effectively defend Japan in case such deterrent failed and actual invasion did take place. Second, once such war had commenced, the United States would be unlikely to stage a large-scale counter-attack to rescue Japan because it would have to prepare to counter the Soviet attack globally.

In the opinion of this writer the military cooperation between Japan and the United States must become more closely interlocked and integrated than it is today. On both the qualitative and quantitative level of military strength Japan is supposed to maintain and on the level of deployment the United States military forces are expected to make in this area, there should be adequate joint deliberation between the two governments so that the combined total of their military strength will have maximum effect in deterring such an invasion. From this viewpoint, the present condition is very inefficient and demands a substantial improvement because at present the three branches of Japan's Self-Defense Forces maintain mutually independent plans of expansion and maintenance without an integrated overall plan and because the U.S. forces stationed in Japan as well as the Seventh Fleet can only be deployed at the sole discretion of the U.S. government. Another factor that would contribute to enhancing the deterrent capability would be to achieve better cooperation between Japan and the United States in their activities for C³I. In this context, fresh reviews ought to be made on the advisability of joint use of the Surveillance Satellite and the Over-the-Horizon (OTH) Radar. Third, both nations should endeavor to develop a better system of division of labor as well as of collaboration with respect to research in military technologies and munitions development. At present, there is no joint effort in military technology research between the two countries, and such principal munitions as the F-15 and P3C are still being manufactured in Japan by Japanese licensees despite the fact that they are being produced more efficiently in the United States. Such wastes are highly undesirable from the viewpoint of the optimum allocation of human resources, materials, and public funds. Both Japan and the United States ought to expedite joint research, development, and production whenever and wherever possible, and at the same time decide to let one side produce weapons and munitions wherever the other side is found to be less efficient.

It will not be an easy task to construct such a closely-knit, cooperative relationship. While on the American side there is the lingering "superpower symptom" of making unilateral decisions and forcing them on its allies, on the Japanese side there still is a persistent desire to "free-ride" on the American commitment. For one thing, the Japanese government's present interpretation of the Constitution that Japan is barred from exercising the right of collective defense must be worked on, revised

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and/or altered along with a number of other laws and Diet resolutions such as the one that prohibits the military application of satellites. It goes without saying that such revisions and alterations are politically very difficult to achieve. And, to touch once again on the subject of the alliance relations, it should be remembered that the temptation to “free-ride” becomes much greater as the knowledge of the common interests becomes more widespread, while willingness to share the cost burden of maintaining the alliance suffers as the contrasting difference of interests becomes more widely known. This is one of the fundamental dilemmas of international alliances, brought about because we still maintain in today’s world a sovereign-state system even as the already interdependent relations among nations continue to deepen.
5. China’s Relations with Communist Countries and Parties

Tatsumi Okabe

THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In considering the Communist role within a country as a security problem, two different lines of thought have developed. One contends that there are special ties among Communist parties and that these ties are used to intervene in the domestic affairs of other countries and to subvert existing regimes. In contrast to the “myth of international solidarity among Communists,” an opposing view contends that Communists are no more internationally united than are other political groups or non-Communist states. According to this line of thought, seemingly special ties are within the usual practices of the nation-state system. This essay will examine these two different views by discussing China’s relations with other Communist parties and states. The examination starts by reviewing the theoretical background of “the myth of international solidarity.”

Marxism in its original form presupposed a single world revolution rather than separate revolutions in the various countries. This conviction was based on the belief that the world was rapidly becoming a single unit under capitalist development. The world was believed to have become interdependent. The proletarian world revolution was supposed to complete global unification. After the revolution, therefore, all states were to be organized as a “world republic.” The nation-state system was to die together with the capitalist mode of production. The structure of the nation-state, an organizational model which first appeared in Europe, was believed to correspond to the capitalist economic system, but not to socialism.¹

Lenin used Marxism to develop his theory of imperialism. According to him, under imperialism, wars relating to the redistribution of colonies would be repeated

over and over again, because of the aggressive nature of the imperialist powers and
the uneven development of capitalism. This is the essence of the Leninist thesis of the
"inevitability of war." According to Lenin, the people of the world would have to
choose between a war-ridden "imperialist" world and a peaceful socialist world based
upon global federation. The choice was not between an "imperialist" regime and a
socialist regime in one country, but one between an "imperialist" international system
and a socialist international system. From the Leninist perspective, therefore, "im-
perialism" was not only the last stage of capitalism, but also the last stage of the
nation-state system. The revolution envisaged by Lenin was a world revolution.

In accordance with this thesis, until Lenin's death in the early 1920s, the
Communist movement disregarded national boundaries. The issue of "noninterven-
tion in the domestic affairs of other countries" did not exist for the Communists,
because national boundaries were no more than "reactionary" remnants of the capital-
ist period. Lenin stated this in clear terms: "The victorious proletariat [of the first
revolutionary country]... will stand up against the capitalist world, attract oppressed
peoples of other countries to their side, stimulate uprisings against capitalists in these
countries, and act against the exploiting classes and their states even by resorting to
armed force, if necessary." This is the real meaning of "revolutionary war" and
"revolutionary diplomacy." The application of restraint on the "export of revolution,
which is now a cliché for Communist leaders, did not exist in Leninist terminology at
that time; on the contrary, export was encouraged. This was based on the belief that
national distinctions and national boundaries would inevitably be eliminated with the
downfall of world capitalism. The term "proletarian internationalism" had a vitality
no longer existant today.

According to Lenin, "Proletarian internationalism demands that the interests of
proletarian struggles in one country should be subordinated to the interests of
worldwide proletarian struggles." Internationalism, therefore, meant a denial of
nation-states and nationalism. Let me call this original type of internationalism
"Internationalism I" in order to make a distinction between this and later revised
versions. The first revision occurred under Stalin's rule.

When the Bolsheviks came to power in Russia in 1917, they anticipated that
revolutions would occur shortly in western Europe. They thought that their tasks were
to trigger a world revolution and to maintain their power until the advent of that
revolution. Lenin believed that "in a system of states... it is impossible to imagine
that the Soviet Republic can coexist for a long period of time with imperialist
countries."
The world revolution did not occur, however. After Lenin’s death, Stalin made a 180-degree ideological turn by calling for “socialist construction in one country” in 1925. This change in the basic premise of Leninism was realistic in view of the world situation at the time, but the change was so radical that it was sharply criticized by Trotsky, who stuck to ideological orthodoxy, proclaiming that the doctrine of socialism in one country was a reactionary attempt to contain the advanced production mode of socialism in the “reactionary” framework of the nation-state.9

The new theory caused basic changes in the Communist perception of international relations. The nation-state system, which was supposed to vanish after the anticipated world revolution, was now accepted for the indefinite future, and the Russian Coimmunists had to adapt to it. The world revolution would have to be replaced by separate individual revolutions in various countries. In other words, Communism was “nationalized.” These changes necessarily led to a revision of “internationalism.”

However, in order to maintain continuity from Leninist days, thus establishing his legitimacy as Lenin’s lawful successor, Stalin retained the rhetoric of the old theory. Therefore, the call for world revolution and internationalism continued. World revolution and internationalism as advocated by a nation-state trying to survive in a hostile environment, however, had a quite different meaning from that advocated by revolutionaries trying to replace the existing nation-state system with a socialist world federation. These key concepts now became the means to protect and enhance the national interests of the Soviet Union. This was symbolically shown by Stalin’s definition of an internationalist as “one who is determined to support the Soviet Union without reservation, without disruption, and unconditionally.”10 This revised type of internationalism shall be called “Internationalism II.”

The guiding principle of Soviet relations with other Communist parties after the revision was a strange mixture of rhetorical internationalism, lip service to world revolution, and Soviet nationalism. The mixture is reflected in the dichotomous use of “state” and “party.” Diplomatic relations with capitalist countries were conducted in accordance with the rules of the nation-state system, including the principle of nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other countries. But party-to-party relations, which were supposed to be outside of official state-to-state relations, dealt with support to revolutionary activities by Communist parties in other countries. The Comintern, thus, became a convenient camouflage for Soviet foreign policy in its capacity of being the central organization to promote world revolution. The dichotomy, convenient for the Soviet Union, was not accepted by other countries because the state and the party of the Soviet Union were and are inseparable. The dichotomy has been regarded as no more than a dual strategy of Soviet foreign policy and has remained one of the potential conflicts between Communist and non-Communist countries. It was because of this situation that the Comintern was

dissolved during World War II when the Soviet Union was an ally of Western "capitalist" countries.

Internationalism II, however, had a strong impact within the international Communist movement. The lingering appeal of Internationalism I has made many foreign Communists adherents to Internationalism II without noticing the difference between the two. The "myth of the international solidarity of Communists" was born under these circumstances. Several factors contributed to the acceptance of Internationalism II as genuine internationalism. First, the Soviet Union was the only fortress of socialism. Second, the Soviet Union had high prestige and was the center of the world Communist movement. Third, Stalin was the charismatic leader of the global Communist movement.

The situation started to change when diverse socialist nation-states appeared, but where similar conditions exist (as in East European countries) Internationalism II is still viable in some degree. The so-called Brezhnev Doctrine, which places the interests of the "family of socialist nations" higher than the national interests of the various socialist countries, is a typical example as well as a logical conclusion of Internationalism II, although, seen from a different perspective, it is no more than "big-nation chauvinism" or "hegemonism" to use Chinese terminology.

**CHINA'S EXPERIENCE**

Chinese communism has been nationalistic from its beginning. This is one of the main differences between Chinese communism and Western, including Russian, communism. The Chinese Communists were attracted by communism because they thought it would be the best means of national salvation. The degree of their nationalist inclination can be found in Li Dazhao’s theory of a "proletarian nation." Li thought that the class struggle relevant for China was one between the “proletarian nations” and “bourgeois nations” of the world. His definitions of “class,” “proletariat,” and "bourgeoisie" were very different from those of Marx or Lenin.

Although Li Dazhao believed in Internationalism I, as was shown by his support of the Socialist World Federation, his perception of the tasks China faced was nationalist. It was the natural reaction of a Chinese Communist and, for that matter, of Communists from all colonial and dependent countries.

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11 The point is emphasized in recent campaigns for patriotic education in China. See Zhonggong Zhongyang Xuanchuan Bu [Central Propaganda Department of the CCP] and Zhonggong Zhongyang Shujichu Yanjiu Shi [Research Room of the Central Secretariat of the CCP], “Guanyu jiaqiang aiguozhuyi xuanhuan jiaoyu de yijian” [Opinion on accelerating patriotic propaganda education], Renmin ribao [People’s daily] (Beijing), July 16, 1983.


13 Li Dazhao, “Lianzhizhuyi yu guojizuzhi” [Federalism and international organization] in Li Dazhao xuanji, p. 134. Also see Meisner, op. cit., p. 186.

Mao Zedong was even more nationalistic. During his revolutionary days, Mao tried to be as independent from Moscow as possible, and came to power within the Communist party by struggling against the “internationalists,” namely, the pro-Soviet group led by Wang Ming. Mao denied Internationalism I when he said that “such a world union of socialist countries can be successful only if every nation has the right to enter or leave the union according to the will of its people, and with its sovereignty intact and certainly never at the ‘command’ of Moscow.” Although Mao subscribed to Internationalism II to some extent during his revolutionary days, the statement just cited indicates clearly that after coming to power, Mao and his party did not support Internationalism II. China’s severe criticism of the Brezhnev Doctrine was a logical extension of Mao’s statement.

Mao was successful in his efforts to obtain extensive independence from Moscow because the Soviets could not afford to pay much attention to the fate of obscure, native, self-claimed Communists in northwest China during the 1930s and World War II. Soviet indifference to the Chinese Communists was demonstrated by the signing of the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact in 1939 and the Japan-Soviet Neutrality Pact in 1941, both at the height of China’s anti-Japan, antifascist struggles. After that time, the Chinese Communists started using the slogan of “self-reliance.”

When the Comintern was dissolved in 1943 to facilitate cooperation between the Soviet Union and Allied nations in the West, Mao welcomed the dissolution and said:

The internal situation in each country and the relations between different countries are more complicated than they have been in the past and are changing more rapidly. . . . The Communist International, which is far removed from the concrete struggle in each country, was adapted to the relatively simple conditions of the past, when changes took place rather slowly, but now it is no longer a suitable instrument.

The statement was no less than a declaration of independence from Moscow and meant a further departure of the CCP from Internationalism II.

This, however, does not mean that the later conflicts between the CCP and the Soviet Union were already inevitable. From the CCP’s perspective, the Soviet Union was the “mother country” of socialism and the only “living model” of an “ideal” social system toward which China should aim. Although the Chinese Communists felt it necessary to maintain their independence from Moscow, the Soviet Union was a special country with which to unite and from which to learn. Therefore, despite some unpleasant experiences with the Soviet Union before and after the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, the Communist regime in China wanted to have

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16 Joint Editorial Staff of *Renmin ribao*, *Hongqi* [Red flag], and *Jiefang junbao* [Liberation army daily], “Lieningzhu yihaishi shehui diguozhu yi” [Leninism or social imperialism], *Renmin ribao*, May 1, 1970.
17 Schram, op. cit., p. 289.
complete ideological-political unity with the Soviets. The unity aimed at by the Chinese, however, was to be based on equality between two nation-states. From the Chinese viewpoint, there should never be any supernational authority in international relations, although the Soviet Union was to be respected as the eldest brother in the socialist camp and a predecessor in socialist construction. The Chinese Communists in power declared that they were internationalists, but their version of internationalism has long been different from Internationalism II. The internationalism they have had in mind is friendship and unity between and among sovereign nation-states or independent Communist parties that share common interests, common social systems, and a common ideology. This version of internationalism is not different from the non-Marxist, "bourgeois" internationalism of the West, which both Internationalisms I and II deny. Let us call the Chinese version of internationalism “Internationalism III.”

The Soviet Union, however, tried to apply Internationalism II to relations within the socialist camp and called it “socialist internationalism.” The camp, in the Soviet eyes, was not a mere group of nation-states. Internationalism II was effective in Eastern Europe, and it still is effective in varying degrees, as is shown by the continuing validity of the Brezhnev Doctrine. Especially when Stalin’s charisma—and power—was unchallengeable, the superior-subordinate relations between the Soviet Union and East European socialist nations were firmly established. The case of Yugoslavia was exceptional, but it is clear evidence that the Soviet Union wanted to apply Internationalism II to relations with other socialist countries. Precisely on that occasion China clarified its position with respect to Internationalism II. Liu Shaoqi, on the eve of the Communist takeover in China, wrote a lengthy article to express his party’s support of the Cominform’s expulsion of Yugoslavia. He did not support Internationalism II, however, but emphasized the necessity of combining patriotism with internationalism. This was no more than reiteration of Internationalism III.

Nevertheless, the difference between Soviet Internationalism II and Chinese Internationalism III did not surface for some time because Stalin’s prestige was absolute. Moreover, China wanted to learn from the Soviet Union and to rely on it both economically and for purposes of security. China wanted to sign the Sino-Soviet Alliance Treaty despite “a series of struggles” with Stalin. This shows that the Chinese Communist insistence on unity with the Soviet Union was motivated by Chinese interests and not by Chinese endorsement of Internationalism II.

Internationalism II has always been difficult to impose on countries not under the direct control of the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia, whose Communists came to power on their own, was a case in point and China was another, although the latter maintained unity with the Soviet Union until 1956 and tried to do so during the rest of the 1950s.

In 1956 when the Sino-Soviet conflict commenced, included among the issues was the disagreement over the principles that should govern relations among socialist

20 Mao Zedong sixiang wansui, p. 432.
countries. There are different views on the causes of the Sino-Soviet conflict, which after 1956 developed into an all-out, many faceted confrontation, but at the outset the core of the conflict was ideological.\(^{21}\) For Communist regimes, ideology is the most important source of legitimacy. "Correct and proper" policies based on "correct" ideology were and are the source of all legitimate power. The "correctness" of Communist ideology in the early 1950s rested on the "distinguished" achievements of the Soviet Union and was symbolized by the high prestige of Stalin. This was one important reason why China, without subscribing to Internationalism II, persisted in close unity with the Soviet Union. For the Chinese, however, the legitimacy of the Communist rule in the USSR was shattered by Khrushchev's "indiscreet" criticism of Stalin at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1956. No other Communist parties including the Chinese were consulted beforehand,\(^{22}\) although these parties were severely affected. The legitimacy crisis led to disturbances in some East European countries, notably in Hungary, and in China to a lesser extent. Mao himself was affected by the successive waves of criticism against the cult of personality.\(^{23}\)

To cope with this legitimacy crisis, the Chinese Communists published two articles\(^{24}\) to show their more balanced evaluation of Stalin. In these articles, China defended Stalin, not because they loved him, but because he was the symbol of the "correctness" of their ideology. The impact of the criticism of Stalin on domestic politics in China as well as in other socialist countries made the Chinese Communists realize anew the danger of intervention in their domestic affairs by another, bigger socialist country, although the Soviet intervention in 1956 was unintentional. Therefore, in the midst of the East European unrest in 1956, the Chinese government, in its statement on Soviet dealings with the East European disturbances, declared that relations among socialist countries like those with other states should be established on the basis of "the five principles of peaceful coexistence."\(^{25}\) These principles are no more than a confirmation of the common rules of the nation-state system, such as mutual respect for the sovereignty and equality of nations, and nonintervention in the domestic affairs of others. In the Soviet view of international relations, peaceful coexistence refers to the principle governing relations between countries with different social systems. Therefore, the Chinese statement on peaceful coexistence among socialist countries contradicts the Soviet understanding. In December 1956, China

\([^1]\) On this point see Tatsumi Okabe, "Chūgokugawa kara mita Chūō kankei" [Sino-Soviet relations seen from the Chinese side], in Kokusai Mondai [International affairs] (Tokyo), April, 1983.

\([^2]\) Joint editorial staff of Renmin ribao and Hongqi, "Sugong lindao tong women fenqui de youlai he fazhan" [Origins and developments of conflicts between Soviet leadership and us], Renmin ribao, Sept. 6, 1963.

\([^3]\) Mao Zedong sixiang wansui, p. 162.

\([^4]\) Editorial staff of Renmin ribao, "Guanyu wuchan jieji zhuangzheng de lishi jingyan" [On the historical experiences of the proletarian dictatorship], April 5, 1956, and idem, "Zai lun wuchan jieji zhuanzheng de lishi jingyan" [Once more on the historical experiences of the proletarian dictatorship], Renmin ribao, Dec. 29, 1956.

went further by mentioning the "big-nation chauvinism"\textsuperscript{26} of the Soviet Union. This represented a new chapter in Communist polemics. Again, the implication was clear. Internationalism II, with the Soviet Union as the commanding center, as seen from China, was tantamount to big-nation chauvinism.

In 1958, China under the leadership of Mao Zedong tried to seek "China's own road" to socialism by launching the Great Leap Forward and establishing the People's Communes. These can be interpreted as China's efforts to establish its independent source of legitimacy, but precisely for that reason these efforts were criticized by the Soviet Union, which had been the old source of legitimacy. The Soviet verbal intervention in China's domestic affairs in 1958 represented a frontal attack on the legitimacy of Chinese Communist rule and accelerated the ideological schism between China and the Soviet Union. China now wanted to become a new center of ideological authority in order to cope with the Soviet threat to its legitimacy.

Two other problems in 1958 accelerated the Sino-Soviet conflict. The first was the Soviet proposal to organize a Sino-Soviet joint fleet and to establish a joint military radar surveillance system in China.\textsuperscript{27} This was perceived by China as a violation of China's national sovereignty. The other was the Taiwan Straits crisis, which needs no lengthy analysis here.\textsuperscript{28}

After 1958, Sino-Soviet relations rapidly deteriorated. During the process, China voiced increasingly stronger assertions of independence from any international authority and declared that there should never be a "paternalistic guiding party" in the international Communist movement.\textsuperscript{29} The Chinese version of internationalism, Internationalism III, based on national interests, was thus firmly established and repeatedly proclaimed by the early 1960s.

Our historical review can be summarized as follows: (1) the type of Communist internationalism that denies national interests and national boundaries (Internationalism I) is a theoretical remnant from the days for Marx and Lenin and survives today only in words; (2) since 1925, Communist internationalism has been no more than a nationalist weapon for the Soviet Union, which has allegedly been the center of the world Communist movement (Internationalism II); (3) China, having been a peripheral member of the movement, has tried to escape the yoke of Internationalism II and has achieved independence; (4) the Chinese Communists view relations among

\textsuperscript{26}[Once more on the historical experiences of the proletarian dictatorship], \textit{Renmin ribao}, Dec. 29, 1956 (see note 24).

\textsuperscript{27}Mainichi Shimbun (Tokyo), Jan. 26, 1972. This is a report of one of the earliest first-hand disclosures of the problem by the Chinese.

\textsuperscript{28}There are many research reports on the problem including: Shinkichi Etô and Akira Ishii, "Mō takutō no shini" [Real intentions of Mao Zedong], \textit{Chūō Kōron} [Central public argument], Tokyo, April 1975; Mineo Nakajima, "Chūō kankei no kanwa to hakyoku" [Détente and collapse of Sino-Soviet relations], in his \textit{Chisō taiirse to gendai} [The Sino-Soviet conflict and the contemporary era] (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Sha, 1978); Allen S. Whiting, "New Light on Mao: Quemoy 1958: Mao's Miscalculations," \textit{The China Quarterly}, no. 62, June 1975.

\textsuperscript{29}This is one of the main themes of controversy between the Soviet Union and China. For example, see Joint Editorial Staff of \textit{Renmin ribao} and Hongqi, "Sugong lindao shi dangdai zuida de fenliezhuyizhe" [The leadership of the Communist party of the Soviet Union are the biggest divisionists today], Feb. 4, 1964.
socialist states as identical to relations among nation-states having different social systems (Internationalism III), and fear intervention by stronger socialist states (big-nation chauvinism or hegemonism). As we shall now see, the same principles can logically be applied to party-to-party relations, although other possibilities exist.

PARTY-TO-PARTY RELATIONS

Party-to-party relations here refer to the relations between the CCP and Communist parties not in power in other countries. Relations between the CCP and parties in power are not separable from state-to-state relations and will be discussed in the next section.

Our task is to discover the attitudes of the Chinese Communist party to other Communist parties. Logically, it should be expected that China would treat other parties equally, respecting the independence of these parties. Verbal homage has been paid to this principle, but in substance, this has not necessarily been the case. Chinese experience in resisting Soviet internationalism cum big-nation chauvinism has not hindered China from adopting Internationalism II with China as the center when that served to enhance its national interests. Naturally, this type of action is seen by smaller parties as big-nation chauvinism on the part of China. For these parties, the Chinese Communist party seems to assume a commanding role similar to that played by the Soviet Union; and for the governments of the countries concerned, China appears to engage in subversive interventions in their domestic affairs.

Chinese Internationalism II has come from three different motives. First, there have been cases in which China cooperated with the Stalinist Internationalism II. One case in point was China’s criticism of the Japan Communist party in 1950. At that time, the Cominform criticized the JCP’s strategy of a peaceful transition to socialism under the American Occupation and called for intense struggle against “American imperialism.” The JCP, however, did not entirely accept this criticism. Then, the People’s Daily of the CCP intervened to declare that the Chinese supported the Cominform. Two days later, the JCP Central Committee accepted the criticism. In this case, China played an important role in changing the basic strategy of another party. This was the type of foreign command the Chinese Communists had rejected during their revolutionary struggle. China, here, was apparently motivated by the desire to support a unified policy within the international Communist movement under Stalin’s leadership. After this, the Chinese Communists coerced the JCP into adopting a violent revolutionary strategy in Japan. This strategy turned out to be a total failure for the Communists and was subsequently criticized as “ultra-leftist adventurism.” According to a later JCP account, Mao Zedong apologized to the JCP leader, Kenji Miyamoto, in 1959 for their “incorrect” intervention.

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31 “Riben renmin jiefang de daolu” [The road to the liberation of the Japanese people], Renmin ribao editorial, Jan. 17, 1950.
Second, after the Sino-Soviet conflict started, China wanted to establish a new center of the international Communist movement. This was motivated by the Chinese desire to consolidate Communist legitimacy at home. As stated before, Soviet criticisms of Stalin in 1956 and of China's own road to socialism in 1958 had jeopardized the legitimacy of the Communist regime in China. To restore legitimacy, the Chinese Communists had to deny Soviet authority over the international Communist movement, and had to establish their own prestige among as many Communist parties as possible. This resulted in promoting separatist activities in many Communist parties of the world. Some pro-Beijing factions split off from Communist parties in their countries to form "pure" Communist parties. Most of these parties were under the control or influence of the CCP and had ideological affinity with the "commanding" party. Once again, the closeness between the CCP and a domestic group caused the governments concerned to be worried about intervention from China in their domestic affairs.

Third, after the onset of the Sino-Soviet conflict, China's security was threatened by the lack of effective deterrent and defense capabilities. In order to restrain a possible American invasion of China under this situation, Chinese leaders decided to support worldwide, anti-American movements. According to Chinese logic, if the United States was kept busy coping with such movements all over the world, it would not be able to threaten China. Therefore, violent struggles, not necessarily by Communists, were encouraged. China's praise of "national liberation movements" after 1958 had this motive among others. In the Chinese view, the unstable situation also contributed to hindering any freeze of the global status quo by the Soviet-American détente. For the Chinese, who never forgot the objective of regaining Taiwan, the status quo in the area was always a target to be attacked.

Besides these three motives, there was another factor supportive of China's Internationalism II—its urge to command other parties—namely, the remaining influence of the "Middle Kingdom" mentality. Being a large, advanced country in traditional times, China had been the center of the world order in its region. A sense of superiority was thus fostered among the Chinese in their dealings with "uncivilized" peripheral peoples. This psychology may have had some lingering influence on China's relations with the smaller Communist parties of neighboring countries. However, this factor, with a few exceptions, does not seem to have played a big role. In a recent article, the present writer pointed out three different sources from whence came the "foreign policy images" of the Chinese Communist leadership, namely, those attitudes and perceptions shaping policies toward the outer world: historical, ideological, and situational. The historical source relevant here is divided into three subcategories. The first is the experience of the mini-state system of the Warring States era and the period of the Three Kingdoms. The second is the experience of the

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33 An example of this argument is the Renmin ribao editorial, "Quan shijie yi qie fandui Meidiguozhuyi de li liang li anhe qilai" [Unite all forces in the world opposed to American imperialism], Jan. 21, 1964.

tributary system, which fostered the Middle Kingdom mentality or the sense of superiority. The third is the experience after the Opium War, which resulted in a sense of humiliation and nationalism. Among the three subcategories, the third has had the greatest influence in shaping contemporary Chinese foreign policy; the second subcategory, the legacy of the tributary system, is not now playing a substantial role; the Middle Kingdom mentality is important largely in those cases where peripheral people have a sense of inferiority. In contrast, the third main category, the situational factor, which is the accumulated result of learning from the day-to-day experiences of involvement in the international system, is playing an increasingly decisive role in the perceptions and policies of Chinese leadership.

China’s commanding attitude toward other parties and its resulting intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries have been related to the above underlying factors. Its efforts at dictation, however, have not always been successful, and successful directions have not necessarily led to successful intervention in the internal politics of the country concerned. One example of an unsuccessful order was the case of the Japanese Communist party in 1966 and thereafter.

In March of that year, the JCP delegation headed by Kenji Miyamoto visited North Vietnam, China, and North Korea. The objective of the visit was to strengthen international support for North Vietnam in its opposition to “American imperialism.” The delegation had talks with Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, and Deng Xiaoping in Beijing. At that time, because of the severe conflict between China and the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communists were opposed to any united action with the Soviet Union. Therefore, on many issues, the views of Chinese and Japanese Communists differed. Despite this, an agreement on a joint communique was reached. Before the issuance of the communique, the delegation visited Mao Zedong in Shanghai to get his approval. On that occasion, Mao rejected the communique because the wording, especially with regard to attacks on Soviet “revisionism,” was too mild. He also asked the JCP to adopt a more militant policy, including a call for violent revolution. The JCP delegation, having learned the lesson of 1950, did not accept Mao’s advice, and the talks broke off. After this, the Chinese media started criticizing the JCP in connection with the attack on the Liu-Deng faction during the Cultural Revolution. The JCP did not bend to Chinese criticism, and relations between the two parties have remained strained to this date.

The Chinese move seems to have been a part of China’s regional strategy of seeking to surround China with armed struggles by the Communists of neighboring countries. The North Koreans were also asked to start armed struggles, it is reported. The case of the Indonesian Communist party (PKI) in 1965 may be another example, although China’s role in the abortive coup on September 30 of that

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36 When CCP Secretary-General Hu Yaobang delivered a speech to the Japanese Diet in November 1983, JCP Diet members boycotted it. Later, the JCP newspaper published a review of CCP-JCP relations since 1966 to justify the boycott. “Chūgoku hakenshugi no kako to genzai” [Past and present of Chinese hegemonism], *Akahata* [Red flag] (Tokyo), March 15, 1984.
year is not clear. It is certain that China was involved at least indirectly. It is widely agreed that China gave support, including material aid, to establish a “fifth force,” which was supposed to play an important role as an armed unit under Communist control. It is not certain, however, whether China “commanded” armed uprisings in Indonesia. There are many different explanations about the domestic situation in Indonesia before the coup, and about China’s role in it.  

Behind the strategy of urging armed struggles in neighboring countries were such factors as security considerations in the face of the escalation of the war in Vietnam, the desire to enlarge and strengthen pro-China parties in Asia in order to oppose the Soviet Union both in ideology and in organization, and a spillover of the radical domestic politics of the Cultural Revolution. The last factor is important in understanding the indiscriminate interventionist policy of that period.  

The situation at that time, however, was exceptional. Mao’s ideological and political obsession together with the efforts of his subordinates to protect themselves by becoming more “revolutionary” are factors in explaining the foreign policies of this period. Extremist policies backfired, causing the isolation of China in international society, and it was a reaction against such policies that triggered the moderate policies of the 1970s, even while Mao was still living.

If the example of the JCP in 1966 was an unsuccessful case of controlling another party, the history of the Malayan Communist party is an example of successful control by the CCP.

The MCP, from the time of its establishment, has been heavily influenced by the CCP. Most of its members have been ethnic Chinese, and the ethnic factor was decisive in uniting the two parties in a superior-subordinate relationship, significantly different from the CCP’s relation with other Communist parties in Asia. Although it is not clear to what extent the CCP was involved in the decision to start armed struggles in 1948, the MCP was heavily influenced by the Maoist strategy while waging guerrilla war in Malaya. It is even said that directives from Beijing governed fundamental changes in the revolutionary struggle.

The direct relationship between the interests of the People’s Republic of China and the policies of the MCP was made manifest when China began to feel the necessity of peaceful coexistence with the existing governments and regimes in the region. In 1952, China called for peace in Asia and the Pacific region and said, “Present military conflicts in Vietnam and Malaya are not only greatly damaging the life and property of the people, but are also jeopardizing the peace of other areas of the region.” By saying this, China showed its support for peaceful settlements of the

42 “Yazhou ji taipingyang quyi heping huiyi choubei huiyi xuanyan” [Declaration of the preparatory conference on peace in Asia and the Pacific region], Renmin ribao, June 7, 1952.
wars in Vietnam and Malaya. This attitude was in sharp contrast to China’s previous policy of encouraging wars of national liberation. The activities of the MCP diminished in accordance with the change of Chinese foreign-policy interests. On the eve of Balin talks in late 1955 between Chief Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman and the MCP, China denied the “myth” that the MCP and China were closely linked and expressed the hope that Malaya would become “an independent, democratic, and peaceful country” by achieving agreement in the talks. The talks were unsuccessful, but when Malaya under the leadership of Rahman became independent while continuing to struggle against the MCP, the leaders congratulated the “new fruit” of the Malayan people. The MCP also declared the termination of the armed struggle.

The correlation between China’s foreign-policy interests and the policies of the MCP again became clear in the mid-1960s. At that time, the Chinese foreign-policy line had become very hard because of the Sino-Soviet conflict and the Cultural Revolution. To respond to the shift in the PRC, the MCP renewed military action. In June 1968, in commemorating the twentieth anniversary of armed struggle in Malaya, the MCP declared that the only way for victory in Malaya was “to encircle cities by [controlling] rural villages and to seize power by armed force.”

The armed struggle, however, came to a standstill in the late 1970s when China recognized the necessity of a peaceful international environment for its modernization. When Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang visited Southeast Asia in 1981, he promised to respect the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries. He said that CCP relations with the Communist parties of Southeast Asia were only “moral and political.” Although Southeast Asian governments were not satisfied with this remark, it was a step forward from Deng Xiaoping’s restrained statement that China separated state-to-state relations and party-to-party relations, which he expressed in Southeast Asia in 1978. Zhao’s position, perhaps, is the furthest that a Chinese Communist leader can go with regard to relations with Southeast Asian Communists.

From this brief description of relations between the MCP and China, it can be concluded that the case of the MCP was an example of successful control by China. China’s “success,” however, did not provide victory in the revolutionary struggle of the MCP. On the contrary, the close contacts of the MCP with China and its overwhelmingly Chinese ethnic composition have estranged the party from the Malay peasants, who are the most numerous group among the peoples of Malaysia and who are supposed to be “water” in which the “fish” (Communists guerrillas) should swim. Effective control by China is thus an important factor in explaining the failure of the MCP struggle.

The case of the Thai Communist party is similar to that of the MCP, though the connection with China is less complete. The party has been influenced mainly by the

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44 Zhao Enlai’s congratulatory telegram of Aug. 30, 1957.


Chinese, partly by the Vietnamese. The TCP policy line, as was the case with the MCP, fluctuated in accordance with changes of China’s foreign policy. This suggests that the TCP has been controlled by the CCP to a great extent. After the Sino-Vietnamese war, the party was split into a pro-China mainstream faction and a pro-Vietnamese or pro-Soviet faction. Later, younger students who had joined the party’s guerrilla activities after the 1976 military coup became disillusioned and came out of the jungle to surrender to the government. As in Malaysia, too heavy a reliance on China has been a major factor in limiting the influence of the Thai Communists.

The Burmese Communist party has also had close ties with the CCP, but control by China has been less clear. Assistance from China has generally been limited, although it has been a source of concern for the Burmese government. Communist activities in Burma have not been closely correlated with the fluctuations of Chinese foreign policy. One reason for this is that the People’s Republic of China has had generally friendly relations with the incumbent government of Burma. As suggested earlier, similar situations are now emerging with respect to other Communist parties in Southeast Asia as the relations between China and the governments in the region have become friendly.

In sum, the more China is engaged in normal, friendly international relations, the more China has had to abide by the common rules and practices of the nation-state system. The three main factors supportive of Chinese Internationalism noted earlier have almost disappeared under the present PRC leadership. First, China has long ceased to cooperate with Soviet Internationalism. Second, the present leadership is trying to legitimize its rule by modernization rather than by fostering pro-China factions in other parties. Third, for modernization to be successful, China needs a peaceful international environment; consequently, it has become a status-quo power. As long as the present leadership and present policies continue, China will not intervene in the affairs of other parties.

STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS

In analyzing relations between Communist countries, it is possible to distinguish party-to-party relations from state-to-state relations in form. In substance, however, the party and the state are virtually the same in these nations. In most cases, whether or not there are party-to-party relations between two Communist parties in power is merely a measure of the distance between the two nation-states. Therefore, the two kinds of relations will be discussed together in this section.

According to the Chinese view, relations among socialist countries should be governed by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, which, as noted, include respect for the sovereignty of nations, the equality of states, and nonintervention in domestic affairs of other countries. The meaning of these principles is becoming

47 Osamu Akagi, "'Taikoku Kyōsanto' no keisei to batten" [The formation and development of the Communist Party of Thailand], Tōa [East Asia] (Tokyo), nos. 179, 180, and 182, May, June, and Aug., 1982. This paper uses new materials recently published in the Thai language.
49 Gurtov, op. cit. (see note 39).
increasingly ambiguous in this age of interdependence and mutual penetration, but the significance of China’s insistence on these principles lies in its refusal to recognize a governing role for any Communist international or supemational authority. Although China’s conflicts with the Soviet Union are multidimensional, most issues are related to the problems of national sovereignty and independence. Such Soviet unilateral actions as withdrawing aid and experts and canceling contracts and agreements in 1960 were examples of Soviet big-nation chauvinism in Chinese eyes. In an important review of the Sino-Soviet conflict published in 1963, the Chinese said:

The leadership of the Communist party of the Soviet Union seems to have thought that they could cause the Communist party of China to abandon Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism and force it to obey their will, meaning revisionism and big-nation chauvinism, only by wielding the baton in their hands, ganging up with their followers, encircling and attacking, and applying great pressure both politically and economically. But the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people who have had long trials and training can never be overthrown nor be crushed.  

In practice, however, as in party-to-party relations, such an experience has not hindered China from taking a similar big-nation chauvinistic attitude toward smaller countries. In July 1978, China unilaterally stopped its economic and military aid to Albania and withdrew its experts from that country. The decision came after the so-called Gang of Four was purged and the ideological harmony between the two countries that had existed during the Cultural Revolution was lost. Interestingly, the general tone of the letter of protest by the Albanians to the Chinese resembles the earlier Chinese complaint against the Soviet Union. The letter said:

Taking this hostile step against socialist Albania, you [the Chinese Communists] seek to hit at, and damage, the economy and defense capacity of our country, to sabotage the cause of the revolution and socialism in Albania... [The Chinese action is] a reactionary act taken from great power positions, an act which is a repetition, in content and form, of the savage and chauvinistic methods of Tito, Khurschev, and Brezhnev that China also once condemned.  

The letter is replete with attacks on China’s consistent big-nation chauvinism, making one wonder how friendship between the two could ever have been sustained.

A virtually identical problem occurred in Sino-Vietnamese relations at about the same period. According to the Vietnamese account, China wanted to apply pressure on Vietnam in 1975 after the war in Vietnam ended. It rejected new demands for aid by the Vietnamese and did not keep its promise about aid as agreed upon during the war. The Vietnamese said: “Clearly, aid by the Chinese leadership is not ‘unselfish’ as they usually boast, but is an instrument of big-nation expansionism and big-nation

hegemonism. Beijing's aid is always no more than a 'carrot and stick.' In 1978, China unilaterally canceled all economic and technical aid and withdrew all experts and engineers working in Vietnam. This unilateral action followed the enforced mass Chinese exodus from Vietnam and led to the Sino-Vietnamese war in early 1979.

Although it is not necessary to believe everything the Albanians and the Vietnamese have said about China's unilateral cancellation of aid and other "transgressions," the two instances cited above suggest that the Chinese cannot be exempted from the big-nation chauvinism they themselves have attacked. The Chinese leaders, however, are different from their Soviet counterparts in one point: They have not openly declared that the sovereignty of some countries should be limited in the manner of the Brezhnev Doctrine. On the contrary, China, being a developing country itself, always proclaims that sovereignty of nations should never be restricted. As a matter of fact, one of the most fundamental sources of conflict between China and Vietnam is the difference of views on the independence of Cambodia and Laos, especially the former. China contends that these two countries should be truly independent and sovereign, while the Vietnamese emphasize the "special relations" and "regional strategic alliance" among the Indochinese Three. The Vietnamese argument as seen from China is no more than the revival of the plan for an Indochina Federation, which was an important goal of the Communist party of Indochina in the 1930s. It must be noted here that the pro-Vietnamese parties of Laos and Cambodia are called the "People's Revolutionary" party, not the Communist party. The name suggests that these two countries, in the eyes of the Vietnamese Communists, are not capable of developing communism independently.

China's big-nation chauvinism, therefore, is a matter of convenience rather than one of principle. China's relations with both Albania and Vietnam were determined by China's political considerations. China had close relations with Albania and assisted that country earlier because it was the only country in Eastern Europe outside Yugoslavia that opposed the Soviet Union. When China's most important international goal was to oppose the Soviet Union and to establish China's own ideological legitimacy, Albania was a good friend. Albania was also important because it was opposed to Yugoslav "revisionism." Later, when China's policy started to change after 1976, Albania increasingly became a liability. China's pressure on that country represented an effort to bring Albania into line with China's new foreign policy, and when that country, because of its distance from China, successfully resisted Chinese pressure, the PRC cut off economic relations in a big-nation, chauvinistic way.

53 On Albania, China has kept its silence. On Vietnam, the Chinese side of the story can be found in three articles by Xinhua and *Renmin ribao* critics of the Vietnamese White Paper, published in *Renmin ribao*, Nov. 15, 21, and 26, 1979.
54 For this refer to the Comintern Program of 1928. The party of Mongolia is also the "People's Revolutionary party," while the Pol Pot group in Cambodia called their party the "Communist party" before their dissolution in 1981, implying their independence from the Vietnamese.
In the Vietnamese case, China assisted Vietnam’s fight for national liberation during the two Indochinese wars. The Chinese Communists did this in their own national interest as any nation-state in a similar situation might have done. In the bipolar Cold War days, when China belonged to one of the two camps, the war in Indochina was closely connected with China’s security interests. In the 1960s when the Sino-Soviet conflict was intensifying, Vietnam became an area of contest between China and the Soviet Union. China concentrated its efforts on attracting Vietnam to its side rather than in achieving an early settlement of the fight. In the 1970s China tried to keep Vietnam weaker by advising the Vietnamese not to unite with the South hastily and by keeping close ties with anti-Vietnames Democratic Kampuchea. When the Chinese felt that the Vietnamese were irreversibly tilted toward the Soviet Union, they punished the Vietnamese and withdrew aid and experts from Vietnam.

China’s relations with North Korea are different, although here too, the Chinese have acted in their own national interest as in Vietnam. Like the Vietnamese, the North Koreans have tried to strike a balance between China and the Soviet Union. Owing to their much better geographic position, the Koreans have succeeded in keeping the balance, although in the past few years, they have tilted toward China. Because of their success in keeping the balance, neither China nor the Soviet Union can apply undue pressure on North Korea. This allows the country to enjoy a relative and limited independence between the two giants.

As our discussion shows, state-to-state relations among socialist countries as perceived by China are not different from the usual state-to-state relations among non-Communist nation-states except for some international rhetoric attached to relations with friendly socialist states, and on occasion, Third World countries. China’s internationalism is no more than a confirmation of solidarity and friendship between sovereign states.

Thus, Chinese leaders view international relations today in basically the same fashion as the leaders of other nation-states. As other states, depending upon their size and the degree of their national capabilities, act as big nations vis-à-vis smaller nations around them, so does China. It is the size and potential of China as a big nation that counts. Since the Cultural Revolution, ideology has not played an important role in China’s foreign policy. As other states have accepted the rules of the nation-state system in order to survive in it, China is now governed by them, too. In that sense, China has become the same as nonsocialist nation-states.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It has been asserted that relations between Communist parties and states are special, and that the ties resulting from this fact constitute a strong weapon in the

55 Chung Chin-Wee, “Chūgoku-Soren to Chōsen hanto: Kita Chōsen to no kankei o chūshin ni” [China-Soviet Union and the Korean peninsula: centering on their relations with North Korea], Kokusai Mondai, Aug. 1983.

56 On the role of ideology in Chinese foreign policy, see Tatsumi Okabe, “Chūgoku no taigai seisaku to taigai imēji” (see note 34).
hands of Communists. Our analysis, however, challenges such a belief. A false impression results from the persistent memory of Marxist-Leninist Internationalism I, but the internationalist rhetoric used by contemporary Communist nation-states is quite different from the early period. Today’s Communist internationalism is no more than an attempt to serve national foreign policies. The Chinese case is no exception. The difference between the Soviet Union and China is that the Soviet Union is closer to Internationalism I because it still assumes a supernational authority over the Communist bloc and Communist movement (Internationalism II), while the PRC calls for the international solidarity of sovereign and independent Communist nation-states and parties (Internationalism III). This makes the foreign-policy behavior of China similar to that of non-Communist nation-states. Except for the very beginning of the People’s Republic and the Cultural Revolution, China’s external behavior has been fundamentally within the sphere usually permitted by the rules of the nation-state system, although internationalist rhetoric and big-nation behavior have sometimes blurred the image.

To say that China abides by the rules of the nation-state system is not the same as saying that one may place one’s confidence in China’s good intentions. As a nation-state that is seeking to survive and develop in the nation-state system, China cannot help but abide by the rules of the system.

In this respect, PRC foreign policies during the Cultural Revolution constitute a useful lesson. At that time, as the revolutionary upsurge in the domestic area spilled over into foreign policy, China’s behavior, more or less uncontrolled by the center, violated the rules of the nation-state system.\(^\text{57}\) The resulting impression of China abroad was extremely adverse, contributing to a negative image of Chinese “revolutionary diplomacy.” China’s international position was severely damaged.\(^\text{58}\) To cite one example, pro-Chinese votes in the United Nations with regard to Chinese representation decreased during the Cultural Revolution from the 47-to-47 tie with the Republic of China (Taiwan) in 1965. After the Cultural Revolution, Zhou Enlai had to make great efforts to offset China’s bad image. It was only after energetic efforts to “restore diplomacy” were undertaken that China was admitted to international organizations. This experience shows that rule-breaking does not pay a state wishing to survive and develop in the international community.

The phrase “revolutionary diplomacy,” no longer in vogue, has had three different meanings.

First, it has represented support, mostly moral, for the “self-reliant” revolutionary activities of Communists of other countries. This is not different, in nature, from American support of opposition groups in a hostile country.

Second, it has indicated support of forces trying to change an unfavorable status quo. China’s support of “national liberation struggles” is a case in point. Those forces

\(^{57}\) China’s policy toward Southeast Asia during the Cultural Revolution is analyzed by Gurtov, op. cit. (see note 39).

\(^{58}\) China later published a self-criticism on its attitude to the outside world during the Cultural Revolution. See Xu Junji and Wang Xingbin, “Geguo de geming wenti bixuyou benguo de danghe renmin jueding” [The revolutionary problem of each country must be decided by the party and people of the country], *Hongqi* (Beijing), No. 21, 1980.
supported are not necessarily Communist. Some of them may even be anti-Communist. Such activities, again, are not different from those undertaken by other nations, especially big nations. It is also a means of applying pressure to unfriendly governments, but when relations with an incumbent government are improved, the dual strategy of separating state-to-state relations and party-to-party relations becomes difficult to pursue. The history of the Burmese Communist party and recent situations in ASEAN countries demonstrate this.

Third, "revolutionary diplomacy" can be an action to break the rules of the nation-state system as was the case during the Cultural Revolution. As mentioned above, this may jeopardize the survival of the country. Revolutionary diplomacy in the true internationalist sense (Internationalism I) is not compatible with the desire of nations to retain their separate sovereignty. Internationalism II is also difficult to implement without conditions that the Chinese lack, as we shall soon note. Consequently, China's relations with Communist parties and states, including superior-subordinate relations, can be understood as normal practices of the nation-state system. In the history of that system, many interventions and pressures by the strong against the weak have occurred. China in its interparty as well as its interstate relations has also practiced intervention. The conditions promoting China's intervention can be summarized as follows:

First, weakness is the most important condition to induce intervention. When a Communist party or a Communist state is weak in ideology, organization, financial abilities, or military power, the possibility of intervention and control increases. The contrast between the results of Chinese actions relating to the JCP in 1966 and those relating to the MCP illustrate this fact. As we have noted, successful control of a party does not necessarily lead to the successful attainment of the revolutionary goal of that party as was shown by the examples of the MCP and the JCP in 1950. On the contrary, foreign domination of the party often leads to failure, partly because the commands from abroad do not fit the local situation (this was the lesson Mao learned) and partly because the "foreignness" of the party estranges important segments of the people (the case of the MCP). In addition, the health of the society to which the party belongs is a decisive factor. In the past, major successful cases of subversion and intervention occurred in weak states (for example, South Vietnam and Cambodia). Having sanctuaries adjacent to such states, moreover, greatly increases the possibilities of success.

Second, for intervention to be successful, it is necessary for the intervening party to have high international prestige. The main reason why Stalinist Internationalism II was misunderstood as Internationalism I lay in the prestige of the Soviet Union and Stalin. The Soviet Union was regarded by most Communists in the world as the only model embodying the ideals of Marx. Stalin, being the practitioner of the ideal, enjoyed an authoritative role in the international Communist movement. Decades later, Mao Zedong tried to replace him, achieving only limited success.

Third, when the world or a region is divided into hostile bipolar blocs, the probability of intervention by the bloc leader to bloc members increases. On the contrary, when the situation is multipolar (or polycentric), the possibility of successful intervention and control decreases. Again, this is a general principle applicable to any bloc of nations; but it is especially valid for the Communist bloc because, under
bipolar confrontation, the Communist inclination for a monolithic ideology and organization tends to increase. In a multipolar situation, however, a small party or a small state can maintain a substantial degree of independence by manipulating bigger powers. North Korea is a case in point, and the Vietnamese were successful in striking a balance before their confrontation with China forced them to rely on one of the two big Communist powers.

In contemporary China, under the troika leadership of Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, and Zhao Ziyang, the second condition noted above does not exist, because the post-Mao leaders are more pragmatic and do not have sufficient charisma to justify internationalist intervention. The third condition does not exist, either, because the world is becoming increasingly multipolar. Moreover, China's own perception of international relations accepts that fact. This became remarkably clear after 1982. In the past, the Chinese Communists applied the “principal enemy” theory in international relations. According to this theory, one must first find out who is the “principal enemy,” the source of all evil of the period. In order to achieve the goals one pursues, it is then supposedly necessary to organize a broad united front to isolate the principal enemy, binding him hand and foot. Yet the Chinese leaders are now giving up this theory and moving toward a more multilateral, issue-by-issue perception of international relations. The new perception fits in with the requirements of a modernizing country existing in a peaceful but multidimensional, complicated international environment.

Parallel with this are China's efforts to restore party-to-party relations with some of the Communist parties with which it severed relations during the high tide of Sino-Soviet confrontation and the Cultural Revolution. In September 1982, Hu Yaobang declared anew in his Twelfth Party Congress report that the relations between Communist parties should be based on the four principles of independence, equality, mutual respect, and nonintervention in the internal affairs of other parties. The four principles are included in the party constitution adopted at the Congress.

It is true that with the radical reduction of ideological differences a common concern over the fate of socialism may arise in China and in other Socialist countries including the Soviet Union, but it is unlikely that this concern will develop to the extent of allowing an internationalist authority to reappear. The Communist world is more pragmatic and multipolar now, and the difference between Soviet Internationalism II and Chinese Internationalism III remains the greatest obstacle to restructuring a monolithic unity of Communist states.

Among the three conditions that induce intervention, therefore, only the first one still remains, and this will not vanish as long as the nation-state system continues. It is not peculiar to China or to communism. In this sense, the ASEAN concept of "national resilience" has a relevance wider than Southeast Asia.

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59 Zeng He, “Guoji xingshi de pianhua yu fazhan qushi” [Changes and the direction of development of the international situation], Shijie Zhiishi [World knowledge] (Beijing), No. 11, 1983.

60 As for the changes of the basic foreign-policy line that occurred in 1982, see note 21 and Tatsumi Okabe, "Chūgoku gaikō no shintenkai" [New development of Chinese diplomacy], in Yoshikazu Miyazaki and Tatsumi Okabe, eds., Chugoku no taigai keizai seisaku to kokusai kankei [China's foreign economic policy and international relations] (Tokyo: Nicchū Keizai Kyokai, 1983).
6. The Korean Peninsula and East Asian Security

Byung-joon Ahn

KOREA AND EAST ASIA

Nowhere else in East Asia is the security situation more precarious than in the Korean peninsula. This fact was poignantly brought home by the bomb explosion in Burma on October 9, 1983, which caused the death of four South Korean cabinet members and thirteen other officials who accompanied South Korea's President Chun. This incident has heightened tensions in the peninsula, where the geopolitical interests of four powers, that is, China, the Soviet Union, Japan, and the United States, intersect.

The security of both North and South Korea is inextricably entangled with the security of East Asia, where the four powers are the major actors. Significant realignments have taken place in the four-power relationship since the 1970s, but little change has occurred until recently in the North-South Korean relationship. Even now, the two Korean states still confront each other militarily, economically, diplomatically, and politically.

In addressing security issues for Korea and East Asia, a broad generalization can be made about their interaction. Security in the Korean peninsula is affected by four conditions: the global rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union; the regional balance of power among the four East Asian powers; the local confrontation between North and South Korea; and especially, the domestic politics unfolding in these two countries.

Based on this generalization, three specific points can be made.

1. Any global or regional conflict is bound to affect Korean security adversely, and any local conflict in Korea will also involve the global and regional powers. The major powers are opting for a balance of power policy by trying to deny any single state or combination the right to exercise hegemony; as for the inhabitants of the Korean peninsula, they are opposed to any single power controlling the entire peninsula and therefore favor the status quo of two states in one nation.
2. As realignments in big-power relationships develop independently, the two Korean states are engaged in military, economic, diplomatic, and political competition. Since the economic race has turned decisively in South Korea’s favor, the primary competition is now concentrated in the other areas. Should the military and diplomatic balance not change drastically, the North-South confrontation is certain to turn into a political competition for legitimacy, in which political stability and institutionalization will be determining factors.

3. In deterring Soviet, North Korean, and Vietnamese threats to the territorial integrity of Asian countries and also to the sea lanes of communication, there is no alternative to or “quick fix” for a U.S. military presence coupled with a closer security cooperation among the United States, Japan, South Korea, and the ASEAN countries. But such cooperation is more realistic and feasible through bilateral efforts or some informal consultations than through attempts to build a multilateral or coalition, because of many domestic and external constraints.

But multilateralism is possible in the economic realm and especially in the newly emerging arena of Pacific cooperation. As for political development, each country must find a viable way to stability based upon its own unique capacities and development.

THE FOUR POWERS AND THE TWO KOREAS

In this era of instant communication and complex interdependence, the security of any country is subject to the global and regional balance of power. In East Asia, the Soviet Union, North Korea, and Vietnam pose potential threats to security. As for Korea, however, none of the four powers—China, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Japan—wants to see any event happen that might threaten a direct confrontation among them; hence, they have to accept the territorial status quo on the Korean peninsula. Beyond this common stake, their policies toward the two Korean states diverge substantially: China and the Soviet Union compete in their support for North Korea, while the United States and Japan divide their roles in support of South Korea.

Constraints

Before we examine contemporary features of global and regional relations, it is necessary to explore the background of East Asian and Korean security. Four factors constrain state behavior: history, geopolitics, economics, and politics. Any current issue is more or less a product of these interrelated factors, but geopolitics and domestic politics are generally more important than the other factors.

Historically, the Korean division was a by-product of both World World II and the Cold War. The decision by the United States and the Soviet Union to occupy the Korean peninsula at the end of World War II paved the way for the division. After the United States fought against the People’s Republic of China during the Korean War, the bipolar relationship between the Sino-Soviet and the American-Japanese alliances set the basic tone for East Asian and Korean affairs. The historical legacy of World War II and the Korean War has remained since 1945.
Geopolitically, East Asia is composed of two regions: the Northeast, where China, Japan, the United States, and the Soviet Union interact in close proximity; and the Southeast, where the ASEAN states, currently aligned against Vietnam, advocate a zone of peace, freedom, and neutrality (ZOPFAN). The deepening Sino-Soviet conflict in the 1960s made it possible for the United States to shift from a policy of confronting China and the Soviet Union as a monolithic bloc to one of negotiating with them separately. The rapid growth of Soviet military power in East Asia prompted China to seek rapprochement with the United States. The latter, in turn, was able to reach détente with both China and the USSR. The impact of this triangular diplomacy on Japan was substantial: it enabled Japan to normalize its diplomatic relations with China before the United States did. Thus, by the end of the 1970s, an antihegemony strategic entente had emerged among the United States, Japan, and China against the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance. Beginning in the 1980s, however, China asserted a more independent and nationalistic stand by proclaiming its nonalignment, identifying itself with the Third World, and criticizing both superpowers. While maintaining closer ties with Japan and the United States, it also opened negotiations with the Soviet Union.

Economically, the emergence of Japan as a superpower, the dynamic development of the newly industrializing countries (NICs) of which South Korea is a model case, and the steady growth of ASEAN countries have contributed to the rise of Asia and the Pacific as a region equal in importance to Europe and the Atlantic. China’s entry into the Western-market economic system has opened up new possibilities for economic cooperation. To counter the rising tide of protectionism and neomercantilism in the United States, Japan, and Western Europe, many leaders in the Asia-Pacific region are groping for viable forms of Pacific cooperation.

Politically, generational changes of leadership are underway in many Asian countries, contributing to political instability. A succession crisis and the resulting political instability in a given country can easily spill over into the international arena with security implications. In both North and South Korea, for example, the transfer of power is the most important political issue for the leadership at present. Meanwhile, the Reagan administration has committed itself to match Soviet power on a global basis while being prepared to negotiate from strength on arms reduction.

The Nakasone cabinet is taking a more assertive and global view on Japan’s role in international politics. Chinese leadership under Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang is endeavoring to achieve modernization at home and a more independent foreign policy abroad. The rapid changes in top Soviet leadership in recent years have made more difficult the Russian effort to project a continuity of policy at home and a strong image abroad, but Gorbachev inherits the problems of his predecessors: the need to revitalize a sagging economy and at the same time to keep Soviet military power at least equal to that of the United States.

The Global Balance of Power

Against this background, the two Korean states struggle, seeking security, economic development, and recognition. The shift from the Cold War to détente made
possible some relaxation in the ideological confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union with implications for Korea as well as other regions. But the strategic confrontation among the four powers involved in Korea has remained virtually unchanged. This situation has caused the two Korean political regimes to intensify their competition in the military, economic, diplomatic, and political areas as each has sought to enhance its legitimacy in relation to the other.

Globally, both the United States and the Soviet Union are trying to retain their superiority or at least parity with the other side in military capabilities and strategic position. After the Soviet Union attained nuclear superiority at least quantitatively and occupied Afghanistan, the United States sought to check Soviet global ambitions by accelerating weapons development and reiterating commitments to such vital areas as Western Europe, the Persian Gulf, Central America, and Northeast Asia. As of early 1985, negotiations relating to strategic weapons, space weapons, and related issues have been resumed. Some type of agreement on arms control may eventually result from these efforts. It seems likely, however, that Soviet efforts to separate NATO from the United States, to increase its influence in the Middle East, to encircle China, and to forment trouble for the United States in the Western Hemisphere will continue.

Among the contingencies that might affect Korean security, one can conceive of a conventional war in Europe, the Persian Gulf, or even Central America where the Soviets would be involved. In such cases, the diversion of American naval units and even some army units from the Western Pacific and Korea cannot be ruled out, even though the Carter administration officially disavowed the so-called swing strategy in 1979. American forces, being thinly spread abroad, are apt to be shifted as the occasion demands.

In this era, in which both issues and defenses are becoming globalized and such mobile nuclear weapons as SS-20s are being deployed throughout the Eurasian continent, one can argue that the strategic significance of the Korean peninsula can be downgraded. But because the military role of nuclear weapons other than to deter one's opponent from using them is being questioned, the military role of conventional weapons and of a strategic locale is being enhanced. Under these circumstances a geopolitical buffer like Korea, where three nuclear powers and one economic superpower have vital security interests, can easily become a volatile spot of global rivalry especially if the United States is prepared to meet the Soviet challenge wherever it occurs.

The Regional Balance of Power

Regionally, as noted, a more fluid four-power balance is now emerging as a result of changes in the domestic and external politics in East Asia. Among these are the altered Sino-American relationship after China began to seek greater flexibility
between the United States and the USSR, the consequent trend toward normalization in Sino-Soviet relations, a regional role being launched by Japan, and the renewed Soviet-American dialogue. To the extent that no one power can dictate the behavior of the others, a balance of power prevails in the current relationships.

But the precise state of this balance is predicated upon the policy and capabilities each power seeks in Asia. Soviet East Asian policy is to deter a strategic nuclear attack by the United States on the homeland, to contain China, to weaken or neutralize Japan, and to exercise greater control of the sea lanes in the Western Pacific. Lacking viable political or economic weapons, the Soviet Union relies primarily on military power to accomplish these goals. The Soviets are deploying some 52 divisions on the Sino-Soviet borders and in Siberia; they are now installing 135 SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) targeted at China, Japan, and Korea. The Soviet Pacific Fleet, with such new equipment as 50 Backfire bombers and the aircraft carrier Minsk, are posing threats to the American Seventh Fleet and to the communication lines between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. By developing a foothold at Cam Ranh Bay with its 10,000-foot runway and an airfield in Danang it has been able to project its power into the Indian Ocean. At least 10 Soviet ships, including one cruise-missile submarine, are patrolling the South China sea. In addition, 4 TU-95 Bear reconnaissance aircrafts are stationed at Cam Ranh for surveillance missions over the American Subic base and other areas in the Pacific. These forces can be mobilized to control the choke points near Japan and the Straits of Malacca.

Since 1981, the Soviets have responded positively to China's initiatives for improving bilateral relations. After preliminary talks in October 1982, March and September 1983, and, most importantly, December 1984, both sides have been making serious efforts to achieve substantive results in economic, technological, and cultural relations. Better state-to-state relations will presumably ensue, although no progress has yet been made on the most thorny issues separating the two nations.

China's Asian policy can be explicitly stated as that of opposing any country seeking to exercise hegemony in Asia and the Pacific. Beijing succeeded in including this clause in its peace treaty with Japan and also in the normalization agreement with the United States in 1978, implying that the Soviet Union was the potential hegemonic power. Recently, however, Beijing has proclaimed a policy of not aligning China with either "superpower" as Defense Minister Zhang Aiping told American Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger when he visited Beijing in September 1983. Although Beijing sought some military hardware from Washington, it was not interested in an anti-Soviet strategic alliance despite Weinberger's emphasis on sharing important strategic concerns. Taking a leaf from earlier American efforts to occupy a centrist position in triangular diplomacy, China seems to be taking advantage of the tense Soviet-American relations that have prevailed recently by trying to maximize its national interests with both superpowers.

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A combination of domestic and international factors has influenced the turn in Sino-American relations from the prospects of a strategic entente to a more uncertain relationship. The renewed emphasis Beijing has placed on the liberation of Taiwan and the restoration of sovereignty over Hong Kong since the Sino-American joint communique issued on August 17, 1982, may reflect China's need to play upon nationalist sentiments for domestic reasons. And Beijing's quest for at least limited rapprochement with Moscow appears to be based on its calculation of China’s national interests, given the changed strategic picture. Soviet threats of invasion have been reduced and Mao's crusade against "revisionism" has been eliminated. Now Beijing is accusing both the Soviet Union and the United States of seeking hegemony while increasingly seeking to identify itself with the Third World.

Thus far, however, the Soviet Union has not met the PRC's demands regarding Vietnam, Afghanistan, and the Sino-Soviet border. But the United States has reached agreements with the PRC on textile trade, military technology, and industrial cooperation, making possible a steadily increasing cooperation between the two countries. To build a "prolonged peaceful international environment" conducive to the accomplishment of modernization at home, Beijing must continue its policy of expanding economic and scientific relations with Japan, the United States, and Western Europe.

A cornerstone of Japan's security policy is to strengthen its ties with the United States against its one potential enemy, the Soviet Union. Since Japan relies heavily on oil from the Persian Gulf for its industries, it seeks to guarantee a secure supply of oil from the Middle East. In response to pressures from the United States, Japan is committed to developing conventional forces to conduct air and sea surveillance, in areas of one thousand nautical miles from its mainland. As part of its efforts to help build stability in East Asia, Japan is also providing South Korea, Southeast Asia, and China with credit and economic assistance in accordance with the principle of "comprehensive security."

In pursuing these goals, Prime Minister Nakasone has called for a more assertive role for Japan. Unlike the former premier, Suzuki, who initially agreed to assume a division of role with Reagan in May 1981 and then disavowed any intention to imply that Japan was participating in a military alliance with the United States after he returned to Tokyo, Nakasone told Reagan in January 1983 that Japan would make preparations to defend against Soviet deployment of Backfire bombers. At the Williamsburg summit in June 1983, Nakasone endorsed NATO's plans for deployment of American medium-range missiles in Europe, thereby suggesting Japan's commitment to American policies of global security. For the first time, moreover, a white paper prepared by the Japanese Defense Agency in 1983 acknowledged the importance of joint American-Japanese military training and of defending the sea-

lanes in the Pacific. Indeed, since November 1982 Japan has carried out joint military exercises with the United States. In June 1982 Tokyo accepted a Washington proposal to deploy F-16 fighters at Misawa for four years starting in 1985. When President Reagan visited Japan in November 1983, Tokyo also agreed to transfer its military-related technology to the United States. For the purpose of bolstering self-defense efforts, Tokyo is envisioning a 6 or 7 percent increase in its annual defense expenditures in order to upgrade air-defense, antisubmarine, and electronic-warfare capabilities. Constrained by the constitution, public opinion, and sizable budget deficits, however, Tokyo will increase its defense expenditures and commitments only gradually—falling considerably short of the desires of some American leaders.

American policy for East Asia is to assure that no single power or coalition of powers controls the resources of the region. For this purpose, the United States is committed to ensuring the security of Japan and South Korea, to developing a durable strategic relationship with China if possible, and to maintaining the security of essential sea-lanes. The American military presence in Japan, South Korea, and the West Pacific is crucial to deterring Soviet, North Korean, and Vietnamese expansionist proclivities. In performing these diverse roles the United States is aiming at building a coalition of allies and friends in East Asia against the growing military power of the Soviet Union and its allies.

In its strategy of putting more emphasis on allied nations, the United States regards Japan as its most important partner in Asia. Despite serious strains over a trade surplus in Japan’s favor and Japan’s reluctance to assume a greater burden in sharing American defense efforts, Washington has made consistent efforts to improve its relations with Tokyo. Reagan’s choice of Japan as the first stop in his trip to Asia in November 1983 attests to this concern. While in Tokyo, Reagan told the Japanese Diet that the American friendship with Japan is “permanent”; he also stated that the American-Japanese security treaty should provide “the bedrock” of the two nations’ defense relationship, calling upon Japan to share more of the burden of mutual defense efforts.

America’s China policy remains that of fostering a low-level strategic relationship against the Soviet Union. For this purpose, the United States has agreed to sell sophisticated weapons—including tube-launched, optically-tracked, wire-guided (TOW) antitank missiles, the improved Hawk antiaircraft missiles, components of early-warning radar systems, and other high-technology items—to China; it will also have military exchanges with China. Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang visited Washington in January 1984 and President Reagan returned the visit in April 1984. Despite these signs of warmer relations, the Chinese are clearly reluctant to accept the American idea of developing a strategic relationship even though they share some of the American views on Soviet intentions. Moreover, the American government itself is divided on the extent to which military equipment should be transferred to China, and the general attitude is one of caution.

9 Ibid., September 29 and 30, 1983.
Meanwhile, to meet its security commitments, the United States currently maintains the following military units in East Asia: one army division in Korea; two-thirds of a marine division in Okinawa; five combat air wings, including two in Korea, two in Japan, and one in the Philippines; two carriers, one battleship, eight submarines, and twenty-one surface combatants.

In these ways the major powers are pursuing their policies vis-à-vis friends and adversaries primarily through bilateral ties rather than by multilateral linkages. The result is a looser form of alignment than the traditional type of alliance or coalition. Politically, the regional balance tends to be quadrilateral, but strategically, it is bipolar. Perhaps such policies are more realistic and natural. Depending on the nature of the challenge encountered, the major states can cooperate through parallel actions rather than in an integrated manner. On the whole, however, United States, Japan, and China have closer common or parallel interests than any of these states has with the Soviet Union.

The Four Powers and the Two Koreas

Korea is no longer a direct issue in the bilateral relations of the powers. Because they cannot reach agreement on an ultimate settlement, they have been forced to leave it to the Korean states themselves. Only in this limited sense can one refer to "Koreanization of the Korean question."

By and large, the major powers see Korea in terms of their global and regional perspectives. The United States and Japan, for example, tend to treat South Korea as being important to their bilateral relations in a positive sense. China and the Soviet Union, on the other hand, see North Korea as an important area in their rivalry. The United States has maintained a defense treaty with South Korea since the armistice was signed in 1953. China and the Soviet Union have maintained defense treaties with North Korea since 1961.

The Soviet Union's primary interest in Korea is geopolitical. Moscow does not want Pyongyang to take any action that might involve the Soviet Union in a head-on clash with the other powers, especially the United States. Nor does it want Pyongyang to take the Chinese side in any Sino-Soviet conflict. Since 1973 Moscow has not provided new weapons such as MiG-23s or T-72 tanks to Pyongyang, forcing the latter to develop domestic production of weapons; Moscow probably did this for fear that North Korea might be tempted to attack South Korea. It is unclear whether this policy has been altered as a result of Kim II Sung's visit to Moscow in May 1984 and the visit of Vice Foreign Minister M. S. Kapitsa to Pyongyang in December of that year.

Like the Soviet Union, China does not want North Korea to wage war against South Korea; additionally, the PRC does not want North Korea to take the Soviet side in the Sino-Soviet rivalry. Since 1975 it has been Beijing's overriding concern to

prevent another situation in Korea like that which occurred in 1950 or like the commitment China was forced to make later to North Vietnam. North Korea is the only country with which China has a formal defense agreement. For this reason Beijing has consistently supported Pyongyang with military and economic assistance, but it has also steadily counseled caution on Pyongyang’s part.

Japan's official posture toward Korea is that peace and stability on the Korean peninsula are essential to peace and stability in East Asia including Japan. As part of the American-Japanese security-treaty obligation, Japan is supposed to allow the United States to use bases and facilities on her territory should an emergency arise in Korea. While giving political and economic support to Seoul, Tokyo supports some unofficial political ties and economic contacts with Pyongyang.

American policy toward Korea is to deter war on the peninsula by honoring the defense commitment made in 1953 and to maintain a balance of power with the Soviet Far East. South Korea is the only place on the Asian continent where the United States keeps ground troops; the strategic importance of Korea has been recognized by Washington in terms of Japanese security. In recent years Washington has strengthened the firepower of the Second Division stationed between the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and Seoul with more advanced equipment.

In this way, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and the United States are seeking their security interests in Korea. They all accept implicitly or explicitly the Korean status quo. North Korea is still bent on overturning the status quo on its own terms, notwithstanding its recent change of policy regarding negotiations with the Chun government. Nevertheless, since the 1970s the four powers have shown in varying degrees a de facto recognition or what may be called “cross-contact” with the two Koreas. This situation caused the two regimes in North and South Korea increasingly to compete in their diplomatic and political relations with the four powers and with all other countries, especially those of the Third World.

NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA:
COMPETITION FOR SURVIVAL AND LEGITIMACY

Since 1948 North and South Korea have been competing for survival and legitimacy. The military competition seems to have reached an impasse because the American troops in South Korea have compensated for North Korea’s superiority. By all accounts, the economic competition is being won by South Korea. As South Korea has expanded its diplomatic influence in the Third World, North Korea has seemingly resorted to nondiplomatic means including terrorism. In the final analysis, this competition centers on the question of which side enjoys greater political legitimacy.

Military Competition

A root cause of the North-South confrontation in North Korea is the sense of insecurity existing on both sides and the military buildup along the DMZ where 1.4 million regular troops are facing each other. If American forces were excluded from the comparison, the military balance would be definitely in favor of North Korea.

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North Korea began its military buildup early in the 1960s. Since then Pyongyang has invested far larger portions of its gross national product (GNP) for military purposes than has the South. The South started military modernization programs only in the 1970s, and even these efforts have been limited by other priorities of U.S. global strategy and the exigencies of U.S. Congressional politics. Nevertheless, in recent years ROK military expenditures have been substantial as the effort to catch up with the North continues. And while the military doctrine and force structure of the North are offense-oriented, whereas those of the South are defense-oriented, the U.S. military presence compensates for this difference.

According to the latest estimate by the London-based Institute of International and Strategic Studies, North Korea maintains an armed force of more than 784,500, representing 3.8 percent of the population, while South Korea has an armed force of 622,000, 1.3 percent of the population. The North is deploying half of its combat forces near the DMZ. General Robert W. Sennewald, commander of U.S. forces in Korea, told the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee in March 1983 that North Korea has spent 25 percent of its GNP for the military in the past decade, whereas South Korea has spent 6 percent. In the past three years the North Koreans accelerated their program for the production of Soviet T-62-type tanks, the acquisition of some 160 Chinese-built A-7 aircraft or copies of MiG-21s, and a naval expansion to 500 combat vessels including 21 submarines and boats outfitted with surface-to-surface missiles. Pyongyang's forces are capable of attacking the South without Chinese or Soviet help, whereas the support that can be rendered by the United States to Seoul is perceived to be weakening.

North Korean armor, including tanks and artillery, is domestically produced. The North is far stronger than the South in the number of armored divisions and mechanized and motor divisions, which are equipped to be most effective in carrying out fast and mobile attacks on South Korea to breach the forward defense line between the DMZ and Seoul. The North's artillery in particular is superior in numbers and range. The North is still increasing the number of its artillery units with heavier and longer-range pieces, amounting to three-fourths of all the American artillery pieces, existing throughout the world according to a speech by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz.

Another strength of North Korea is a commando-type force of at least 100,000 men who can be deployed rapidly by 100 high-speed landing ships, 250 A-2 transports, or through underground tunnels to penetrate deeply into the South. They can destroy or confuse command and communication networks; they can also carry out terrorist acts as some of them did when they attempted to raid the Blue House (the ROK president's residence) in 1968 and to assassinate the South Korean President in Rangoon in October 1983.

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13 Korea Herald, March 10, 1983.

In addition to its army, Pyongyang's navy and air forces also are superior to those of Seoul, at least in quantity. Pyongyang has 500 combat vessels, Seoul only 100; the former has 21 submarines and missile-equipped patrol boats, the latter only a few American-made World War II–vintage destroyers. The former has 740 combat aircraft, the latter only 450. Table 1 shows the North's superiority in manpower and firepower.¹⁵

Table 1
South and North Korean Ground Forces, 1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>South Korea</th>
<th>North Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>622,000</td>
<td>784,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple rocket launchers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks/assault guns</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>2,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armored personnel carriers</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>1,140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Thus, as Richard L. Armitage, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, testified before Congress, Pyongyang still has the advantage over Seoul in all capabilities as follows: 2 to 1 in maneuver battalions, 2 to 1 in artillery, 3 to 1 in tanks, 2 to 1 in fighter aircraft, and 3 to 1 in naval combatants.¹⁶ It is true that numerical comparisons can be misleading because in certain areas such as fighter aircraft South Korean equipment is qualitatively superior. However, Pyongyang's forces are far larger than is necessary purely for the defense of the North.

Pyongyang's military buildup accelerated just when the first series of North-South dialogues got underway in 1972–1973. Yet only in January 1979 did this fact come to light. The United States was so preoccupied with the Vietnam War during the early 1970s that it could scarcely pay attention to Korea. Besides, it took more than one year to make a careful assessment of the data by the intelligence community. Once this was done, President Carter had no choice but to suspend his plan for a phased withdrawal of American ground troops.¹⁷

Outnumbered and outgunned in manpower and firepower, Seoul undertook the first force improvement plan in 1975–1981 and is currently proceeding with its second plan (1982–1986), which envisions acquisition of artillery, armor, and antitank and

¹⁶ Korea Herald, March 11, 1983.
antisubmarine equipment.¹⁸ Purchase of 30 F-16 fighters will enhance Seoul’s air force substantially. But the lead time between foreign military sale contracts and delivery is so long that it will be a considerable time before Seoul can catch up with Pyongyang.

Therefore, it is essential for the United States to maintain its troops in South Korea at the current level of 40,000. Their role is threefold. First, they are necessary to deter war by the North and to honor the U.S. defense commitment to South Korea. As Henry Kissinger pointed out, the reason for the U.S. commitment is the same in both Europe and Korea because the removal of the American shield might tempt aggression.¹⁹ In this sense the “team spirit” exercises between South Korea and the United States are designed to demonstrate the credibility of that commitment. Second, less understood but vitally important is their surveillance and intelligence gathering role, which can be guaranteed only when ground forces are present. Since the force balance in Korea favors the potential aggressor, the defender must be able to detect the moves of the attacking force as early as possible, but South Korea does not have these capabilities. Third, the U.S. military presence is a credible symbol that the United States intends to remain an Asian power and to play its role in balancing Soviet power in this region. For these reasons, defense secretary Weinberger, in his annual report to the U.S. Congress in January 1984, stressed the need to strengthen American forces and to undertake joint American-South Korean exercises.²⁰

In the long run, Seoul will be capable of attaining a military balance with Pyongyang on its own efforts. Until that time, the American role for deterring aggression and preserving stability is required.

Economic Competition

In all aspects, South Korea has outstripped North Korea in its economic competition. From the early 1960s, Seoul has regarded economic development as a national task, while Pyongyang was giving top priority to building up its military forces. Like any other planned economy, Pyongyang’s economy did grow rapidly in the 1950s as a result of mobilizing labor and available resources, especially in the heavy industrial sector. In recent years, however, plagued by the problems universal to command-type economies, it has fallen far behind Seoul’s record. Apparently, Pyongyang’s seven-year plan ending in 1984 has failed to reach its targets, for it has not announced its achievements thus far. The abruptly convened Supreme People’s Congress in January 1984 endorsed a newly created Economic Policy Committee to review Pyongyang’s plans and to study ways of expanding its trade relations with capitalist economies, notwithstanding its foreign debt of more than $2 billion.²¹ In September 1984, a joint venture law was announced, with the hope that foreign

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¹⁹ Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), p. 308.
investment would be attracted. Given the problems, however, the likelihood of substantial foreign investment seems slim.

In contrast, the average annual growth rate of South Korea’s economy in the past twenty years has been more than 8.6 percent. In 1982 Seoul’s GNP reached $67.1 billion with exports of $21.5 billion and imports of $22.8 billion; its fifth five-year plan (1982–1986) envisages a real growth rate of 7 or 8 percent per year. In 1983, the South Korean economy grew by 9.5 percent, one of the highest rates in the world. It is now in the process of being transformed into a high-technology stage with multiple connections with other market economies.

As shown in Table 2, South Korea with a population twice and GNP four times that of North Korea has already won the economic race, and the gap in this area is going to widen in the years to come. When South Korea will join the bracket of advanced industrial countries in the late 1980s, the gap will have become so large that North Korea cannot possibly match South Korea’s performance in socioeconomic development. South Korea is now the seventh-largest U.S. trading partner and the fourth-largest market for U.S. grain exports. In addition, South Korea has become an active member of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference, which includes the

### Table 2

Major Indicators of North and South Korea (1981)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>South Korea (A)</th>
<th>North Korea (B)</th>
<th>Comparison (A/B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>3,872</td>
<td>1,809</td>
<td>2.1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>km²</td>
<td>99,016</td>
<td>122,370</td>
<td>1 : 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>$ billion</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>4.6 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>1,607</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>2.1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>$ billion</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>16 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric generation</td>
<td>million kw</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2.1 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crude steel production</td>
<td>million tons</td>
<td>12.47</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil refining capacity</td>
<td>barrels/day</td>
<td>790,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>10 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipbuilding capacity</td>
<td>million tons</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>12 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile production</td>
<td>unit</td>
<td>337,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>22.5 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement output</td>
<td>million tons</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>2.9 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber production</td>
<td>million tons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>8 : 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

market economies of Japan, the United States, and the ASEAN countries, whereas North Korea continues to support an autarkic economy, separated from advanced technology, unable to operate on a scale that maximizes investment, and threatened with obsolescence in many fields.

**Diplomatic Competition**

During the Cold War there was little room for the two Koreas to maneuver diplomatically because they had to rely almost totally on their respective major power allies. As the bipolar confrontation between the two superpowers gradually turned into a four-power realignment in the 1970s, North and South Korea began to explore new approaches to all four powers. In addition, during the second half of the 1970s, North Korea made an effort to gain support in the Third World. But entering the 1980s, South Korea began to make progress in its competition with North Korea throughout the Third World by using its economic strength. This intensification of diplomatic competition may have prompted Pyongyang to adopt violent means.

In the “northern” triangular relationship among China, the Soviet Union, and North Korea, the two Communist powers have lent their diplomatic support to North Korea at least in official pronouncements. But the Soviet Union has been unwilling to risk a direct clash with the United States on behalf of North Korean interests, as evidenced by the cautious attitude shown during the Korean War in 1950–1953 and the *Pueblo* incident in 1968. Nor did China approve of Kim II Sung’s designs for military action against South Korea in 1975 when he discussed this matter with the Chinese in Beijing. After the Sino-Soviet conflict deepened in the 1970s, each of the Communist giants tried to keep North Korea from tilting decisively toward the other side. The competition between Beijing and Moscow enabled Pyongyang to play one against the other and thereby to steer a neutral road in the Sino-Soviet dispute. But rarely could Pyongyang take an equidistant course in so doing. In the 1980s, therefore, Pyongyang retains closer relations with Beijing.

In the “southern” triangular relationship among the United States, Japan, and South Korea, Washington and Tokyo have supported South Korea’s foreign policy, but their pluralistic political and social structures have made it possible for some private groups in both countries to dissent from the official policy of their governments. In the 1980s, however, Washington and Tokyo have begun coordinating their contingency planning for a possible crisis in Korea.

Pyongyang was able to join the nonalignment movement led by Tito and Castro in 1975, from which Seoul was excluded. Encouraged by this diplomatic coup, Pyongyang rejected the proposal by U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at the thirtieth U.N. General Assembly that the two Koreas, the United States, and China convene a meeting to explore ways of “crossrecognition” of the two Korean states by the four powers (the United States, the PRC, Japan, and the Soviet Union). Pyongyang—

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yang rejected this idea by calling it a scheme to perpetuate “two Koreas.” Beijing and Moscow have abided by Pyongyang’s position. In July 1979 Pyongyang rejected the joint proposal made by presidents Park and Carter for a tripartite conference of Seoul, Washington, and Pyongyang despite some indication that Beijing had endorsed this formula. Pyongyang was to accept the concept of tripartite negotiations later, in 1983, with certain provisos, but the idea was no longer acceptable in Seoul and Washington. Since 1974, however, Pyongyang has consistently called upon both Washington and Tokyo to have direct talks. Washington has thus far rejected any official contact with Pyongyang unless Seoul is fully represented and unless either Beijing or Moscow follows with a comparable action toward Seoul.23

In the late 1970s, while a triangular cooperation among the United States, Japan, and China was being formed against the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance, the Soviets saw this as an anti-Soviet military alliance and sought to improve Soviet relations with the North Koreans, accusing China of collusion with the United States. Hoping to obtain some military and economic assistance from Moscow, Pyongyang apparently responded with much expectation. According to Soviet claims, sixty industrial enterprises were built in North Korea with Soviet aid. These plants account for a high proportion of Pyongyang’s industrial production: 60 percent of its electric power, 30 percent of its steel, 45 percent of its petroleum products, 40 percent of its iron ore, and 20 percent of its woven goods. Twelve more industrial projects have been built with Soviet help.24

As shown in Table 3, Moscow seems to have deliberately increased its imports from Pyongyang from 1978 on. Perhaps to compensate for these favors Pyongyang has allowed Soviet commercial and even naval ships to use port facilities at Najin. In 1980 Kim Il Sung met Brezhnev at Tito’s funeral; in 1982 Pyongyang’s Vice President Pak Song Chol went to Brezhnev’s funeral. The climax to visitations came in the spring of 1984, when Kim visited Moscow for the first time in more than two decades.

In the 1970s China gave its official endorsement to North Korean positions while sharing some common perspectives with the United States. Beginning in 1981, however, after Sino-American relations deteriorated over Washington’s arms sale to Taipei and concern grew in Beijing over Russian overtures to Pyongyang, China set out to patch up its relations with North Korea by providing more military and economic aid and even acquiescing in Kim Il Sung’s succession plan for his son Kim Jong Il. That these efforts paid off was indicated by the exchange of visits between the top leaders. Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang made a secret visit to Pyongyang in April 1982; about this time China provided forty A-47 fighters to North Korea and resumed export of one million tons of oil.25 In September Kim Il Sung made a highly publicized visit to Beijing.

The Sino-Soviet competition had increasingly affected not only North Korea but also South Korea. Since June 3, 1973, when Seoul enunciated the policy of


opening relations with nonhostile Communist states, South Korea has expanded her contacts with both China and the Soviet Union in humanitarian, athletic, scholarly, and economic fields through direct and indirect channels. For example, Seoul’s volume of indirect trade with China increased from $100 million to $400 million in the late 1970s. The Soviet Union has also allowed South Korean citizens to attend international events in its territory since 1973.26

Table 3

Soviet Trade with North Korea (in million dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>373.8</td>
<td>230.6</td>
<td>143.2</td>
<td>87.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>502.6</td>
<td>366.8</td>
<td>135.8</td>
<td>231.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>458.4</td>
<td>303.5</td>
<td>154.9</td>
<td>148.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>480.6</td>
<td>301.3</td>
<td>179.3</td>
<td>122.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>461.6</td>
<td>261.3</td>
<td>200.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>468.5</td>
<td>258.8</td>
<td>209.7</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>375.8</td>
<td>218.4</td>
<td>157.4</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>446.0</td>
<td>223.5</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>552.5</td>
<td>257.9</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>749.8</td>
<td>358.9</td>
<td>390.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>880.6</td>
<td>443.2</td>
<td>437.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>745.3</td>
<td>392.8</td>
<td>352.5</td>
<td>40.3</td>
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In 1982, Moscow took action seemingly intended to show its displeasures over Pyongyang’s warming relations with Beijing. In October, Moscow had two Tass representatives abruptly show up at Kimpo Airport asking for entry visas to attend the Technical Committee of the Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies held in Seoul; they even made a courtesy call on President Chun. At the end of October, the Director of the Art Preservation Department of the Soviet Ministry of Culture visited Seoul to attend an Asian regional conference on art and museum administration sponsored by the South Korean government. In March 1983, Moscow again sent two high officials to a conference held in Seoul, this one on agriculture. These were clearly attempts by Moscow to play a “South Korean card” against North Korea and China.

Against this background, the forced landing of a Chinese airplane hijacked by Chinese dissidents in May 1983 provided Seoul with an excellent opportunity for a direct contact with Chinese authorities. Unexpectedly, Beijing promptly sent a team of thirty-three officials and crew, led by Shen Du, director general of the Chinese Civil Aviation Administration (CCAA), to engage in face-to-face negotiations with a team of South Korean officials led by Assistant Foreign Minister Kong Roh Myung. In a memorandum signed by both sides and bearing the official names of both countries for the first time, they agreed to cooperate further if similar emergencies should occur in the future, thus opening the way to the possibilities of more contact.

But immediately after the Chinese crew and the hijacked plane returned home, Beijing sent its foreign minister, Wu Xuequan, to Pyongyang to allay Kim II Sung's worry about Beijing-Seoul contacts. While in Pyongyang, Wu reaffirmed Beijing's support for Pyongyang's call for withdrawal of U.S. troops. In June 1983, Beijing welcomed Kim Jong Il in his unpublicized visit to China. About this time Beijing refused to issue entry visas to South Korean participants in U.N.-sponsored meetings in China, such as the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Industrial Development Organization. Yet Beijing concluded an agreement with Tokyo on a new air route so that Japanese and Chinese planes could fly over the so-called Korean flight information region through which Shen Du's mission flew in May 1983.

As for Moscow's approach to Seoul, the shooting down by Soviet fighters on September 1, 1983, of KAL 007, an unarmed South Korean civilian airplane carrying 269 crew and passengers, dashed chances of better Soviet-South Korean relations and also raised international tensions throughout the world. Soviet refusal to admit its responsibility or explain the incident, let alone compensate the victims, shocked the South Koreans. Also distressful to Koreans was Moscow's refusal to allow South Korean specialists to join Japanese and American officials in receiving wreckage of the destroyed KAL plane in Sakhalin.

After Moscow had shown such gross insensitivity, Beijing condemned Moscow's shooting down of the plane (although at the U.N. Security Council it abstained from voting on a resolution to condemn the Soviet Union). Interestingly, it allowed South Korean representatives to attend the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) conferences held in China in August and September 1983. Moreover, Beijing permitted two South Korean delegates to attend the International Telecommunications Union conference sponsored by the Chinese government in September. Later that month, when defense secretary Weinberger met with Deng on September 28, 1983, Deng revealed Beijing's serious interest in easing tensions on the Korean peninsula. This interest represented a major shift in Beijing's attitude; only a few years earlier, in February 1979, Deng had told Carter that Beijing had little influence over Pyongyang.27 As a further indication of its desire to reduce tensions, Beijing permitted many Korean residents to visit their

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relatives in South Korea, and Shen Tu sent condolences to his counterpart in Seoul for the shooting down of KAL 007.28

On the other side of the coin, both the United States and Japan launched "smile diplomacy" toward Pyongyang in this same period. In March 1983 the U.S. State Department announced new guidelines for American diplomats in some capitals so that they could have informal contacts with North Korean diplomats; it also relaxed rules on issuing visas to North Koreans who wanted to attend academic conferences in the United States. Tokyo made similar gestures by admitting a North Korean delegation to the twenty-third Asian-African Legal Consultative Conference held in May 1983.

These moves are being promoted on the ground that they can contribute to breaking Pyongyang's self-imposed isolation and also are necessary to match Seoul's informal contacts with Beijing and Moscow. Testifying before the Asian-Pacific Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives in July 1983, Allen S. Whiting, for example, pointed out that the Seoul-Beijing agreement on the hijacking incident freed the Soviets to move further along their previous approaches to South Korea. But the KAL incident in September 1983 has made it difficult for them to do so.

If this smile diplomacy leads to its intended goals, one should welcome it. But it is essential that Tokyo and Washington not get ahead of Beijing and Moscow. If contacts can be initiated jointly by Seoul, Washington, and Tokyo through close consultation, the policy deserves serious consideration. Indeed, the late South Korean foreign minister, Lee Bum Suk, made a speech on what he called "northern policy" in June 1983 in which he called for normalization of relations with China and the Soviet Union. In December 1983 the new foreign minister, Lee Won Kyung, promised to resume Seoul's unofficial contact with Moscow despite the KAL incident.30

Throughout the turbulent years from 1980 to 1985, the United States and Japan rendered active diplomatic and economic assistance to South Korea. In February 1981 at President Reagan's invitation, President Chun became the first chief of state to visit Reagan at the White House; Reagan also canceled Carter's plan for phased withdrawal of American troops.31 At the fifteenth annual Korean-American security consultative meeting in Washington in April 1983, the United States agreed that the security of South Korea is "vital" to the security of the United States. The Senate passed a special resolution reaffirming the American commitment in commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the treaty in October; this resolution indicates bipartisan support for the commitment. Reagan reaffirmed it when he visited Seoul in November 1983.32

To bolster American forces in South Korea, Washington increased the firepower of the Second Division by deploying more advanced equipment and by assisting in

32 Korea Herald, November 15, 1983, p. 5.
Seoul's force improvement plan. It provided Seoul with foreign military sales of $160 million for 1981, $210 million for 1982, and $180 million for 1983; for 1984 $230 million was projected, with an equal amount envisaged for 1985 on somewhat better credit terms. When President Chun made his second visit to Washington in April 1985, President Reagan reaffirmed the U.S. security ties with South Korea, calling them "the linchpin of peace in Northeast Asia."33

Prime Minister Nakasone took a decisive action by making his first foreign trip to Seoul in January 1983, immediately after assuming office. In the face of North Korea's increasing military capability, Tokyo has taken the Korean situation more seriously than before.34 Even though it refused officially to accept any linkage between security and economic cooperation, Nakasone's decision to settle the issue of $4 billion credit for Seoul was taken primarily for security considerations. Since his trip, Korean-Japanese relations have further improved. Tokyo collaborated with Washington concerning the KAL incident and also applied sanctions against Pyongyang after the Rangoon incident, suspending the exchange of political leaders and private persons with Pyongyang as well as enforcing economic strictures. Through its contacts with Beijing, Tokyo has tried to convince Beijing to use its restraining influence on Pyongyang. In fact, Nakasone and Hu Yaobang agreed on the importance of stability on the Korean peninsula when they talked about the Korean situation in November 1983.35 When Nakasone visited Beijing in March 1984, he had another chance to present his views on Korea to the Chinese leaders. When President Chun made his historic visit to Tokyo in September, Emperor Hirohito delivered an expression of "regret" for Japan's colonial rule over Korea in the past, and President Chun accepted this as a formal apology and vowed to look toward the future. Thus, Seoul has had the upper hand recently in diplomatic activities connected with the United States, Japan, and China.

The most intensive diplomatic competition has centered on the Third World, but here again, South Korea has made substantial progress. In July 1981 President Chun made state visits to the five ASEAN countries, and all five governments endorsed Seoul's stand on reunification. In November 1981 the South Korean Olympic Committee scored a diplomatic coup when Seoul was chosen as the site for the 1988 Olympic Games as well as the 1986 Asian Games. In 1985 Seoul will also host the International Monetary Fund and World Bank conventions. In August 1982 President Chun visited four African states: Gabon, Kenya, Nigeria, and Senegal. In October 1983 when Seoul hosted the Inter-Parliamentary Union convention, seventy-three countries sent delegates, although neither the Soviet Union nor any of the East European countries did because of the KAL incident. In pursuit of political and economic interests in the Third World, President Chun left Seoul on October 8 for another round of state visits to Burma, Sri Lanka, India, Australia, New Zealand, and

33 Ibod., May 14, 1983.
Brunei. But the incident on October 9, when, in an attempt to hamper South Korea's growing inroads into the Third World as well as to induce political chaos in South Korea the North Koreans detonated a bomb that killed seventeen South Korean officials in Rangoon, stopped him from completing this journey.

Pyongyang's terrorist act actually backfired when Burma expelled the North Korean embassy and withdrew its recognition of North Korea in November 1983 after an investigation on the bombing conclusively established North Korean responsibility. This also caused the United States, Japan, and even China to be concerned about stability on the Korean peninsula and to take further measures to prevent violence. President Reagan, on his visit to Japan and South Korea in November 1983, discussed the North Korean problem with Prime Minister Nakasone and President Chun; at that time he reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the security of South Korea by reiterating that the security of South Korea is "pivotal to the peace and stability of the Northeast Asian region and in turn vital to the security of the United States." According to Hu Yaobang, who also visited Japan late in November 1983, Kim II Sung assured Deng Xiaoping and him twice that North Korea would never invade South Korea. He added that China condemned terrorism by any country; he went out of his way to stress that tensions from any source should be avoided in Korea.

Some Third World countries followed the action of Burma. Costa Rica, Western Samoa, and the Comoros severed diplomatic relations with North Korea, and Thailand rejected North Korea's request to open an embassy in Bangkok. Even the Japanese Communist party attacked Pyongyang openly. Chuji Kuno and other leaders of the Japan-North Korean Parliamentarian Friendship League were defeated in the elections in December 1983. Since Pyongyang has inflicted isolation upon itself, Seoul's diplomatic edge over Pyongyang's has increased as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

| Number of Countries with which North Korea and South Korea Have Diplomatic Relations (1984) |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|             | Asia          | Middle East | Africa      | Oceana     | Western Europe | Eastern Europe | United States | Total       |
| North Korea | 15            | 10          | 41          | 6          | 9             | 9             | 11          | 101         |
| South Korea | 14            | 14          | 31          | 12         | 20            | 0             | 30          | 121         |
| Both Koreas | 8             | 5           | 26          | 5          | 9             | 0             | 10          | 63          |

38 *International Herald Tribune*, November 19 and 20, 1983.
Against this background, Pyongyang suddenly called for a three-party conference of the United States, South Korea, and North Korea, thus engaging in another round of diplomatic competition. Pyongyang initially sent this proposal to Beijing on October 8, 1983, on the eve of the Rangoon incident; it was conveyed by Beijing to Washington on October 12. Pyongyang renewed the proposal on December 3 when South Korean authorities sank an armed North Korean spy ship and captured two agents in the sea off Pusan. Then, on January 11, 1984, when Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Zhiyang was about to meet with President Reagan and to deliver the same message in Washington, Pyongyang broadcast two letters containing this proposal to the U.S. government and the "Seoul authorities." In these letters Pyongyang suggested "a three-party conference whereby South Korean authorities can participate in a conference between us and the United States on an equal footing." This conference was supposed to discuss replacing the armistice with a "peace agreement" with the United States and adopting a "nonaggression declaration" between North and South Korea; only after these two achievements are made, it was said, can there be dialogues between Seoul and Pyongyang. In so saying, Pyongyang made it clear that the primary purpose of such a gathering was to force the United States to withdraw troops from South Korea and then to talk with Seoul on unification issues. Given the timing of this proposal and the open way in which it was made, it is reasonable to assume that Pyongyang was also trying to cover up its responsibility for the Rangoon incident and to regain the diplomatic offensive toward the United States.

Citing the fact that Pyongyang had not admitted its responsibility, let alone apologized for the Rangoon massacre, Seoul replied that Pyongyang should first apologize and then resume direct dialogues if it was really serious about easing tensions. At the same time, Seoul expressed its willingness to attend a larger international forum of either a four-party conference including China or a six-party conference including Japan and the Soviet Union if it could contribute to reducing tensions.

Washington endorsed Seoul's stand on these points. President Reagan told Premier Zhao on January 11, 1984, that a four-party conference of the United States, South Korea, North Korea, and China was preferable to the tripartite idea. Pyongyang rejected this quadrilateral formula. Only then did Beijing support Pyongyang's stand, however, without expressing its official attitude on the quadrilateral idea.

Unofficially, Beijing has not ruled out the possibility of attending a four-party conference on Korea. Sharing the perspectives of Seoul and Washington on Pyongyang's behavior, Tokyo remains somewhat interested in exploring the idea of a six-party conference including itself and Moscow. But Beijing and Pyongyang are not likely to be receptive to this. As long as Pyongyang is opposed to the idea of such a larger international conference for fear that it would lead to cross-recognition of Seoul by Beijing and Moscow, it can hardly materialize. Nor is a tripartite conference likely to be held as long as Seoul rejects it. Hence, the exchange of these proposals represents another aspect of the diplomatic struggle between Seoul and Pyongyang.

Nevertheless, cross-contact between the two Korean states and the four powers is going to increase. Now that Beijing has agreed to cooperate with both Washington and Tokyo to find ways of reducing tensions on the Korean peninsula, the exchange of information and consultation between these capitals will also grow. Insofar as informal and indirect channels are concerned, quadrilateral communications among Washington, Seoul, Beijing, and Pyongyang seem to have already taken place.

**Political Competition**

Meanwhile, the North-South confrontation remains a struggle by both parties for legitimacy. Each side's unification policy reflects that struggle. The political competition is between a totalitarian system trying to adopt a dynastic succession and an open, though authoritarian, system trying to institutionalize a constitutional democracy. In the long run, this competition will also be settled in favor of the South.

To date, the thrust of Pyongyang's unification policy has been to deny legitimacy to the South Korean system, while Seoul's policy is to recognize the reality existing on the peninsula and to induce Pyongyang to constructive dialogue through which the peace and confidence necessary for an eventual unification can be built. Two sets of such dialogue did take place, one in 1972–1973 and another in 1979–1980, but both were unilaterally suspended by Pyongyang when the domestic political situation in the South turned stable. The first series of talks was prompted by the external changes dramatized in the sudden Sino-American rapprochement. The proposal for talks was initiated by Seoul. North Korea's Kim put a halt to the dialogue after South Korea's Park began to consolidate the yushin (revitalizing reform) system. The second series, initiated by Pyongyang, was prompted by the internal changes wrought by the assassination of President Park, but Kim abruptly suspended these talks, too, after General Chun was elected president of the Republic of Korea in 1980.

Immediately after the inauguration of the Fifth Republic in March 1981, President Chun proposed either an exchange of visits or a summit between himself and Kim. In January 1982 he called for the drafting of a constitution under which a reunited Korean state could be established. For this purpose he suggested that a Council for Unification be formed by representatives from both sides and that liaison offices in both capitals be established to handle matters of mutual interest. With these proposals he expressed his willingness to discuss some of Pyongyang's positions including the one on the "Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo," which Kim had proposed in 1980. In rejecting these suggestions and even the idea of exchanging information on separated families through the Red Cross, Pyongyang insisted on two conditions: withdrawal of U.S. troops and change of the government in Seoul.

In 1983 three developments illustrated the contrasts between the approaches of the South and North to the issue of contacts. The first, in June, was the unanticipated success of the Korea Broadcasting System in its campaign to reunite separated families. Through the powerful medium of television, more than ten thousand separate families within South Korea were united after separations of thirty-three years.

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41 Ahn, "Unification of Korea," pp. 73–82.
years. When they embraced in tearful yet happy scenes, the whole nation watched and cried; the scenes were a most poignant human drama that moved people of every walk of life in South Korea. Yet Pyongyang was, at least publicly, unmoved and even claimed that the events were fabricated by Seoul.\textsuperscript{42} The second example was the Soviet shooting down of KAL 007. As the entire nation was grieving and angry about this barbaric act, Pyongyang defended Moscow's action by endorsing the latter's claim that the plane was on a spy mission for the United States. Pyongyang failed to utter a word of regret or condolence. The third example was the explosion at Burma's Aung San Mausoleum. Pyongyang still claims that this incident was perpetrated by antigovernment dissidents in South Korea, notwithstanding Burma's conclusive evidence proving North Korean responsibility.

These different reactions derive from the diverging political systems of North and South. Both systems face the problem of ensuring a smooth succession of power and retaining political stability. The most imminent problem confronting the North is how to perpetuate the existing system through a dynastic succession. The problem facing the South is to find a viable political order in a rapidly industrializing society in the long run, and how to institute a seven-year, single-term presidency in the short run.

In the autumn and winter of 1984, unexpected developments took place. The North offered to provide relief supplies to the victims of serious floods in the South, and unexpectedly, Seoul accepted them, indicating that it did not need the supplies, but hoped this could lead to resumed South-North communications. Shortly thereafter, Pyongyang suggested a dialogue on economic, sports, and cultural matters. In mid-October, the North agreed to a proposal to hold bilateral talks on trade and economic cooperation, and the first meeting opened on November 15 at Panmunjom. Both sides set forth proposals of a detailed and basically compatible nature. The North, however, cancelled the meetings scheduled for December and January 1985, using an incident at the DMZ and the joint ROK-United States military maneuvers as excuses. Since May 1985 the economic and Red Cross talks have been resumed, with some results.

Reversing its previous position, the North has now agreed to discuss important issues with the South, albeit in a halting and uncertain manner, watching political developments in the South—and on other fronts as well. Nevertheless, the new turn of events may reduce tensions on the peninsula, and abet cross contacts between the two Koreas and the major powers with which each has limited relations.

One of the continuing contrasts between North and South Korea is that relatively little change has taken place in North Korean leadership whereas there have been frequent changes in the leaders of the South. As a result, the South Koreans have accumulated a great deal of experience in coping with political crises. The North Koreans have yet to overcome a major succession crisis when Kim Il Sung leaves the political scene, making the future shape of the North Korean system uncertain. If one takes China's experience after Mao's death as an example, factional struggles are

\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Nodong Shinmun}, August 30, 1983.
likely to follow the death of Kim Il Sung. Should they polarize the differences between a pro-Beijing and a pro-Moscow faction, both the Chinese and the Soviets would be tempted to intervene in North Korean domestic politics. This could become a source of instability on the Korean peninsula.

Some signs of factionalism were discernible at the Third Session of the Seventh Supreme People’s Assembly held in January 1984. There is a prima facie indication that Kim Il Sung promoted a faction of technocrats in the state machinery as his “outer court” while keeping Kim Jong II and his lieutenants as his “inner court.” For example, Prime Minister Yi Chong-ok, an economic expert, was elevated to the position of a vice chairman whereas Kang Song-san, another economic manager, was appointed prime minister, and a number of other technocrats were assigned to positions dealing with the budget, light industry, and agriculture. In December 1983 Foreign Minister Ho Dam was replaced by Kim Young-nam. These reshufflings may have been designed to shift blame away from Kim Jong II, who was said to have directed the Rangoon incident, and to put more emphasis on pragmatic economic policies. In other words, Kim Il Sung attempted to limit the damage done to his son by coopting more technically oriented cadres into the central organ of government and at the same time seeking to weather the severe economic crisis taking place under Jong II’s administration.

The degree to which the two states are open to the outside world provides another contrast. North Korea remains largely shut off from the outside world, but South Korea is a highly open society, trading with more than 140 countries. Once the North Korean system is subjected to an alternative source of information emanating from outside, it will be difficult to sustain the cult of Kim’s personality. The impact of such information on this Orwellian system will be substantial in generating fundamental changes.

As for South Korea, there is reason to believe that a system Chalmers Johnson calls “soft authoritarianism” may take hold if the promise of the present government to transfer power according to its constitutional procedure is delivered in 1988. The rising middle class, consisting of white-collar workers, professionals, the bureaucracy, the business community, and even the military, is groping for political stability in order to assure national security and economic growth. Most of them aspire to do away with the vicious cycles of attempts to institute constitutionalism followed by military coups, which have characterized the Korean political scene thus far. There are also those who challenge the current system. Among them are a small number of radicalized university students, religious leaders, alienated journalists, and politicians; of these, student radicalism has been the most intractable problem.

Given the presence of North Korean threats and the need to sustain a high rate of economic growth in an increasingly competitive and revolutionary world, neither

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43 Chalmers Johnson, “Political Institutions and Economic Performance” in the first volume of this conference series.

Western style democracy nor an unbridled dictatorship will be tolerated in South Korea. And yet, a less authoritarian and more stable political system may well take root gradually in South Korean society. The more legitimacy is generated in the South, the better chance it will have for continued, productive dialogues with the North.

The Rangoon bombing may have been Pyongyang’s deliberate attempt to destabilize the South Korean political situation by using terrorism as a political instrument short of war, as in Lebanon. Such an act may also be a desperate effort by Pyongyang to compensate for failures in its economic and diplomatic competition with Seoul. Even though this strategy backfired this time, it runs the risk of triggering an inadvertent war. As a result, the competition for survival and legitimacy will continue for some time, renewed dialogue notwithstanding. No matter what kind of proposal either side may make, one thing is clear: one side cannot make the other accept what it does not wish to accept; nor can it any longer deny the existence and legitimacy of the other side. In one way or another, therefore, both Koreas will have to come to terms with reality. It is in this regard that in recent years South Korea’s policy has accorded more with reality than has North Korea’s, a fact which North Korea may now have belatedly recognized.

**CONCLUSION: QUEST FOR BALANCE AND COOPERATION**

To assure East Asian and Korean security requires balance and cooperation among the parties. In the mid-1980s a complex balance of power is emerging in this region. Even though the global balance still depends on the strategic competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, the regional balance in East Asia concerns Japan and China as well; all four countries have important stakes in the local balance on the Korean peninsula.

In the forty years after World War II the geopolitical relationship in East Asia has been realigned despite the Korean division. On balance, the Soviet Union poses potential threats to the East Asian balance of power. This makes it possible for the United States, Japan, and China to seek areas of cooperation even if a formal alliance is unfeasible. Short of a global conflict, war among these powers is unlikely, but there is a possibility of local conflict on the Korean peninsula, which might well disrupt the present state of bilateral relationships between the powers. To that extent, therefore, these powers have little choice but to accept the status quo in Korea.

After major power realignments loosened the Cold War constraints on the Korean confrontation, North and South Korea engaged in intense military, economic, diplomatic, and political competition. At least in quantity, North Korea is superior to South Korea in the military balance if U.S. forces are not counted. In the economic and diplomatic race the South has outperformed the North. The balance sheet for political competition is not yet in, and this is why both sides are struggling for

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legitimacy. Although in the long run the South's quest for democracy may well prevail over the North's attempt to prolong autocracy, both sides have been under pressure from both domestic and international sources to seek a political settlement. Hence, the renewed dialogue.

North Korea may still seek to couple dialogue with efforts to seek a violent change of the status quo. Revolution in the South has long been a primary objective of Kim Il Sung. For this reason North Korea has repeatedly resorted to irregular methods including terrorism and support of an underground Communist movement. As a result, North Korea continues to pose a threat not only to South Korea but also to all parties that want peace and stability in East Asia. To cope with this problem requires well-coordinated efforts by South Korea, the United States, Japan, China, and even the Soviet Union. Of these countries it is particularly incumbent upon China to exercise its restraining influence over North Korea because China seems to enjoy more leverage than any other power in Pyongyang.

To keep peace and security in East Asia and Korea, several conditions have to be met. First, the United States should perform the role of balancer or mediator by maintaining steady and reliable commitments and capabilities and by displaying a coherent leadership and strategy in this region. Should there be security cooperation among the United States, Japan, and China, such cooperation is feasible through existing bilateral relationships and informal or parallel actions rather than united action or alliances. Multilateralism is feasible in the area of Pacific economic cooperation by combatting protectionism and enhancing interdependence. This state of cooperation amounts to what Robert Scalapino aptly calls "soft regionalism." 46

Second, it should be a paramount goal of the major powers to render their services in deterring war on the Korean peninsula and in keeping the North-South Korean confrontation nonviolent. They can also contribute to lessening tensions there by expanding their bilateral contacts with both North and South Korea, first building confidence and then promoting four- or six-party conferences. As for the North-South Korean relationship, the major powers should encourage both sides to continue to engage in constructive dialogues through which problems of unification can be served according to the principle of self-determination.

Finally, as for internal politics in Asian countries, each country must be responsible for finding a route to peaceful political succession and the type of stability that will be of benefit to all its people.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since 1945 Southeast Asia has rarely been at peace. In Indonesia, the Japanese occupation and the anticolonial revolution spawned political instability that endured until 1966, including most prominently movements to found an Islamic state, the rebellion of the Outer Islands, and the rise and demise of the Indonesian Communist party (PKI). In Malaysia the Communist party (MCP) was successfully suppressed during the Emergency (1948–60), although remnants remain even today. Vietnam witnessed the anticolonial struggle against the French followed by the Second Indochina War, which featured elements of both civil and international conflict. Cambodia endured five years of externally backed internal war (1970–75), followed by the forty-four-month proletarian dictatorship of Pol Pot, the final Vietnamese invasion of late 1978, and the ensuing anti-Vietnamese struggle. Thailand was involved in the Second Indochina War and felt seriously challenged by four insurrections in the North, Northeast, South, and far South from 1965 until 1983. Burma, from its inception, was beset by all manner of rebellions, both Communist and non-Communist. Finally, the Philippines successfully repressed the Huks (1946–54) only to give birth to the Moro National Liberational Front (MNLF) in the 1970s and the burgeoning Communist New People’s Army (NPA) in the 1980s.

In spite of this cornucopia of misery, comments in academia, the press, Congress, and the executive branch sometimes seem immune to sophistication. In response to crises as far flung as Kampuchea, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Afghanistan, serious debates still rage on questions long since settled by the
experience of the past several decades. Columnists, Congressman, and academics continue to make statements that are essentially ahistoric, as if we had not lived through an entire era of insurgency and counterinsurgency. For instance, although experience shows “the economic” vs. “the military” approach to counterinsurgency to have been a false dichotomy, arguments about how to assist threatened governments retain a timeless myopic quality with commentators and politicians in the 1980s blithely assuring the public that “only economic and social justice can restore peace,” as if economic and social programs could exist without substantial military and police powers to protect them. It should be obvious from experience that insurgency problems usually involve finding the appropriate mix of military, economic, social, and political instruments. However, professors, pundits, and politicos still contend that insurgent threats can be solved without military aid, as if diplomatic initiatives and social reform schemes had any real prospect of bearing fruit in militarily untenable situations.

Likewise, contentious statements still abound concerning wholly indigenous civil wars versus externally backed internal wars. The debate over the importance of external support continues to litter the intellectual landscape in spite of the now copious evidence that very few insurgencies can sustain themselves in the long run or muster the power to overthrow a sitting government without substantial foreign inputs of money, materiel, and sometimes men.

Finally, arguments about sources of rebellion and methods of counterinsurgency remain culture bound. American and other Western commentators remain wedded to the universality of a democratic doctrine about dissent and insurgency in spite of the obvious fact that Communist practices in places such as Afghanistan, Laos, and Kampuchea are diametrically different but nonetheless reasonably effective. For example, American editorial writers subscribe to a democratic article of faith, that government repression of opposition groups leads to insurgency; this cultural bias reigns supreme in spite of empirical exceptions such as postrevolutionary China, Pol Pot’s Kampuchea (1975–78) and post-1975 Vietnam, where the application of repression correlates highly with unquestioned control by the ruling regime. For instance, Western counterinsurgency doctrine emphasizes political rather than military means by advising concessions on civil liberties and widening access to political power. In contrast, Communist practice emphasizes egalitarian political symbolism but with no quarter given to opponents or potential opponents; once in power, the vanguard of the revolution cannot and will not share political power with non-Communists. In Vietnam and Kampuchea revolutionary governments have sought either to harry their opponents out of the land or to exterminate them, and yet, excessive coercion notwithstanding, rebellion has been notably absent.

The historical context of rebellion and revolution in the post–World War II era in Southeast Asia provides a laboratory for us to sort out alternatives theories concerning the roots of internal dissent, the transformation of dissent into armed

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rebellion, and the strategies used by Communist and non-Communist governments in attempting to combat persistent rebellion.²

Part of the misunderstanding revolving around the subject derives from a failure to understand that there are different kinds of causes, namely preconditions and initiating factors. In Scott’s phrase, preconditions refer to “the creation of social dynamite,” whereas initiating factors refer to “its detonation.”³ One of the problems in analyzing rebellion is that some authors concentrate on preconditions while others highlight initiating factors, whereas comprehending rebellions requires simultaneous attention to both factors. In some instances the preconditions seem to be present but rebellion stubbornly refuses to blossom. In others, initiating factors abound but the underlying preconditions are inadequate to support a revolution.⁴ Successful rebellions are rare because they demand the simultaneous appearance of both preconditions and initiating factors.

In Section II, we will explore preconditions for rebellion that are often mistaken for being both necessary and sufficient causes. Declining per capita income, corruption, and inequality, in and of themselves, are shown to be too commonplace to account for the presence of successful revolutions or sustained rebellions, both of which are rather infrequent sociopolitical phenomena. Ethnicity, on the other hand, is shown to be a more frequent motivation for postwar rebellions. In Section III we will move from sociology and economics to politics, and in doing so, from studying the contents of social tinder to examining traditional and modern political relationships capable of igniting the fire of rebellion by combining vital ignition factors with the more commonplace preconditions for rebellion. Emphasis is placed upon the vital importance of external assistance and sanctuaries for sustained or successful rebellions. Section IV emphasizes the curious inconsistencies between Western and Soviet counterinsurgency practices.

² A bewildering array of political phenomena could be included in the study of dissent: democratic parliamentary opposition; spontaneous riots; coups d’état; and rebellions. I have chosen to deal only with organized rebellions of the postcolonial variety in Southeast Asia. This means that important forms of dissent (e.g., the rise of the PKI in Indonesia) have been left out as well as the anticolonial revolutions. Further, I have intentionally concentrated on only major, long-term organized rebellions, omitting relatively minor instances such as the Muslim separatists in Southern Thailand, Front Unifié de la Lutte Pour les Races Opprimées (FULRO) in Vietnam, and a host of small rebellions in Burma. No attempt will be made to expand the essay to include such massive non–Southeast Asian topics as the Chinese revolution.


⁴ For example, the paralysis of the Indonesian economy from 1960 to 1966 might have been expected to provide fertile ground for rebellion—declining GNP per capita, declining food production per capita, deteriorating health standards, chronic mass malnutrition, and even a famine on Java. Yet when the PKI, without sufficient preparation, sought to move from a mass-mobilization strategy to an armed strike against the government, organizational effectiveness was lacking and hence the revolution failed.

In contrast, in Thailand in the 1960s and 1970s the initiating factors were provided by excessive coercion by corrupt local officials and by political paralysis in the main governing institution, the army, from October 1973 through October 1976. Initiating factors that might have been expected to inflame local populations or to supply recruits by the tens of thousands to the CPT were not sufficient to compensate for the absence of the preconditions for rebellion among ethnic Thai of the central plain. While initiating factors were to an extent provided by local administrators and incidents of violence in Bangkok, expanding well-being and the ethnic isolation of the CPT precluded the party’s rapid and sustained expansion.
II. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PRECONDITIONS FOR REBELLION

The linchpin of Western counterinsurgency doctrine is that rebellions take place because governments fail to deliver the goods economically, politically, or socially. Governments are attacked because reasonable expectations of wide segments of the population have not been met.\(^5\) Narrow, class-based, oligarchic elites that rule for their own benefit and attempt to pass along the benefits of rulership to their offspring are, in effect, asking for rebellion. In nations where poverty, inequality, corruption, or nepotism are increasing, rebellion is not unexpected. According to these assumptions one should expect rebellion when regimes deprive citizens of their customary forms of political influence or when the prospects for earning an adequate living rapidly decrease.

Although it is true that rebellions do not usually occur in paradise, the data on postcolonial rebellions in Southeast Asia do not provide clear support for the hypothesis that increasing levels of poverty, corruption, and inequality at the national level uniformly lead to armed unrest or revolution. Economic deterioration provides a set of preconditions or a social context in which other, primarily political, factors determine whether destitution leads to rebellion or merely to long-suffering acceptance of shared poverty.

The following figure provides a rough illustration of the weak direct relationship between GNP per capita at the national level and the presence of rebellion. Although GNP per capita is not a perfect indicator, it is the only one for which we have adequate time series data extending back to the 1950s. Furthermore, long-term trends in GNP per capita probably reflect the rural sector to the extent that a large proportion of GNP derives from that sector in a particular country.\(^6\)

\(^5\) Ted Gurr provides the most systematic exposition of why men participate in armed rebellion. One of his important points is that the potential for collective violence rises dramatically with "the intensity and scope of relative deprivation." For Gurr the most important factor, \textit{although by no means the only factor}, is a rising discrepancy between what people expect and what they perceive themselves to be capable of attaining. As defined by Gurr, relative deprivation is a psychological quality that is difficult to operationalize until after a rebellion has occurred. In dealing with ongoing events in the Third World, we usually lack data on perceptions and must rely on crude estimations of well-being such as GNP per capita, and, if we are fortunate, income distribution data. See Ted Robert Gurr, \textit{Why Men Rebel}, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970, pp. 8–154. See also two important earlier works: Neil J. Smelser, \textit{Theory of Collective Behavior}. New York: The Free Press, 1963; and Chalmers Johnson, \textit{Revolutionary Change}, Boston: Little, Brown, 1966.

\(^6\) Growth or decay of real GNP per capita is an inadequate statistic for judging the socioeconomic health of a society. However, this statistic and similar aggregate economic statistics have been used repeatedly to "confirm" hypotheses about J-curves and relative deprivation. The obvious reason for using such a crude indicator is that it is one of the few statistics on which we have relatively extensive time-series data.

In addition, observers remain confident that direction of change in GNP per capita should correlate relatively well with overall change in the economic structure except in cases where GNP per capita is inflated by a single export product, such as oil, which does not reflect growth in the remainder of the economy unless its proceeds are re-invested in the country. See Gurr, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 56–66, 83–91, on problems of operationalizing the concept of relative deprivation. Unfortunately for peasants in most developing countries, we lack the type of data on perceptions that would be necessary to test Gurr's hypotheses, and hence we are thrown back upon GNP per capita for lack of anything better.

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Table 1

Relationship Between Real GNP Per Capita and Rebellion in Southeast Asia
1945–1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stagnant or decreasing real GNP per capita</th>
<th>Increasing real GNP per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victorious rebellions</td>
<td>Vietnamese Communist movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained rebellions</td>
<td>Khmer Rouge (1982–84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khmer Rouge (1979–81)</td>
<td>KPNLF + Moulinaka (1982–84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPA (1980–84)</td>
<td>MNLF (1972–79)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MNLF (1980–84)</td>
<td>Karen National Liberation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan Independence Army (1962–74)</td>
<td>Burmese Communist party (1975–84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burmese Communist party (1948–74)</td>
<td>CPT (before 1981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed rebellions or no rebellions</td>
<td>Huks (1946–50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti–Khmer Rouge forces (1975–78)</td>
<td>Malaysian Communist party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of rebellion in Vietnam (1975–82)</td>
<td>(1957–60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRRI (1958–61)</td>
<td>Khmer Communists</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* See Appendix, p. 168.

Of the twenty-six rebellions (or phases of rebellions) there are only two clearcut insurgent victories, the Khmer Rouge (1970–75), and North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF), 1958–75. Poverty was increasing rapidly in Cambodia between 1970 and 1975 because of the anarchic impact of international intervention and civil war on the normally prosperous economy; however, the preceding decade had been marked by increasing economic well-being. In Sihanouk’s Cambodia, unemployment of urban intellectuals was increasing, and

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7 For purposes of analysis the victory of Communist forces in Laos is not differentiated from the Vietnamese outcome.

For this essay the anticolonial rebellions such as the Indonesian revolution and the Vietnamese war against the French have not been included. To have included anticolonial rebellions would have expanded our task beyond the scope of a short chapter and introduced confounding variables such as rebellion against foreigners and the peculiar political circumstances created by the Second World War.
there is speculation that land concentration may have been on the rise, particularly in Battambang province, but relative to the remainder of Southeast Asia, class differences were not apparent in the countryside. Except in the mind’s eye of the Khmer Rouge elite, before 1970 the economic preconditions for revolution were largely, although not entirely, absent from the Cambodian countryside.

In South Vietnam, GNP per capita was increasing in the period 1958–75 when insurgency and economic welfare flowered simultaneously. No one would deny the economic problems of South Vietnam—tenancy, uneven income distribution, illiteracy, and inflation; however, with substantial foreign inputs and significant domestic reforms, the Republic of Vietnam’s ability to deliver the economic goods increased in the period 1958–75. Although economic and social issues played a part, especially in the generation of rebellion in the early years of the conflict, the revolution in Vietnam certainly involved more than perceptions of relative deprivation.

At the other end of the spectrum in Figure 1 are “failed rebellions” or the absence of rebellion. What is curious, from the vantage point of economic determinism, is that failed rebellions are equally likely in situations of increasing and decreasing GNP per capita. Real income was declining in Pol Pot’s Kampuchea (1975–78), but there was no significant organized internal rebellion. Similarly in Vietnam after 1975 real income declined; however, with the exception of FULRO elements, there has been no sustained organized rebellion against the Communist government. Finally, the Dar’ul Islam rebellion in Indonesia disintegrated in 1961–62, a period marked by real decline in GNP per capita after a long period of increase; this particular combination of economic trends might have been expected to increase the attractiveness of Kartosoewirjo’s movement. And the rise of the Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI) occurred in a period of slowly rising GNP per capita, while its demise transpired at the beginning of a lengthy period of falling GNP per capita, ascending mortality rates, and descending food production per capita (at least compared with the late 1930s). The economic preconditions for civil war were present in Indonesia in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but the PRRI spawned a fairly anemic mass following in a rebellion that never really took hold in its three-year existence.

The largest set of rebellions in Southeast Asia involved those that were sustained for long time periods. Most of these, such as the Huks, the Dar’ul Islam, and...

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9 Charles Stuart Callison, Land-to-The-Tiller in the Mekong Delta, Berkeley: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, 1983.
10 To avoid cluttering Figure 1 I have left out several instances: the period of peace and slow growth in the Philippines (1955–68), in which there were no significant insurgencies, and the period of peace and prosperity in Malaysia when the Malaysia Communist party had ceased to be a serious threat.
the Communist Party of Thailand, had periods of substantial power and rapid growth before their ultimate demise. Several examples, such as the New People’s Army in the Philippines or the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and various insurrections in Burma are currently in progress. Two-thirds of the examples of sustained rebellion took place in periods of rising GNP per capita. The Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) rose and flowered (1965–81) in the greatest period of sustained economic growth that the kingdom of Thailand had ever witnessed and yet the CPT suffered a sudden demise (1982–83). Obviously it is difficult to credit either the rise or fall of the CPT to GNP figures at the national level. The Burmese insurgencies rose in a period of profound economic stagnation, 1948–74, and continued in an age of rising income (1975–84). In the Philippines, the seventies saw a doubling of the average real growth rate (compared with the peaceful sixties) but nonetheless we find both the Moro National Liberation Front (MLNF) and the NPA. The NPA during 1980–83 presents positive support for a directly economic theory of rebellion. The number of supporters of the NPA has been rising rapidly at the same time that economic growth has stalled and real GNP per capita has declined. As encouraging as the correlation might be in the case of the NPA, rebellion is a more complicated matter because the fortunes of the MNLF have been declining rapidly in the very same time period from a high water of 20,000 guerrillas in 1976–77 to approximately 6,000 in 1983. Economic preconditions, though important, do not a revolution make.

Why isn’t there a clear and direct correlation between national economic well-being and the lack of rebellion? First, national data on GNP per capita often disguise pockets of festering poverty. For instance, in 1978 when GNP per capita in Bangkok was more than $1,000 per annum, it was estimated at only slightly more than $200 per annum in the impoverished Northeast where the CPT was then growing. Similarly, Midanao (home of both the MNLF and a substantial concentration of NPA) has for centuries been a poor stepchild of Manila when it came to economic development. Second, rebellions are the work of armed minorities, usually small minorities. GNP per capita is a statistic applicable to the entire population of a country. For example, there are fifty-three million people in the Philippines whereas the NPA consisted of only 10,000–15,000 rebels (with at best twenty times as many inactive supporters). Hence, the direct correlation is low, almost by definition, because GNP per capita affects the whole population whereas less than one-half of one percent of the population actively or inactively supports the NPA. Third, there is a

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14 The average growth rate in real GNP per capita was 2 percent per annum from 1960 to 1969 in the Philippines. From 1970 to 1979 the rate averaged 4 percent. In 1980–81 it was stagnant and turned negative on a per capita basis in 1983.

15 The MNLF and NPA are very different movements. My only point here is that economic downturns have no necessary stimulating impact upon peasant rebellions. Other factors must exist to transform social dynamite into an actual explosion.
high ratio of assertion to hard evidence in the study of rebellions. There are few studies of the actual impact of poverty on rebellion at the local level whereas Western observers all too readily assume that rebellion must be a matter of poor peasants versus rich peasants or poor villages versus rich villages. When we have data on individuals or on whole social units that we know were caught up in a rebellion and compare these with individuals or social units who opposed the rebellion, we may find that the supposedly high correlation between rebellion and deprivation is, at best, weak. Fourth, rebellions have rather long histories whereas GNP/capita is a much more volatile index of transient trends. Per capita income, along with virtually every indicator of economic well-being, declined so rapidly under Pol Pot that the country was seriously depopulated, yet there was virtually no rebellion; in contrast, the years 1982–84 were probably years of rising GNP/capita in real terms in comparison to the disastrous years 1975–78 and the famine following the Vietnamese invasion; however, the number of troops fielded against the Heng Samrin government increased significantly during these relatively more bountiful years. Paraphrasing Trevor Roper’s comment on the economic causes of civil war in England in the seventeenth century, it is clear that the history of rebellions in postwar Southeast Asia is not a simple matter of “which little piggies had roast beef and which little piggies had none.”

Corruption and Inequality

While many will admit that levels of GNP per capita are unlikely to relate directly to rebellion, a more sophisticated corollary of economic determinism is found in the perception that corruption and unequal distribution of the fruits of a society can, in and of themselves, readily topple a sitting regime. The assumption is that although shared poverty has been tolerated for ages, economic growth accentuates income and social class differences and unless moderated by social legislation (progressive taxation and labor intensive development projects, etc.), the poor will become intensely aware of their inequality and rise up to strike down the oligarchs.

There are several flaws in this proposition. First, corruption is ubiquitous in Southeast Asia, tarnishing Communist and non-Communist governments alike, and the distribution of rebellion by no means fits the pattern of corruption in any straightforward fashion. In reading the daily reports from Hanoi, Vientiane, and Phnom Penh, one finds cadres repeatedly being criticized for corruption, and, as in virtually every Southeast Asian society, one can safely assume that these public campaigns against petty corruption represent only the tip of the iceberg. Medium and low-level corruption today in Vietnam is undoubtedly more frequent than in South Vietnam under Thieu and Ky, and access to highly valued state resources (consumer goods, medical treatment, higher education, and foreign travel) is clearly derived from one’s position in the Communist party or in the army. Goods are in short supply

and their availability is determined by political position. These practices probably result in more socially restricted access to these fruits of society than existed under prerevolutionary governments. Even though these practices have probably narrowed access to a shrinking pie, corruption and maldistribution have not led to rebellion. Just as corruption in Vietnam after 1975 has not proved to be a sufficiently potent rallying cry for large-scale opposition, stories of corruption in high places (whether true or false) abound about the governments of Soekarno, Suharto, Marcos, and Ne Win, but without direct discernible impact on the prospects for peasant rebellions. Under Soekarno there were indeed rebellions, but corruption was not the major issue; and although corruption under Suharto’s New Order remains widespread, rebellion, with the exception of Timor, is absent. Marcos and Ne Win both faced chronic rebellions but no one points to personal corruption as the sole and sufficient explanation for these rebellions.

One reason why corruption, even obvious levels of corruption, in both Communist and non-Communist societies fails to ignite rebellion, is that cultures differ. At least in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, and the Philippines vibrant forms of traditional social structure still exist, which view positively the social and economic favoritism so often described as corruption by the Western press. In the far-flung patron-client systems of Southeast Asia, unequal distribution of the fruits of growth is not necessarily perceived as unjust. So long as benefits are distributed to subordinate oligarchs for subsequent redistribution downward through their independent networks of followers, the system may not be weakened significantly by these extra-legal exchanges. The greatest peril to regimes founded on patron-client systems is not what Westerns call corruption but the probability that as a particular elite expands through economic growth, corruption may not be sufficiently widespread to carry out its redistributive and social-welfare functions. If power is concentrated to exclude whole networks of patrons and clients, such as after the declaration of martial law in the Philippines, the ruling powers may create enduring elite antagonisms, which are dangerous because of the capacity of deprived patrons for manpower mobilization. The enduring cultural legitimacy of patron-client systems in most of Southeast Asia may be one reason why examples of corruption are more likely to excite the visiting correspondent than they are to cause genuine anger among the general population. Excitement about corruption is usually the province of the university-educated whereas many peasants still perceive wealth as flowing almost naturally to those with political power. Entrepreneurs, who are often ethnically Chinese, have always insured their ability to do business by enriching political powerholders, thereby creating

17 Many definitions of corruption are ethnocentric. For example, if a businessman in Southeast Asia provides financial backing to a politician to insure that a law will not be applied to him, Western observers classify this as corruption. However, if a Washington lobbyist expends funds to create a loophole to insure that a law will not apply to an industry, this is merely interest-group politics. In both instances money has been used to create selective enforcement. In Washington legal niceties are maintained by altering the law, whereas in the Southeast Asian example the approach is made directly to the regulators without involvement in the legislative process. The methods are different, although the practical outcome may be identical; however, one will be condemned as corruption while the other tends to be shrugged off as politics as usual.
a system of informal taxation through which businessmen contribute to the wealth of particular leaders and their followers.

Another assumption concerning unrest in the Third World is that rising economic and social inequality leads to rebellion. But a substantial increase in social and economic inequality is probably an inevitable part of the process of capital formation that underpins economic growth. In the world of rapid economic growth, there is no free lunch. Most capital formation, of necessity, must be domestic capital formation. In peasant societies, the onset of rapid growth usually shifts wealth away from the poorest, least efficient peasants, who lose their land and become laborers. In addition, the gap in wealth between capital city and countryside grows. Furthermore, there is a distressing tendency for scholars and journalists of the West to have a blind eye for progress at the village level. Just because poverty remains apparent in the 1980s does not mean that substantial progress has not been made in the eyes of villagers as a result of the quickening pace of agricultural economic life. Just because tenancy and landlessness are increasing does not mean that tenants and landless laborers are necessarily more disadvantaged than ever before. Although this contradicts the assumptions of many, a landless laborer may, in a rising labor market, be better off than his marginal landholder father. Likewise, it is not the existence of tenancy but the terms of tenancy relative to other opportunities that determine the economic equation. Finally, the gap between the rich and the poor, between the city and the countryside, are also evident in Chinese and Soviet development history. For instance, in the Soviet Union rapid capital formation by the state was engineered through brutal collectivization, which subordinated all peasants, not just rich and middle peasants, to the demands of rapid industrialization.

The importance of inequality to generating rebellions depends upon the basic value assumptions present in a particular culture. If a particular political culture has as its ideal equality of opportunity for all, scorns the concepts of an aristocracy, and derogates inherited differences in social, economic, and political power and status, then the existence of gross inequality will produce extensive political alienation. If, however, a culture has never accepted equality as an absolute ideal and has emphasized that society is inherently hierarchic and that all men are created unequal, lack of equality per se is not cause for widespread political alienation. In such a culture social and economic inequality would not translate into a burning sense of social justice.

Much of traditional Southeast Asia, animated by the doctrines of Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism, has never assumed that all men are created equal. Even within the Islamic and Christian areas, especially at the rural level, a hierarchic world view continues to predominate as it has since before Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and

18 See Richard Critchfield, Villages, New York: Anchor Press, 1981, pp. 162–185. With regard to rural Java his work pointed out what academics were reluctant to accept: that the green revolution was working, that it was absorbing more labor, and that it was bringing greater prosperity to village Java. See Ansil Ramsay, “Explaining Landlessness in Central Thailand,” Journal of Developing Areas, April 1985, for empirical evidence that the number of landless laborers is expanding because new technologies have increased the demand for agricultural labor and have raised the real wages of agricultural laborers. For a formal exposition of the tendency of outsiders to misperceive economic change among peasants, see Samuel L. Popkin, The Rational Peasant, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.
Christianity touched Southeast Asia's shores. This social view is now passing, but the pace with which it expires is both slow and selective. Among urban intellectuals and much of the ruling class, this hierarchic view has already begun to fade; however, in the villages, the force of the traditional social ideal retains vitality. The economic dualism of colonial society has to some extent been replaced by an ideological dualism in which the demands for popular participation are strongly felt in the cities, especially among the educated elite, whereas the countryside supplies the pre-participatory backbone for authoritarian governments.

The urban intellectuals resonate familiar themes such as colonialism, feudalism, and economic dependency, and alienated middle class intellectuals have provided the leadership cadres for the most important rebellions in the history of Southeast Asia. However, these ideological themes are chiefly important to urban, middle-class followers and to the international press which will convey the revolution's image to the world. By and large it is only after peasants have been recruited into the revolution and consciously taught a new set of beliefs that they reject hierarchy in favor of equality and the patron-client system in favor of the new party structure.\footnote{See Paul Berman's description of the way in which traditional means were used to bring individuals into the Vietnamese revolution, a movement where they were subsequently transformed through intensive political indoctrination into new believers in egalitarianism, atheism, and communism (Paul Berman, \textit{Revolutionary Organization}, Lexington: D.C. Heath & Co., 1974; and Douglas Pike, \textit{Vietcong}, Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1966.)}

\textbf{Religiosity and Ethnicity}

Religious and ethnic group violence were two forces whose disintegrative potential was greatly feared by the first generation of nationalist leaders. Much effort during the first generation after independence was expended in devising overarching symbols capable of attracting religiously and ethnically heterogeneous followings to the same mass organizations. The symbol-wielding of Soekarno in Indonesia in the 1950s and the 1960s was aimed at knitting together into a single symbolic entity groups with diverse ethnic and religious beliefs.

As indicated in Figure 2, fear of the disintegrative power of religion was somewhat overstated; in Southeast Asia, at least, religion has not been nearly as potent a source of rebellion as some might have predicted. Only two of the sustained rebellions were primarily religious, the Dar'ul Islam in Indonesia and the Moro National Liberation Front in the Philippines. In both instances, Islamic fundamentalism and the desire to cast off rule by infidels were primary motivations. These rebellions have been distinguished by their endurance and ferocity, but the Dar'ul Islam has long since failed and the MNLF is presently fading from the scene. In Burma, both the Karen and the Kachin rebellions are primarily ethnic in origin; however, the declaration of Buddhism as the state religion in the 1960s undoubtedly contributed to the alienation of large numbers of Christians within these groups.
Most sustained rebellions as well as the victorious insurgencies in Indochina were either devoid of religious appeal or explicitly atheistic. However, only two of the nonreligiously based rebellions ultimately succeeded. The recruitment base of the Indonesian and Malay Communist parties was probably constrained by their rejection or perceived rejection of Islam. Likewise, the CRT, the Huks, and the fledgling resistance in Vietnam after 1975 were incapable of mobilizing significant followings, and perhaps the absence of religious symbolism accounts in part for their failure.

Why has religion not been a more apt instrument of revolution in modern Southeast Asia? First, the nation states carved out by European colonialism were multireligious. Islamic fundamentalism might appeal to Malays, but an Islamic revolution would almost assuredly alienate the large Indian and Chinese minorities. Therefore a truly nationwide political movement could not be based solely on Islamic symbolism. The same proved true in Indonesia where Islamic forces could not dominate the island of Java because strictly orthodox Moslems were a minority among more syncretic believers who intermingled Hindu and animist with Islamic beliefs.

Second, Islamic rebellions characteristically are traditional, that is, they tend to lack modern organizational structures capable of transforming ever larger numbers of potential followers into true revolutionaries. For example, the Dar’ul Islam rebellion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Appeal</th>
<th>High appeal</th>
<th>Low appeal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rebellions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustained</td>
<td>DI (1948–60)</td>
<td>Khmer Rouge (1975–83)</td>
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<tr>
<td>rebellions</td>
<td>MNLF (1972–84)</td>
<td>NPA (1969–83)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karen National Liberation Army</td>
<td>Huks (1946–50)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(1949–84)</td>
<td>CPT (1965–81)</td>
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<td>Malaysian CP (1948–56)</td>
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<td>KPNLF + Moulinaka (1979–84)</td>
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<td>Shan Independence Army (1962–84)</td>
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<tr>
<td>rebellions</td>
<td>PRRI (1958–61)</td>
<td>Absence of rebellion in Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or no</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1975–84)</td>
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<td>rebellions</td>
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<td>CPT (1982–84)</td>
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</table>
was fought to establish an Islamic theocracy which would, presumably, have been ruled under a strict interpretation of the Shariat Islam (Islamic law). Prayer five times per day and strict monotheism, according to the rebellion’s formal ideology, would have been required of all persons professing to be Moslems. This would have placed those believing in multiple spirits and deities in a profoundly uncomfortable position. And yet, when I examined the religious beliefs of those who had fought for years to establish an Islamic state, I discovered the movement was staffed by many who professed distinctly unorthodox and syncretic beliefs. Nominal Moslems and outright syncretists fought for the Islamic state, and the coalition opposing them was similarly heterogeneous in its religious attitudes. One of the major differences between a traditional and modern rebellion is that a modern rebellion creates more monolithic adherence to a single set of ideals. Modern political organizations are held together by rewards and common belief structures whereas traditional rebellions cohere less permanently because they are held together by kinship, fictive kinship, and physical coercion, all of which are much more vulnerable to the fortunes of war. In a modern rebellion, such as the PRG in Vietnam or perhaps the NPA in the Philippines, the death or surrender of a single leader does not result in all his followers abandoning the rebellion. In contrast, religious rebellions are more vulnerable to rapid disintegration because they are more traditional.

Both ethnic and religious characteristics supply potential means for attracting recruits to rebellion. However, in recent Southeast Asian history, ethnic differences have been distinctly more powerful for raising insurrections. Two-thirds of the sustained rebellions have utilized ethnic appeals as a critical motivating attraction. The appeal of the Malay and Thai Communist parties was restricted almost entirely to minority ethnic groups. In both instances, these Communist movements appealed successfully to minorities but were unable to organize the much larger Malay and Thai ethnic groups.

Burma’s postwar era supplies a plethora of complicated, ethnically based rebellions. During the colonial period the highland minorities had been governed separately and indirectly. Further, the Karens and the Kachins played exceptional roles, as Force 136 and Detachment 107, in the British effort to oust the Japanese from Burma during World War II. Also, at independence, minority ethnic groups dominated the army in contrast to Burman dominance of the polity. Within weeks of independence the new government faced multiple, ethnically based rebellions. At one point in 1948 the rebellions controlled thirty-one major cities and towns and reached within striking distance of Rangoon. To this day various ethnically based rebel groups along with the Burmese Communist party control approximately half of Burma’s territory and 10-20 percent of its population. The most important of the rebellions is the Karen National Liberation Army. The eleven groups making up the Karen are

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20 Jackson, Traditional Authority, Islam, and Rebellion, pp. 121–128.
the largest minority in Burma, comprising approximately 10 percent of the population. Missionary activities resulted in extensive conversions to Christianity among the Karen during the colonial era. Having been subjected to massacres by the Burman majority during the Japanese occupation and fearing Burman domination, the Karens have been in rebellion since 1948. The movement has steadfastly resisted successive governments, military drives, and amnesty programs and continues to maintain 5,000-7,000 troops in the field.

The Shan rebellion in the northern and eastern regions of Burma had its roots in resistance to domination by ethnic Burmans. Although the Shan, like the Burman lowlanders, cultivate wet rice and practice Theravada Buddhism, the Shan have been in rebellion for more than twenty years. The Shans number approximately 1.5 million and speak their own dialect, which is related to Thai. The rebellion was nurtured by the Burmese government’s decision not to recognize the Shan state’s right to secession from the Union of Burma, a right they thought had been protected by the 1947 agreements negotiated among the various ethnic groups by Aung San in 1947. When the army took power for the second time in 1962, this event propelled the Shan into open rebellion. Although the Burmese army has mounted sustained operations against the Shans during the past twenty years, the rebellion shows few signs of waning. This is at least in part because the Shans have found opium smuggling to be an ideal means for financing their insurrection.

The Burmese Communist party (BCP) fields 15,000-20,000 soldiers. Interestingly, it began as a movement to seize control of the Burman political apparatus. However, when the Chinese cultural revolution spilled over into the Burmese Communist party, fratricide broke out and the original BCP, which had been in rebellion since 1948, was largely destroyed. Concurrently, some of the most important cadres of the original BCP had been drawn into the Rangoon government to build the Burmese Way to Socialism under Ne Win after the 1962 coup. From 1967 onward a new group of Communist leaders rose to power within the BCP and began to base their appeal on ethnicity rather than entirely on Marxist-Leninist ideology. The party was increasingly restricted to the Sino-Burman border area, especially in the Shan state, and as support from the PRC dwindled after the death of Mao, opium became the BCP’s most important source of materiel. In effect, the BCP from the late 1960s onward represents the retraditionalization of a Marxist movement, probably because it found ethnicity to be a more apt organizing principle than the foreign ideology of Marxism.

Figure 3 shows that ethnicity has not supplied a ready road to victory, even though it has been the basis for most sustained rebellions in postcolonial Southeast Asia. Ten instances of major sustained rebellions have emphasized ethno-linguistic appeals as an important source of recruitment. The number of instances could easily be swelled if the inquiry were expanded to include other rebellions such as FULRO in Vietnam, the Ambonese rebellion in Indonesia, and the small-scale insurgency in New Guinea, among others.

Figure 3

Relationship Between Ethnic Appeal and Rebellion*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Appeal</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victorious rebellions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Khmer Rouge (1970–75)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Vietnamese Communists (1958–75)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustained rebellions</td>
<td>Malaysian CP (1948–56)</td>
<td>DI (1948–60)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MNLF (1972–84)</td>
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<td>Khmer Rouge (1975–84)</td>
<td>Huks (1946–50)</td>
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<td>CPT (1965–81)</td>
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<td>KPNLF + Moulinaka (1979–84)</td>
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<td>Karen National Liberation Army (1949–84)</td>
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<td>Shan State Army (1962–84)</td>
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<td>Kachin Independence Army (1958–84)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Burmese Communist party (1968–84)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed rebellions or no rebellions</td>
<td>Malaysian CP (1957–60)</td>
<td>DI (1961–62)</td>
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<td>PRRI (1958–61)</td>
<td>Huks (1951–54)</td>
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<td>Anti-Communist resistance in Vietnam (1975–83)</td>
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<td>PKI (1950–65)</td>
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</table>

* It remains difficult to distinguish between rebellions that are based on ethnic sentiments and those that are based on nationalist appeals. Thus the Shans are ethno-nationalistic, and the Khmer Rouge, KPNLF, and the Moulinaka also seek self-rule by Khmers rather than de facto rule by the Vietnamese.

As indicated, none of these rebellions has yet been successful. The multiethnic nature of the states carved out by the colonial powers has endured the trials of the postwar era in Southeast Asia, and this is likely to continue. The multiethnic nature of the postcolonial states in Southeast Asia seems to have precluded successful rebellions by the Karens, Kachins, and Shans in Burma, the Moros in the Philippines, or any single ethnic group in Indonesia. No single minority group has yet been able to generate the politico-military power necessary for victory against an established central government. Ethnicity is an important precondition for rebellion, but it is unlikely to be able to bring a revolutionary movement to victory unless it can transcend primordial appeals and develop a wider constituency.
IGNITION FACTORS AND REBELLION

Rebellions are more complex than income distributions, corruption, and ethnic and religious groupings. If these preconditions were both necessary and sufficient causes, virtually the entire Third World would be constantly in flames because these preconditions are commonplace. What transforms common social tinder into the fire of rebellion are ignition factors. While we look to economics and sociology for preconditions, it is politics that provides the spark. To understand why rebellions break out in some areas but not in others, we must look to leadership factors, local grievances, ideology and organization, and to external support in money, men, and materiel.

Leadership

The most important people in peasant rebellions are usually not peasants. Peasant rebellions are led by nonpeasants, drawn from the ranks of the lower middle and professional classes. Astute leadership is vital to any rebellion. Without a leadership cadre there will be no ideology, that is, no compelling vision, be it a return to the millennial past or a bold advance to a new social order; there can be no political religion without high priests. Most rebellions are dependent upon charismatic personalities or upon personalities of sufficient prestige to supply a rallying point for an insurrection. Where would the Dar'ul Islam have been without Kartosoewirjo, the Huks without Taruc, the Khmer Rouge without Sihanouk (1970–75), the Mouлина-ka without Sihanouk (1979–84)?—probably nowhere. In Communist rebellions the importance of individual leaders is often less apparent; the ideology, organizational paradigm, and concept of collective leadership can compensate for a paucity of exciting leadership. One reason for the persistence of Communist revolts is that they are less dependent than traditional rebellions on particular leaders; for instance, the NPA in the Philippines marches on although most of its original leaders are either dead or in prison. Similarly the Malay and Thai Communist parties have been less dependent upon the heroic stature of particular leaders.

Political observers often share a regrettable tendency to underestimate the importance of the interpersonal struggle for power as a motivation for igniting a rebellion. Political rebellions, after all, are struggles to change who gets the most of what is worth having in a society. The most important initiating factor, that probably sparks more rebellions than any other, is the competition for power among middle-class or lower-middle-class elites. Mao was correct when he said that revolution is not a dinner party, but what he failed to say was that revolutions are, among other things, struggles to decide who will eat at the high table.

The Indonesian civil war of 1956–61 was at least as much an essay on interpersonal political rivalry as it was a rebellion against corruption, communism, irreligion, and the grotesque inefficiency of the Jakarta government. Without preconditions there would have been no rebellion, but without the desire of important politicians and generals to oust Bung Karno there likewise would have been no
rebellion. When one looks beyond the economic, political, and religious pre-
conditions (which had long existed and which, in several instances, still exist), the
striking thing is that 10,000-15,000 loyal soldiers of the Indonesian army joined the
PRRI rebellion, not for deeply felt economic or sociological causes, but because they
followed their commanders who wanted power.

The on-again, off-again civil war extended from Colonel Zulkifli Lubis’
November 1956 attempt to oust the central government, through the whole series of
regional coups and countercoups, to the declaration of the PRRI on February 15,
1958, to the successful reassertion of central government authority through the use of
armed force. There were coups within coups which had more to do with the pursuit of
personal power by competing entourages than with perceived discontent, anti-
communism, or devotion to Indonesian nationalism. For example, in Medan in North
Sumatra, Colonel Simbolon, a hero of the revolution against the Dutch and long-time
commander of the North Sumatra military district, carried out a bloodless coup on
December 22, 1956, only to be ousted by his “loyal” second-in-command, Colonel
Gintings, five days later. A year later Gintings was deposed by his junior officers to
make way for Simbolon who was then redeposed by Gintings. As Willard Hanna
reported with masterful understatement, “The lines of loyalty within the Medan
command, originally a stronghold of insurrectionist sentiment, were confused.”24

The point here is not that rebellions and revolutions are devoid of underlying
economic preconditions or subsequent ideological rationales, but that the dynamic of
interpersonal politics is often the key to transforming discontent into actual rebellion.
Leaders, charismatic or otherwise, strike the first blow and ignite the rebellion. In
postcolonial Southeast Asia the drive for personal power has often been a critical
factor influencing individual leaders to make historic decisions. No model of rebel-
lions that ignores personal desire for power, status, and wealth, particularly on the
part of the leadership, can adequately explain rebellion and revolution.

Local Politics

The issues for which men are initially attracted to rebellion are often local and
parochial. When we ask why did village X join a rebellion, the answer often has little
to do with the rhetoric of the rebellion’s leaders. Instead, issues for which peasants
will die are usually intensely local, and often these transpire from local incidents
which subsequently may even mobilize whole villages. Traditional authority and
patron-client networks are found throughout rural Southeast Asia, and these local
leadership factors, in combination with everpresent preconditions, are vital to the
ignition of rebellion. Mistreatment or execution of a particularly well-respected local
leader or religious teacher in time of social and economic strain can easily result in the

24 Willard Hanna, “The Rebel Cause,” Bung Karna’s Indonesia, New York: American Field Services
Staff, 1961, p. 8. On the chaos of the civil war, see articles by Hanna in the same volume, particularly
“The Economics of Incongruity” and “The Indecision of the Military.” For additional material on the
PRRI and other Indonesian rebellions, see H. Feith and D. Lev, “The End of the Indonesian Rebellion,”
paramilitary mobilization of an initial core of several hundred fighters for a rebellion. Whole groups, bound together by particular subleaders, can be committed to an insurrection before the rebellion has either a name or a formal set of ideological positions. Furthermore, individuals may join insurrections because of personal injustices suffered by family members at the hands of government soldiers or administrators. In any case, the initial impetus is often personal rather than national. The stature of local rebel leaders and the countervailing stature of leaders supporting the government or remaining neutral are vital especially for traditional rebellions based either on religious or ethnic goals. Local, interpersonal politics, links of personal loyalty spanning generations, and local events all assume great importance to small group and individual decision-making regarding recruitment to rebellion. The degree to which decisions of such great moment often turn on personal considerations is reflected in the confession to Indonesian military authorities given by a village leader, Sjarif Abdullah, who mobilized several hundred men and led them in the Dar’ul Islam rebellion against the government from 1948 to 1961.

In the beginning we fought against the oppressors for the sake of the Republic of Indonesia proclaimed on August 17, 1945. Our Hizbullah organization had become part of a TNI fighting regiment. After the first clash we were still part of the TNI Battalion No. 24, 4th Brigade, and we were still willing and able to fight to the death against the colonial army for the sake of the Republic of Indonesia. We were full of loyalty to the state and country.

Several grievous acts were committed by the TNI stationed in the regions of Garut and Sumedang. Several Islamic leaders were kidnapped and executed without trial by the TNI. Among these remember the cases of Kijaji (Kiyayi) Toha and his followers from Sumedang, Saudara Endang, the leader of the Sabilillah of the subdistrict of Limbangan, and Kijaji Sadja of Sukaradja and Garut.

After this our trust in the TNI and other Republican institutions became less and we even had the improper suspicion that the TNI at that time was only a tool and mask of the PKI. The facts indeed showed this, and because of this, the feeling of loyalty of friends in Islam began growing in our hearts. Indeed the grievous occurrences mentioned above were the cause of civil war that started in the subdistrict of Limbangan. The anger of the Ummat Islam in the region of Limbangan, because of the loss of their bapak (literally father or leader) who was very much loved by them [emphasis added], was at the time a flood which could not be held back. With the help of the Sabilillah group of Oni from Tasikmalaja they rose as one man and fought against the TNI.

The remainder of the confession does not mention any religious beliefs that might have motivated Sjarif Abdullah to join the Dar’ul Islam. Other than mentioning anti-Dutch nationalism, the entire confession remains remarkably silent on the


subject of ideology and religious values. Rather than using his confession to articulate an ideological or religious defense for his actions, Sjarif Abdullah described his motivations in intensely personal terms. The death of a “bapak who was very much loved” is the central point offered to explain his behavior and the actions of others.

Key traditional authority figures once-martyred become twice-powerful as means for recruiting and sustaining local rebellion. Often the key to suppressing rebellion is in providing local leaders with a graceful and respectful means of surrendering—with amnesty and land or jobs as inducements for bringing diehard followers down from the mountain tops or out of the jungle. Alternately, such traditional rebellions tend to collapse with the capture or deaths of the few key leaders who are the critical synapses in the welter of interpersonal loyalties that hold together a particular rebel band or even an entire rebellion.

Ideology and Organization

The politics of rebellion involves more than leadership, be it local or national. Obviously organizations, images, and ideologies, descending from the national level, have impact on rural rebels. The function of ideology in a rebellion is to provide leaders and subleaders with “frameworks of consciousness” through which they can interpret their world and act on their discontents. A rebellion’s ideology supplies the blueprint for the future, more just society to be created after the revolution, the ideal state toward which the violence of revolution is dedicated. Every rebellion, be it traditional or modern, must have a set of formal ideological guideposts; otherwise the rebellion will dissolve into a series of armed movements that, for lack of a common cause, will be perceived as little more than banditry.

Not all ideologies are equally effective. The victorious rebellions in the history of postcolonial Southeast Asia have all hewed to a Marxist-Leninist interpretation of social, economic, and political development. However, it is important to keep this finding in perspective. Not all Communist rebellions win; in fact the number of Communist movements that have failed has been larger, namely, the Huks in the Philippines, the PKI in Indonesia, the Communist party of Thailand, and the Communist insurgents in Malaysia. In Southeast Asia it is clear that Communist ideology is not omnipotent.

There are two functions that must be served by the ideology of a truly successful rebellion. The ideology must be inclusive rather than exclusive, manifesting a willingness to bring an ever wider range of groups into the fold of the revolution. In addition, a successful rebellion’s ideology must be marketable in the international arena, particularly among intellectuals and in the mass media.

One of the greatest inhibiting factors for Islamic rebellions in Southeast Asia has been their tendency to abjure united-front tactics in favor of progressively more restrictive definitions of the requirements of orthodox belief and practice. A sharply

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delimited definition of the ummat Islam (community of Islam) facilitates recruitment and maintenance of an initial vital core for the rebellion, but exclusivity inhibits a systematic approach to wider groupings that could transform the rebellion from a small minority into a larger-scale undertaking. In contrast, one of the crucial assets of the ideologies of the Vietnamese and Kampuchean Communist movements before they came to power was their emphasis on united-front tactics. Even though both rebellions aimed at revolutionizing their societies by ousting the old bureaucratic-military elites and displacing them completely, both rebellions constantly reiterated the theme that there was a place in the revolutionary future for middle peasants, patriotic entrepreneurs, and virtually all political and bureaucratic functionaries. Given the scope and intensity of the purge that followed the capture of Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975, it is sobering to remember that the Khmer Rouge frequently spoke of a united-front approach. Many Cambodians, as well as much of the Western press, accepted this Khmer Rouge propaganda as truth.

Internally, we hold the great unity of the entire people irrespective of social classes, political tendencies, religious beliefs and regardless of their past—except for the seven traitors Lon Nol, Sirik Matak, Son Ngoc Thanh, Cheng Heng, In Tam, Lon Boret, and Sosthene Fernandez.29

Under the most favorable circumstances of the Cambodia revolution which has reached its final stage of victory, the Cambodian nation and people, the NUFC, RGNUC, and CPNLAF have decided to pardon low or high ranking fraternal government employees from all the services, all categories of officers, servicemen, politicians and personalities and all small or high-level members of all agencies of the traitors' regime. Only the seven traitorous chieftains are to be punished by our Cambodian nation and people, our NUFC, RGNU and CPNLAF for their extremely antinational, archfascist and archdecadent crimes. [emphasis added]30

The international propaganda function of an ideology is probably equal in importance to its domestic function of rallying leaders to join the rebellion. To be successful in gaining international support, the ideology must be egalitarian (no matter how hierarchical and even regressive the revolutionary organization may, in fact, be); it must condemn corruption in principle (no matter what the practice); it must embrace tolerance and the cause of human rights (no matter how callous its operatives may be); it must possess a formal constitution guaranteeing all freedoms (regardless of the violations of these practices during the rebellion); and it must be the embodiment of the unified nation (even if its ultimate aim is the subjugation of one portion of the nation to rule by another). In short, an effective ideology must appeal to the search for human perfection because by doing so, the loftiness of the movement's goals can be used as a rationale for its shortcomings. A movement that projects an ideology of egalitarianism, honesty, tolerance, constitutionalism, and nationalism will be excused from even glaring transgressions because of the obviously far greater

nobility of its vision of the future, especially when compared by intellectuals and news reporters with the uninspiring administrative and military goals of the government under attack. In short, a correctly orchestrated ideology should have a distinct advantage over an established government in the battle for international approval fought in the foreign mass media.31

Finally, the function of ideology during a rebellion is to provide a set of goals, and these must be attractive to at least a substantial minority within the countryside. Successful rebellions differ from elections because armed, disciplined minorities rather than complacent majorities win the day. A successful rebellion’s ideology will typically promise to redistribute wealth, status, and political power to its active supporters once victory is achieved. Even though the mass of soldiers fighting for the rebellion may only dimly understand its complex ideology, they will readily perceive their personal stake in such slogans as “land to the tiller.”

In addition to a set of believable goals, a successful rebellion requires an organization to provide rewards (usually rank and status), punishments (usually direct coercion), and a culturally appropriate sense of belonging or group identity.32 The purpose of the organization is to create a new authority structure that will be compelling to large numbers of individuals by providing rewards, punishments, and a psychological security in combination with traditional and modern sources of loyalty such as traditional authority and ideology.

A primary function of any revolutionary organization is to supply rewards. In South Vietnam, one of the fundamental attractions of the NLF was that it opened up an avenue for social and economic advancement in the army and revolutionary bureaucracy that was not available under the Saigon government because villagers without advanced education could not become officers or hold significant rank in the bureaucracy. Similarly, the Dar’ul Islam in West Java appealed in part to the barisan sakit hati (the legion of the sick at heart) who felt that the fruits of the Indonesian revolution against the Dutch had been denied to them. The Dar’ul Islam had both civil and military structures which supplied status, and sometimes access to wealth, for those who felt cheated after the anticolonial revolution had ended.

Coercion is the lifeblood of any rebellion. Regardless of the ideology of the particular rebellion, direct violence will be applied to representatives of the central government, those supporting the government, and even to those who attempt to remain neutral. A commonplace of both insurgency and counterinsurgency is the assassination of prominent local notables such as village headmen or subdistrict representatives by the central government (for siding with the rebels) or by the rebels (for siding with the central government). One of the villages I studied, situated in the heartland of the Dar’ul Islam rebellion, had three headmen killed in a decade through summary execution by either the Indonesian army or the rebels.33 Likewise, a favored

31 On the importance of the mass media’s portrayal of events in a revolutionary war, see Peter Braestrup, *The Big Story*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1977.
32 See Berman, op. cit., pp. 79–117.
Communist revolutionary tactic is immobilizing the village social structure by executing not only the hamlet chief but also the most prominent traditional authority figures or patrons. In this way the traditional bonds connecting the haves with the have-nots in a system of reciprocal duties and responsibilities can be immobilized thereby making available for horizontal recruitment to the new revolutionary authority structure individuals whose families for generations had been imbedded in the vertical, patron-client structure of traditional village authority.

One of the most frequently neglected functions of an insurrectionary organization is providing a culturally appropriate means for satisfying personal security needs. Regardless of the formal ideology propounded by the movement's intelligensia, revolutionary organizations in Southeast Asia continue to satisfy certain traditional psychological needs for the rank and file. Although the particular needs satisfied will vary with the political culture, successful revolutionary organizations in Southeast Asia will (a) satisfy traditional longings for dependency, (b) integrate the individual into a group thereby providing a new personal and political identity, and (c) provide an institutional mechanism for avoiding conflict and enhancing at least a formal sense of harmony. In all these instances, the satisfaction of personal psychological needs provides an important motivation for joining and remaining part of a rebellion. Beyond issues such as poverty, corruption, inequality, religion, and ethnicity, there are personal psychological aspirations that can be satisfied by affiliation with a rebellion. I suspect that for many individuals satisfaction of the need for dependency and the establishment of a more satisfying personal identity may be among the most important reasons for joining a rebellion.

One of the most important functions of a revolutionary organization is transforming raw individual recruits into dedicated fighters. In some instances in Southeast Asia, individuals join a rebellion as a result of the decision of their patrons; in others, the decisive force may be the opportunity for social mobility; while in other instances, an individual may initially enter the ranks of the rebellion as a result of being captured or kidnapped. One distinguishing characteristic of a successful rebellion is the degree of emphasis placed on the tutorial function by the organization. For instance, the People's Liberation Armed Forces in Vietnam in the early 1960s recruited from much the same social clay as the South Vietnamese army, but the emphasis on transforming soldiers into true believers was much greater among the Communist guerrilla forces. In contrast, the Dar’ul Islam, even with its ideology of fundamentalist Islam, did not expend substantial organizational resources on indoctrinating the rank and file to sharpen the intensity of their devotion to the cause. Modern rebellions utilize significant resources to teach the rank and file the goals of the revolution and by and large such movements have greater operational flexibility and increased staying power as a result. Quality of instruction among the rank and file may have as much, if not more, to do with sustaining rebellion than objective

34 Berman, op. cit., pp. 31-47.
economic or political conditions within the particular country. For instance, the Khmer Rouge mounted the most radical collectivization program ever witnessed, but they did so in a rural society that had previously been wealthy by Southeast Asian standards and where few class distinctions had existed in the countryside. There was relatively sparse social tinder available, but this did not prevent the Khmer Rouge from revolutionizing the society. Social perceptions are formed through a learning process and may serve as a basis for social action even if these perceptions are at variance with reality. Therefore organization, ideology, and local and national leadership factors are critical to transforming discontent into rebellion and sustaining it.

External Assistance and Sanctuaries

In the late 1960s it was debated whether the forces fighting against South Vietnam were home grown or imported and directed from the North. This controversy has now been laid to rest by the victorious Northerners who have detailed the substantial and explicit role played by the North in initiating and sustaining the rebellion in the South from its infancy as a guerrilla movement to its final victory as a heavily armed conventional army.

In similar fashion, PAVN played an absolutely vital role in shielding the Khmer Rouge, in its infancy, from the army of Lon Nol. Weapons, money, and men flowed into the movement in 1970–72 despite the deep-seated anti-Vietnamese sentiments of the Khmer Rouge leadership. Regardless of the protestations of Radio Phnom Penh, the revolution that created Democratic Kampuchea had significant external backing.

Pol Pot’s regime ranks as one of history’s most brutal and least successful; few regimes in history have given more plentiful reasons for being deserted by their people. Political slaughter, starvation, epidemics, and total social reorganization accounted for the deaths of up to 20 percent of the total population. When Pol Pot was driven from Phnom Penh, the Khmer Rouge should have disappeared; however, with sanctuaries in the Cardamon Mountains and along the Thai border, and with substantial assistance in money and materiel from China, the Khmer Rouge continues to thwart the Vietnamese occupation army of 180,000 men. Similarly, the Khmer anti-Communist political factions that had been entirely anemic during 1975–78 have grown to substantial numbers since beginning to receive outside assistance.


Vietnam’s occupation has stirred Khmer nationalism, and ethnic antipathy toward the Vietnamese has been given a great stimulant. However, the rising strength of the Khmer Rouge in 1983–84 indicates the potency of outside resources. With a plethora of Chinese aid the Khmer Rouge are the most attractive resistance organization because they, unlike the KPNLF and Moulinaka, can offer a serious Khmer recruit the food, weapons, and other resources necessary to do the job.
On the other side of the coin, the Communist party of Thailand lost its sanctuaries in Laos and Cambodia after 1978 and rapidly lost its support from China when Beijing chose to give higher priority to government-to-government relations with Bangkok.\(^3^9\) The results began to show in 1979, and the disintegration of the pro-Chinese CPT was nearly complete by mid-1983.\(^4^0\) According to one captured CPT administrative official, the reason why the insurgency failed was simple. "Without Chinese assistance their own resources were insufficient to the task" and the guerrillas were forced to extract resources from the villagers thereby blunting the Robin Hood image that all guerrillas seek.\(^4^1\) Similarly, the severance of external aid from Libya to the Moro National Liberation Front after the Tripoli Accord of 1976 coincided with the beginning of a sharp downturn in the fortunes of the MNLF.

This is not to say that outside assistance always works. Reliance on China for external assistance alienated the Malay and Thai majority ethnic groups from their respective Communist parties. Likewise, American covert assistance to the ill-fated PRRI rebellion shows that effective external assistance should not be limited to a single large injection. To be effective, assistance should be moderate in amount and spread out over time to allow the rebellion to grow naturally. Large injections of assistance only become relevant when the rebels begin to attack the defending army directly in large formations requiring conventional weapons and tactics. Finally, outside assistance will only be effective if there is a committed and competent hard core of leaders to manage the rebellion and recruit a mass following. Materiel and sanctuaries cannot substitute for the rarest commodity of all, competent leadership.

Figure 4 shows the strong relationship between external assistance and a successful or sustained rebellion. This relationship is considerably stronger than is found in any of the previous figures.

All rebellions receiving substantial outside aid were either victorious or were able to sustain themselves in the fight. No rebellion receiving substantial outside assistance failed unless this pipeline was severed, as in the cases of the CPT, the MNLF, and the Malaysian CP at the end of World War II. Even rebellions drawing their lifeblood from ethnic animosity such as the Shans, the Karens, and the Kachins have received support either from outside powers or from their successful smuggling and manipulation of the opium trade.\(^4^2\) The British (during WW II) and Thailand (at several points in the past) have supported the Karens. The PRC has supported the Burmese Communist party and also, intermittantly and on a smaller scale, the Kachins. Interestingly, as funding from China dwindled in the late 1970s, the BCP and segments of the Shan State army turned increasingly to opium as the most expeditious means of acquiring hard currency and supplies.


\(^4^0\) See Branigan, "Thai Communist Party," and Shee Poon Kim, op. cit.


### Figure 4
#### Relationship Between External Assistance and Rebellion in Southeast Asia

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<tr>
<th>External Assistance</th>
<th>Low/None</th>
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<td>Khmer Rouge (1970–75)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>South Vietnam (1959–75)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sustained rebellions</strong></td>
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<td>KPNLF + Moulinaka (1979–84)</td>
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<td>Karens (1944–45)</td>
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<td>Kachins (1944–45) (1962–78)</td>
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<td><strong>Failed rebellions or no rebellions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anti-Khmer Rouge forces (1975–78)</td>
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<td>CPT (1982–84)</td>
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<td>Malaysian CP (1957–60)</td>
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<td>Huks (1951–54)</td>
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<td>PKI (1965–66)</td>
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Movements receiving little or no foreign assistance eventually wither and die. This was true of the Dar’ul Islam, the Huks, and the Malay Communist party although all three sustained themselves for considerable periods without external aid. The MNLF has lost its foreign resources and has entered a period of marked decline. In fact, only the New People’s Army, which receives virtually no foreign support, is a healthy and rapidly growing concern. The NPA, at present, is a truly indigenous movement devoid of external resources; however, the historical track record of movements with neither sanctuaries nor external resources should lead us to hedge any bets about the ultimate success of the NPA. Bereft of external support, the most likely, but by no means certain outcome, is that the NPA will sustain itself for an extended period but will fail to reach the critical mass required by a victorious revolution. Obviously, this assessment would change radically if the NPA began
receiving substantial outside assistance, particularly in the form of cash and heavy weapons. The historical experience with other movements in recent Southeast Asian history makes outright victory by the NPA unlikely unless there were a sudden and complete collapse of morale within the armed forces of the Philippines which delivered to the insurgents the weaponry necessary to humble Metro Manila.

Figure 4 seems to settle the controversy. Substantial foreign support is a vital ingredient to revolutionary success or to indefinitely sustaining a rebellion. While foreign support exists, the game can go on—perhaps even without impressive domestic resources—but when foreign support is cut off or withdrawn, insurgencies wither or die. The historical record in Southeast Asia seems clear on the vital nature of external support, even if politicos and pundits discussing conflicts in other regions deny or discount it. No single variable considered in this essay is as powerful a predicador of outcomes as external assistance. Without it, success is probably impossible; with it, failure can almost always be postponed, and these propositions remain true almost regardless of GNP, corruption, inequality, or brand of ideological appeal.

GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL STRATEGIES: WESTERN AND SOVIET COUNTERINSURGENCY IN ASIA

In our description of preconditions and ignition factors causing rebellions, we have implicitly accepted a Western or democratic view of dissent and conflict resolution. However, the most difficult insurgency problems in Asia today are found in Afghanistan and Kampuchea, and the methods for dealing with dissent and rebellion defy standard Western wisdom. Western counterinsurgency doctrine and practice emphasize the political, social, and economic roots of the conflict while portraying military operations as a necessary but inherently inadequate means for winning such conflicts; if an insurgency exists, this means that government has failed and that it must alter its economic, social, and political programs to undercut the grievances being exploited by the insurgents. Therefore, legitimate dissent should be encouraged as part of a counterinsurgency campaign because free elections will allow the government to increase its political authority. Military coercion and repression of counterelites must be kept to an absolute minimum because it is assumed that coercion will only create more opposition. Likewise, although it may be necessary to isolate the general population from the guerrillas by organizing fortified villages, Western counterinsurgency doctrine assumes that this inherently disruptive policy should be cushioned, wherever possible, to avoid further alienation of the peasant population. In addition, Western doctrine assumes that external support for insurgents is important, but not nearly as critical as the internal problems which feed the insurgency; if internal grievances did not exist, the activities of external troublemakers could not take root. Therefore, the solution of internal social, economic, and political problems must be given first priority. Finally, Western counterinsurgency doctrine reflects a tug-of-war between those who desire at least a semi-open society and security officials who emphasize the need for more stringent control to deal with the military exigencies. The contradictory inclinations of the capital-city-centered civilian elite
and the military elite fighting the war in the countryside often result in choosing a middle course—just enough coercion to erode support within the urban elite but not enough military power to produce a clear-cut victory.

Soviet theories are more difficult to summarize because counterrevolution is not supposed to exist. There is a literature on contradiction, on consolidating the revolutionary situation, and on eliminating bandits and feudal elements; however, there appears to be a shortage of articles on counterinsurgency doctrine in Soviet journals. When we analyze Soviet and Vietnamese practices in Afghanistan and Kampuchea, it is clear that these flow from a different set of underlying assumptions concerning internal war even though both the socialist powers and the West have now confronted similar problems, sometimes in the same countries.

The first characteristic, of Soviet activity in Afghanistan and Vietnamese designs in Kampuchea, is that both campaigns are targeted on the long run. Immediate goals are minimal: controlling the main cities and roads without attempting to control large portions of the interior; sealing the borders wherever possible; and maintaining the regime in power by force of arms. In contrast with the American effort in Vietnam, in 1983 there were only 105,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan, and the total Soviet effort probably consumes less than 1 percent of the total defense budget of the USSR. The more moderate effort, of course, produces less dramatic results in the short term, and Soviet rule at present extends only to the maximum range of their weapons. The Soviet assumption seems to be that as long as one can keep a Communist government physically in place at a fairly low cost, one can tolerate hostile control of the vast majority of the interior. The premise is that the guerrillas will eventually become tired and acquiesce in Afghan/Soviet rule. Paradoxically, the Soviets seem to accept the adage of guerrilla warfare, “If you don’t lose, you win.” However, they insist that this maxim applies to the counterinsurgents rather than to the guerrillas. According to the Soviets, time is on their side, not the rebels’, because they can hold the towns indefinitely regardless of what happens in the countryside.43

Second, the Soviets in Afghanistan have been using an almost entirely military approach with little emphasis on civic action or on winning the hearts and minds of the tribesmen.44 Until recently there have been few attempts to penetrate the villages by implanting a new civil authority, and little attention has been given to propaganda. Reliance on military might, regardless of its political cost, is indicated by Soviet utilization of weapons such as yellow rain and “blue X,” which are designed to clear areas by killing everyone rather than by convincing the population of the advantages of affiliation with the Babrak Karmal government. Most of all, there has been no willingness to widen the political authority of the regime in order to undercut the nearly universal appeal of the rebels. The Soviets seem to assume that no party work is


44 An important exception to this generalization is the degree of emphasis being given to the creation of an entirely new, Soviet-raised elite through the long-term education of thousands of Afghans inside the Soviet Union.
possible until military control has been established and that soldiers, helicopters, and tanks are more relevant than ballot boxes and civic action projects.45

Third, the Soviets accept the creation of large number of refugees as a fact of life that follows all revolutions. Hence, masses of refugees are not viewed as cause for alarm but only as an indication that a social and political revolution is in progress. The exodus of 1.5 million refugees from post-1975 Indochina and of approximately one quarter of the total population (4.3 out of 17 million) from Afghanistan is not perceived by Soviet commentators as indicative of policy failure. In fact, creating refugees may be an intentional strategy being followed among the Hmong in Laos and hostile tribes in Afghanistan. Rather than just separating the guerrillas (or in Mao's phrase, the fish) from the general population (or the water), the Soviets may have concluded that it is easier "to empty the fishbowl and capture its contents."46 Western counterinsurgency strategies attempt to separate the "fish" from the "water" but through costly pacification programs which are often ineffective. In Afghanistan, at least, it seems that Soviet policies emphasize terror, reprisal, and scorched-earth policies as the most efficient means for either driving the rural population away or exterminating all who might provide manpower or assistance to the Mujahedeen. Interestingly the same tactics seem to have been used by the Soviet army in its successful pacification of the southern republics of the USSR in the 1920s and 1930s.47

Finally, the Soviets emphasize the overwhelming importance of external assistance in the generation of rebellion. According to Soviet scholars, the Afghan problem does not result from the inappropriate policies of the governments since Daud or from the stimulus given to Afghan nationalism by Soviet troops, but from the intervention of Pakistan and Iran in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The Soviet premise is that there would be no insurgency at all if sanctuaries were closed and foreign military supplies became unavailable. There is virtually no recognition of the ways in which political legitimacy creates a fertile ground for external support of internal war.48

The Vietnamese experience in Kampuchea is similar but not identical to that of the Soviets in Afghanistan. Vietnam seems to be prepared for the long haul; it shows few signs of a willingness to compromise politically even though the Vietnamese

45 After four years of fighting, this monolithically military approach may be changing. The Soviets in 1983 were negotiating local truces with several tribal groups opposing them, and the Karmal regime mobilized an impressive group of national notables in the National Fatherland Front. These moves are almost certainly tactical and do not presage a willingness to share power with the non-Communist opposition or to alter policies, both of which would be necessary to bring about a meaningful political settlement. See Rajendra Sareen, "The Kabul Miscalculation," Far Eastern Economic Review, December 29, 1983, pp. 26–27.


48 Although part of the Soviet motivation for adopting this explanation is propaganda, the frequency and consistency with which the Soviets use it, both in public and private, indicate a genuine belief on their part in the accuracy of this analysis.
people are six years into a long war. Vietnamese forces control the roads and the
towns, but administration has only begun to penetrate the villages. The assumption is
that the guerrillas will eventually tire of the game if Vietnam only stays the course. In
addition, Vietnam and the PRK government, like their Soviet counterparts in Afghan-
istan, show no inclination to widen the political base by making concessions to other
Khmer factions. No matter what the costs, it seems very difficult for ruling Com-
munist parties to contemplate sharing control of the dictatorship of the proletariat with
anyone once the formal government apparatus in the capital city has been seized.
Vietnam also accepts the refugee problem as an inevitable cost of creating a social and
political revolution. Finally, the SRV explains the anti-Heng Samrin rebellion as
resulting only from the meddling of China and ASEAN. Indeed, the political solu-
tions contemplated by Vietnam are designed to seal the border, not to make significant
concessions to Khmer nationalism.

What explains the radical dissimilarity between Western and socialist-bloc
approaches to dissent and counterinsurgency? First, both theories cannot be equally
valid because they take almost diametrically opposite positions. Second, lack of
quick success in counterinsurgency operations has characterized both sides, indicat-
ing that neither possesses a monopoly on insight. The Soviet/Vietnamese emphasis on
the importance of external intervention is exaggerated, but it may be nearer to the
truth than the corresponding deemphasis in Western doctrine. Furthermore, Soviet
recognition of the necessity of preparing for a long war is probably more appropriate
than the impatience characterizing the American approach. However, the essentially
apolitical, almost entirely military nature of Soviet prescriptions for curing internal
war would seem to doom the Soviets (or their surrogates) to the role of permanent
occupying forces amidst sullen and hostile populations. This may be an acceptable
outcome when viewed through the prism of the Brezhnev doctrine, but this cannot
alter the fact that said policies are costly. Finally, the denial of the relevance of
political legitimacy, combined with an insistence upon monopolization of rule by the
Communist party, would seem to relegate the Soviet Union to an endless string of
Hungarian, Czechoslovakian, Polish, Afghan, and Kampuchean crises in which
indigenous regimes cannot face their own people without outside military interven-
tion from the socialist mother country.

CONCLUSION

This essay represents a plea for complexity, for empiricism, and for the
importance of politics. Rebellions are complicated social, economic, and political
movements that have remained resistant to simplistic truisms. Rebellions do not take
place simply because peasant incomes are going down or because the long-run terms
of exchange are moving against the clients and in favor of patrons. Such factors,
where they can be proven to exist, may indeed be important, but they are neither
necessary nor sufficient explanations in and of themselves. Such basic alterations in
the fabric of peasant life may raise the social strain throughout the countryside, but
they do not explain why a very small portion of the peasantry actually joins and
maintains a revolt. To comprehend why a minority chooses to revolt rather than to
suffer in silence requires that we consider the whole process; both the long-term preconditions and ignition factors. This means we must look not only at readily quantifiable social and economic indices but also at more qualitative facets such as national leadership, local alliances, local political grievances, inclusiveness of ideological appeals, capacity to create a new, more effective authority structure, and the ability to procure sufficient external backing to make possible the final assault upon the army and police forces of the central government. It is only through considering these ignition factors that we can begin to understand the process by which social unrest is transformed into organized, violent political rebellion.

A major problem in diagnosing causes of insurgency is that each analyst (myself included) tends to study only one rebellion, or at best, several rebellions within a single country. It is only with a substantial number of cases that we can begin to sort out whether a factor (e.g., short-term decline in GNP per capita) actually explains as much as previously assumed. Only with multiple cases, from different countries, can factors that are idiosyncratic to a particular political culture be filtered out allowing us to understand general processes in diverse nations and historic circumstances.

Finally, with all deference to my colleagues in economics, sociology, and military science, guerrilla wars are political and we need to put politics back into the equation and place it where it belongs—up front and center—even if we cannot quantify it. Even in deteriorating economic conditions rebellion will not break out if the government appears to be overwhelmingly powerful, if there is good political leadership at the national level, if the forces of order do not bludgeon the local population into revolt, if the government has an inclusive ideology and an outgoing organization, and if government diplomacy can prevent the influx of money and materiel to rebels from across the border. Politically competent governments can transcend factors that otherwise predispose a country to chronic rebellion. Why some rebellions crumble while others endure probably is better explained by the effectiveness of a government and army in treating political factors than by specific military tactics or programs for alleviating long-term socioeconomic conditions. Because this assertion contradicts the assumptions of both sides of the current debate on insurgency, it behooves us to study multiple movements rather than single instances and to study them in all their political complexity rather than being satisfied by simplistic explanations having scant relationship to reality.

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APPENDIX

Khmer Rouge refers to the movement led by Pol Pot, which first became apparent in the late 1960s, took power as a result of the civil war of 1970–75, ruled 1975–78, and was deposed by the Vietnamese army in January 1979. The years of sharply declining real income levels were 1970–81, the civil war, the Pol Pot period, and the post–Pol Pot famine.

KPNLF, the Kampuchean People's National Liberation Front, is the non-Communist resistance group led by Son Sann.

The Moulinak is Prince Sihanouk's non-Communist resistance group.

The NPA is the Communist New People's Army in the Philippines. It was born in a decade of relative prosperity, 1969–79, but grew most rapidly when the economy fell on hard times, 1980–83.

The MNLF is the Moro National Liberation Front in the southern Philippines. It arose in an era of national prosperity and declined in military capability as the national economy began to falter.

The Karen National Liberation Army is the fighting organization of the Karen rebellion which broke out in 1949 and continues until today.

Shan State of Northeast Burma serves as the home of both the Shan Independence Army and the BCP, the Burmese Communist Party.

Anti-Khmer Rouge forces consisted of small groups inside Cambodia or on the Thai border which engaged in low-level and sporadic resistance when Pol Pot's regime ruled in Cambodia.

The Permerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia, PRRI, was the rebellion of the Outer Islands against the Indonesian central government during 1958–61.

The Huk rebellion existed on Luzon in the Philippines from 1946 until 1954.

The CPT is the Thai Communist party which has been in rebellion since 1965, but which has suffered a severe decline since 1982.

DI refers to the Indonesian Dar'ul Islam rebellion to found an Islamic state which fought against the central government in West Java, 1948–62.

The Malaysian Communist party continues to exist but in a much weaker and isolated form than when it fought against the British colonial government in the 1950s.

I have not included East Timor in this figure because it was not primarily a rebellion aimed at displacing the government in Jakarta. Instead, Fretilin grew out of the decolonization process and is really comparable to the earlier secessionist rebellion in the South Moluccas.

The GNP data were calculated from World Bank sources. The figures were calculated in constant units in order to control for inflation. Stagnant GNP is defined as less than 1 percent per capita per annum growth in real terms.

Knowledgeable informants would probably count only one genuine guerrilla victory, the Khmer Rouge over Lon Nol. In contrast, the capture of Saigon in 1957 featured a regular army, equipped with a thousand Soviet-supplied tanks, rather than the triumph of guerrillas with hand weapons. Guerrillas indigenous to South Vietman ceased being the major offensive threat to the GVN after 1968. The Northern victory of 1975 is included in Figure 2 because the insurgency in the South was a real factor in the earlier stages of the war, and without its crucial early contribution the outcome would have been in doubt.
8. ASEAN and the Major Powers: Today and Tomorrow

Likhit Dhiravegin

I. INTRODUCTION

ASEAN’s relationship with the major powers has become a topic of academic conferences, mass media coverage, and policy discussions of the Asian region. This has been especially true since 1978, a date that can be taken as the starting point for the dynamism of ASEAN as an organization with an increasing role in regional and international politics. Most notable has been the U.N. resolution initiated by ASEAN on the question of Cambodia. For the past years, ASEAN has scored “victories” regarding that resolution with substantial support from the U.N. members. ASEAN has also been able to establish its image as an effective organization based on regional cooperation, the only one in Asia with completely indigenous membership. In the course of these developments, it has demonstrated its right to be taken seriously.

ASEAN has now been in existence for almost two decades. Its development has been generally smooth, but periods of reduced progress or even stagnation have ensued. Like any other organization based on the cooperation of sovereign states, divergent interests and inherent conflicts have at times slowed down its development. Nevertheless, the past four years have been a period of dynamic growth in its activities, especially in its political role in the region. It has become a political force that the major powers cannot ignore. Thus, an understanding of the relationship between ASEAN and the major powers is now a sine qua non for an understanding of politics of the Asian region. But the problems encountered by the political analyst in undertaking this task are massive because of the many variables in the form of issues, actors, and timing. It is relatively easy to talk about Japan and ASEAN, or China and ASEAN, or the Indochina issue and ASEAN during a certain time span. To encompass the six nations now comprising ASEAN in their various relations—economic, political, security, and cultural—with the major states is a herculean task.

Our attempt, therefore, is to present a “macro-view of a micro-nature,” implying by this seeming paradox that we will seek to provide the large picture of
ASEAN—major power relations while limiting the number of specific factors and actors to be analyzed in detail.

This essay will focus on the political factor, and the countries or actors to be discussed will include ASEAN as a group and as individual countries versus the United States, the Soviet Union, the People’s Republic of China, and Japan; other units such as Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos will be included as parts of the analysis as we proceed. This is not to say that the units left out (such as Australia) are not significant. They are relevant but they should be discussed in a more lengthy study.

This contribution is divided into six parts. Following the introduction will be the framework, providing a global perspective of politics in the region (Section II). A discussion of the positions and the degree of relationships—positive, negative, or neutral—of ASEAN and the affected countries will be presented. The purpose is to telescope the various factors and actors into a pattern, outlining the forest to make possible a subsequent investigation of the trees. Section III will discuss the relationships between ASEAN and the major powers. It will focus on ASEAN’s perception of the three states and its policies toward them. The major states’ perception of ASEAN and their different policies toward the organization will also be discussed. Section IV will deal with the individual ASEAN countries’ perception of the major powers, and the roots of the different perceptions. Implications of these differences will be analyzed. Section V will be an analysis of ASEAN as an organization, its strengths and weaknesses. An attempt will be made to point out the areas where conflicts and troubles could erupt, having a negative impact on the organization. The conclusion will present an overall evaluation and a prognosis.

II. ASEAN IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

ASEAN, in the web of regional politics among the major powers, can best be put into perspective by envisioning the main actors—the United States, the Soviet Union, and the People’s Republic of China—in a “triangular alignment.” The triangular alignment reflects the situation that the three powers have been the main actors in politics in the region or at least are in a position to affect regional or global politics. At the time of writing the relationship between the U.S. and the PRC is on balance positive, while that between the U.S. and the USSR and between the PRC and the USSR is primarily negative. To be sure, this is a static picture. To make the picture dynamic, one can take into account the different nature of the relationships at different periods. For instance, the period of early 1979 would see a “good” relationship between the U.S. and the PRC. Two plus signs might accurately describe the situation. Since then the relationship has “cooled” somewhat; perhaps one plus sign best describes the current situation. The relationship between the PRC and the USSR before 1960 can be rated with two plus signs, whereas at the present time

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1 The discussion in this part was adapted from a paper I presented at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, April 14, 1979, and printed as Likhit Dhiravegin, "The Super Powers and Southeast Asia: A Global Perspective," The Journal of Political Science (Bangkok), vol. 7, no. 2 (January-April, 1981)
the relationship can appropriately be described by two minus signs, although change toward reduced tension appears en route, and one minus sign might soon be appropriate.

We can add to the triangular alignment other countries playing a part in the regional political arena. We can envision Japan between the U.S. and the PRC and Vietnam and its “client” states on the other side between the U.S. and the USSR. ASEAN can be in the middle, because ASEAN in this study is the focus. From this arrangement, we can examine the political environment in which ASEAN as a group must maneuver.

ASEAN has a strong positive relationship (economic and political) with Japan (two plus signs), while the relationship with Vietnam and to some extent its “client” states—Laos and Kampuchea (the Heng Samrin regime)—is not friendly (two minus signs). With the PRC and the U.S., ASEAN relations have been good (one plus sign), but for those with the USSR the minus sign is appropriate. This approximate evaluation of relationships between ASEAN and the actors in regional politics provide a rough picture of the pattern of relationship among the affected countries, a global perspective to be used as a background for further analysis.

To explain the nature of relationships described, we can first look at the U.S. and the PRC. The post-Vietnam War era and the emergence of a new political situation in Asia, especially the Sino-Vietnamese policy differences and conflicts of interest, and the threat of the Soviet Union to fill the political vacuum left by the U.S. disengagement from Southeast Asia, accelerated the improvement of Sino-U.S. relations, building upon the foundations laid by the Nixon visit in 1972. The new realities brought the PRC and the U.S. into a marriage of convenience. Political expediency transformed the hitherto hostile relationship into an increasingly cordial friendship (+), ideological and systemic differences notwithstanding. Between the U.S. and the USSR, on the other hand, the relationship has been deteriorating in recent years. The efforts to keep détente alive and to reduce arms rivalry have been unsuccessful, and the relationship between the two parties must be described as unfriendly (−), whatever changes may now be en route.

The honeymoon between the two socialist comrades, the PRC and the USSR, ended in early 1960 when the latter terminated its aid for the reconstruction of the new giant socialist state. Relations between the two states then sharply deteriorated. Such terms as “hegemony” and “social imperialism” were used by the PRC in describing Soviet leadership and policies. Sporadic border clashes between Chinese and Russian forces came to a climax in the 1969 Ussuri River clash. Even today, despite the resumption of negotiations, huge armed forces on both sides are lined up at the border in a state of alertness. The Sino-Soviet conflict is reflected in the support given by the USSR to Vietnam, which since late 1978 has become an overt enemy of the PRC.

Thailand has been pursuing a policy of reconciliation with Laos. There have been attempts to conclude bilateral agreements with the Laotian government. Because of the cultural and historical ties between the two countries, there seems to be a chance for the development of a cordial relationship. Laos needs a large quantity of Thai products and foodstuffs. A sign of a possible improvement of the relationship may be seen in the visit by the Laotian interior minister, General Sisavat Keobunphan, in January 1984.

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starting with the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. The pro-Beijing regime of Pol Pot was toppled, and there followed the punitive military operation launched by the PRC against Vietnam in 1979. Hence the relationship between the two socialist states can be described as unfriendly (−− or −).

The U.S. and Japan have had a good relationship since the end of World War II. After the end of the U.S. Occupation, Japan depended on Washington to provide a nuclear umbrella. The U.S.-Japan security treaty continues to symbolize defense cooperation. In the regional scene, Japan represents a democracy which is expected to aid in the containment of the USSR, preventing the Soviets from moving south. Trade between the U.S. and Japan, however, has been the main feature of the relationship, and here, problems have arisen because of huge Japanese surpluses. Nevertheless, the overall relationship may be described as friendly (+ + or +).

The PRC and Japan established diplomatic relations in 1972 immediately after the Nixon visit. Since then there has been economic cooperation between the two Asian neighbors. Closer relations culminated in the treaty of friendship signed in 1978. At present, the relationship between these two countries, which historically had been bitter enemies, is cordial and mutually complementary to each other’s political interests (+).

The USSR and Vietnam and its client states—Laos and the Heng Samrin regime in Phnom Penh—are militarily and economically close and politically very interdependent (+ + +). The speculated U.S. $3 million a day given by the USSR in the form of military hardware and economic aid, in return for the facilities at Cam Ranh Bay and Danang and the overt political support given by the USSR to Vietnam at the U.N. and elsewhere on the Kampuchean issue, reflect a closely cooperative relationship. The treaty of friendship signed between the two countries contains a clause that amounts to a military alliance. Article VI of the treaty of November 1978 provides that “if one of the sides becomes the object of attack or of a threat of attack, the contracting parties will quickly move to mutual consultations with the goals of removing the threat and the taking of appropriate effective measures for the preservation of the peace and security of their countries.”

The relationship between the U.S. and Vietnam, which has been described as minimal and hostile (−−−) dates back to the Vietnam War. The bitter memories and the feeling of humiliation on the part of the U.S. still linger on. The reconciliatory gesture made by Vietnam to the U.S. met with a cold reply, and the emerging Sino-Vietnamese conflict drove the Vietnamese leadership toward the Soviet Union. Presently, there are no signs to indicate a desire on the part of the two countries to negotiate.

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One can also describe the relationship between the PRC and Vietnam as very unfriendly (− − −). The relationship between Japan and the USSR can also be described as strongly unfriendly (− −), although various proposals for economic cooperation between the two countries have long been broached. Given the historical hostility, the unsettled dispute over the Kurile Islands, and the fact that the USSR has been a security threat to Japan, it is inevitable that the two countries distrust each other. Japan's attitude toward Vietnam has varied. Immediately after Hanoi's victory in 1975, Japan extended economic aid for reconstruction after the war. Japan also embarked on a joint venture with Vietnam for off-shore oil exploration. But after the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime, Japan reluctantly joined ASEAN, the U.S., and the PRC in calling for withdrawal of foreign troops from Kampuchea. Japan sided with ASEAN probably out of political considerations. At the same time Japan hopes to mediate between ASEAN and Vietnam on the issue of Cambodia. The relationship between Japan and Vietnam is thus fluid. It may be described as ambivalent (0).

We may list ASEAN's relationships as follows: ASEAN and PRC (+), ASEAN and the U.S. (+), ASEAN and the USSR (−), ASEAN and Japan (+), ASEAN and Vietnam (− −).

III. ASEAN AND THE MAJOR POWERS

ASEAN’s perception of and attitude toward the countries who have been actors in regional politics is generally inimical to the socialist states and friendly to countries with an open-market economy. The economy of ASEAN can be broadly classified as open with an authoritarian or semiauthoritarian polity. In the final analysis, ASEAN is anti-Communist. In fact, the creation of ASEAN was in a sense an attempt to bring about collective security among the states involved against the Communist threat, with the concern initially being the People’s Republic of China. Over time, however, with changing circumstances, the socialist states of the region came into sharper conflict, leading to a shift in alliances and alignments. We witness the ironical situation where two former enemies, the PRC and the U.S., now stand on the same side with regard to the Cambodia issue, while two erstwhile socialist comrades, the PRC and Vietnam, have become foes. ASEAN has also found its image undergoing a change especially in certain quarters. Initially, the PRC and the USSR viewed ASEAN as a re-creation of SEATO, with the U.S. pulling the strings behind the scene. But because of political developments, the PRC, up to then an enemy of ASEAN, has sided with ASEAN on the Cambodia issues and cultivated ASEAN generally.

Japan sees ASEAN as a viable regional cooperation organization with indigenous roots. This is because Japan, as an economic power whose main interest is in trade and in the acquisition of raw materials, sees ASEAN as a market and a source of raw materials; but of equal importance is the fact that if ASEAN becomes a viable entity and contributes toward stability in the region, it can serve to contain the Communists, defying the domino theory.
The U.S., on the other hand, sees ASEAN as a group of countries of similar political systems with a distinctive anti-Communist outlook, and thus has given it support. The U.S. also sees ASEAN as a development in line with the Nixon or Guam Doctrine of 1969, with its key theme that indigenous forces should bear the primary responsibility for the preservation of "freedom and democracy" against the Communists with the U.S. providing material and moral support, and if essential, using its sea and air power.

ASEAN as a collective body has the following salient features. It is a new entity, a collective body initially of five countries—Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Thailand. In January 1984, Brunei joined, becoming the sixth member state. ASEAN is an organization of economic cooperation and cultural exchange. It has a common anti-Communist political ideology, not in the sense of struggling against existing Communist states, but in its aversion to a Communist movement taking over state power. ASEAN would like to stay free of entanglements in the power struggle among the major powers and free from political conflicts that do not concern its members. This policy is summarized in the 1971 declaration in Kuala Lumpur known as ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality). There is also a policy of "national resilience," meaning the ability to turn the individual countries into viable economic units with equitable income distribution largely by each state's individual efforts in order to thwart the Communist threat, especially the insurgency movements then supported by the PRC. ASEAN at present seeks to present an image of unity and solidarity; its common goal is peace and stability in the region, and an end to the Cambodia problem.

ASEAN and the United States

As a generalization, one can say that the U.S. supports ASEAN as a group and also as individual countries. Since ASEAN is anti-Communist, the U.S. and ASEAN have a common political interest. The U.S. is seen as a major power, which can be relied on for the supply of military needs. In the event of a crisis, ASEAN as a group would certainly appeal for assistance from the U.S. government. Two ASEAN members, Thailand and the Philippines, can still rely on the Manila Pact. Although SEATO has closed its headquarters, the Manila Pact is still binding, as has been clearly expressed by U.S. authorities. In the Philippines, Subic Bay is still the naval base of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, with Clark Airfield providing quarters for U.S. fighter bombers. And the U.S. still supplies Thailand with annual military aid.

Despite partial disengagement from the region after the Vietnam War, the U.S. cannot afford to abandon the region, if only for its own security. However, the new

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situation has called for a new alignment. The U.S. hopes to maintain stability in Asia and contain the Communists, especially the Soviet Union, by having the People's Republic of China (with its animosity against the USSR), Japan, and ASEAN serve as a counterbalance to the Soviet Union and Vietnam. At the moment one sees a four-pronged "alliance" consisting of the U.S., the PRC, Japan, and ASEAN against the Soviet Union and its ally, Vietnam.

Thus, despite a close relationship between ASEAN and the U.S., ASEAN does not wish to appear too close to the U.S. Indeed, ASEAN was put on the defensive when it was accused of being a new SEATO in disguise. As a result, ASEAN steers clear of statements that have the appearance of deriving from U.S. policy. ASEAN has been trying to present an image of an independent organization with its own policy. However, given a political situation that would require an alliance, it is inevitable that ASEAN would become an ally of the U.S.

ASEAN and the Soviet Union

The USSR is geographically remote from ASEAN. Unless its presence can be made to be felt by its naval forces, it is a country situated on the periphery. For this reason, the People's Republic of China could be seen as posing a greater threat for ASEAN in the future. But ASEAN's attitude toward the USSR has changed since Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, when Hanoi overthrew the Pol Pot regime and installed Heng Samrin as head of a puppet government. The invasion, which took place immediately after the Soviet Union and Vietnam had concluded a treaty of alliance, was seen as a Russo-Vietnamese scheme to get a stronghold in Southeast Asia. Indeed, the invasion of Kampuchea by Vietnam is a twin of the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, although the two events were not directly connected. The Soviet Union now has access to the facilities at Cam Ranh Bay, thus enabling the USSR to connect with its fleet in the Indian Ocean and giving it a "backdoor" to the Pacific Ocean. The buildup of Cam Ranh Bay as a naval base for the Soviet Union is a destabilizing factor for the region and may raise the tension between the U.S. and the USSR. ASEAN has begun to feel the threat posed by the Soviet Union's expansion policy. The Russian-Vietnamese alliance can be seen as a plan to counterbalance the four-pronged "alliance" of the U.S., Japan, the PRC, and ASEAN.

The Soviet Union views ASEAN as a group of capitalist countries allied with the U.S. and Japan, having an expedient relationship with the PRC in order to contain Soviet influence, although, at times, the USSR has changed its attitude toward

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7 The visit by Premier Zhao Ziyang to the United States in January 1984 has been viewed as progress in China-U.S.-Japan relations. An editorial in Yomiuri commented: "Friendly cooperative relations between the U.S. and China and Japan and China are indispensable for Asian peace and security. We hope that Zhao's U.S. visit will produce many constructive results considering that the deterioration of U.S.-Soviet relations heightened global tension." Yomiuri, January 9, 1984.

ASEAN because of the latter’s regional self-awareness and independent policy. In view of ASEAN’s performance, the accusation of ASEAN being SEATO in disguise is now hardly tenable. Recently, for example, the Russian ambassador to Thailand, after paying his respects to ASEAN as an independent organization, accused the U.S. of trying to turn ASEAN into a military alliance, taking the line of ASEAN being a U.S. creation. In fact, the Soviet Union, after changing its attitude toward ASEAN, has attempted to win ASEAN to its side by diplomatic means.

Before giving support to Vietnam, the Soviet Union must have weighed the pros and cons. On one side of the scale was ASEAN, which the Soviet Union decided to trade off for its more promising ally, Vietnam. This choice was realistic because, for the time being at least, it would be difficult for the Soviet Union to compete with the PRC to win ASEAN to its side. To ASEAN, the Russians, unlike the Americans and the Chinese, are strangers, greatly alien to the region. The Russians are also different from other Europeans with whom ASEAN has been familiar, such as the British, the French, the Dutch, and the Spanish. Despite the Soviets’ attempt to compete with the PRC in the region, it is difficult for them to step into the Chinese backyard, historically an area constituting China’s sphere of influence. The presence of a large number of overseas Chinese, many of whom have been holding high positions in the indigenous government bureaucracy, also sometimes serves as a positive factor for the PRC, although the overseas Chinese constitute a liability as well, raising fears of Chinese dominance.

Since ASEAN considers the USSR an outsider with whom it has to deal but wishes to keep at arm’s length and the PRC is a major power and a potential problem in the long run, ASEAN hopes that the present Sino-Soviet rift will continue. As long as the two giant socialist states confront each other without the confrontation erupting into warfare, Asia—and ASEAN—will benefit.

ASEAN and the People’s Republic of China

The People’s Republic of China, ironically, was one of the major factors that motivated the Southeast Asian countries to form ASEAN as a collective body to reinforce, if not to serve as a substitute for, support from the West against communism. The aggressive policy of the PRC during the zenith of Mao and the material as well as verbal support given to the insurgency movements in Asia through the party-to-party relations were of deep concern. The policy of supporting Asian insurgency movements stemmed from the PRC’s ideological commitment and the belief in “wars of national liberation,” which were to take place one by one, a thesis not dissimilar to the domino theory. But of equal importance was the fact that in this

10 Yuri Kuznetsov, the Soviet Ambassador to Bangkok, charged that the U.S. is trying to turn ASEAN into a military alliance. *Bangkok Post*, September 22, 1983.
earlier period, the PRC saw the U.S. as its enemy, entrenched in Asia with its military bases in various places, from Korea, Japan, and the Philippines to Thailand. Moreover, the Asian countries allied with the U.S. had been strongly opposed to communism, especially to Communist China. To have leverage against these countries, the PRC gave support to various Communist movements, providing arms, military training, and an opportunity to direct radio broadcasts at their targets. Although the insurgency movements were unsuccessful, they drained off the material and manpower of these countries. They also created a sense of insecurity and psychological strain for the governments of the Asian countries. The PRC has supported the insurgency movements of four ASEAN countries (excepting the fifth, Singapore). The closest link between the Communist party of China and the Communist parties in Asia was that with the Communist party in Indonesia (PKI). But the PKI's failure in the coup of 1965 brought about its destruction by the army, and since then its remnants have gone underground.12

The improvement of Sino-U.S. relations was given concrete impetus by the Nixon visit to China in February 1972. The subsequent diplomatic victories scored by the PRC against the Republic of China on Taiwan led to a shift of PRC policy. With its entry into the U.S. and its improved relations with other Asian countries, the PRC has greatly scaled down its support for the insurgency movements. Thailand is a clear-cut example; support for the Communist party of Thailand by the Chinese Communist party has been drastically reduced. Most notable was the closing of the clandestine radio broadcasting station, an act that played a significant role in improving the relations between the two countries.13

What brought ASEAN and the PRC closer, however, was the Sino-Vietnam conflict and the problem of Cambodia. The deteriorating relations between Vietnam and the PRC triggered the intervention of the Soviets, who superseded the Chinese, becoming the sole ally of Vietnam. The Chinese viewed with distaste the close Russian-Vietnamese relationship and Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia, regarding it as a plot to extend Vietnam's influence in Indochina and Soviet influence in Southeast Asia. ASEAN's view on the situation was similar to that of the Chinese. Thus, the PRC's and ASEAN's interpretations of the present situation have generally concurred. For this reason the PRC accepted ASEAN as an "ally" conveniently placed to confront Vietnamese and Soviet expansion. Likewise, ASEAN takes the relationship with the PRC on the issue of Cambodia as a convenient alliance. Meanwhile, the need of the PRC to have "friends" to contain Vietnam and its ally, the Soviet Union, necessitated a softening of policy regarding the Chinese Communist party's support for insurgency movements. The reduction of support was not clearly made in public statements, but was real, especially for Thailand, as already mentioned.

12 The PRC allegedly was involved in the abortive coup of 1965 in which half a million people were killed and the PKI was crushed. After the coup, relations between the PRC and Indonesia deteriorated. In 1967, Indonesia suspended diplomatic relations with the PRC.
The PRC has repeatedly emphasized that it supports ASEAN as a regional organization, and it has cooperated with ASEAN on the issue of Cambodia, although some differences exist. It has pledged its support if Thailand, which is a frontline state of ASEAN, were to be frontally attacked by Vietnam. ASEAN, on its part, has maintained its present relations with the PRC because of the concurrence of interest. There is still doubt about the PRC's policy, however. The pressing question is whether the present policy of the PRC and its wooing of ASEAN is only a tactical change resulting from the emergence of a new situation with the ultimate aim of increasing Chinese influence or control remaining intact in the minds of the Chinese leaders. Is the ultimate aim the communization of the area and thereby the creation of states looking to China politically and for purposes of security? Although the policy question is legitimate, it is also a reflection of the inordinate fears of the ASEAN leaders. After all, one could argue, the Communist movement would stand little chance if the domestic situation, especially the questions of equity of income distribution and political participation in an open system, were efficiently handled.

ASEAN and Japan

As mentioned earlier, Japan has taken a great interest in ASEAN because of its role as a market and because of its raw materials and energy (especially, oil and natural gas from Indonesia.) As a result of its positive attitude toward ASEAN, Japan has been greatly involved with the ASEAN countries in trade, investment, aid, technological cooperation, and cultural exchange. Indeed, of the four powers critically involved with ASEAN, Japan has the greatest influence on the economic development of ASEAN and its future. ASEAN greatly needs Japan's assistance to achieve economic modernization. Trade between Japan and ASEAN is substantial, and Japanese investments in the ASEAN countries are extensive. It is not the purpose of this presentation to discuss the economic transactions between ASEAN and Japan in detail. Suffice it to state that neither Japan nor ASEAN can afford a breach in their economic relations because any cleavage would disrupt the development underway.

But the relationship between ASEAN and Japan has not been entirely smooth. There have been growing complaints about Japan's insensitivity to ASEAN's needs and Japan's failure to rectify the trade imbalance that a majority of ASEAN countries suffer. Anti-Japanese feelings erupted into demonstrations against Prime Minister Tanaka during his visit to ASEAN countries in 1974, starting in Bangkok, spreading to other ASEAN countries, and leading to riots in Indonesia. This episode served as a

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14 This has been repeatedly stated by the Chinese authorities. This policy was confirmed by the counselor of the embassy of the People's Republic of China in Thailand, Zhang Qing, in a talk at the Thai-Chinese Friendship Association, November 25, 1983.
15 See, for example, Sueo Sekiguchi, ed., ASEAN-Japan Relations: Investment (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1983), and Narongchai Akrasanee, ed., ASEAN-Japan Relations: Trade and Development (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies), 1983.
16 Akrasanee, ASEAN-Japan Relations.
17 Ibid.
warning that an asymmetrical relationship and an unwillingness to redress grievances (such as the nontariff barriers imposed by Japan on imports from ASEAN) can lead to resentment and demonstrations. Since the 1974 events, Japan and the ASEAN countries have been trying to sort out their differences, and the ASEAN community has hoped that Japan would achieve a better understanding of ASEAN needs. With some gains on this matter, anti-Japanese sentiments have been reduced. However, ill feelings are merely dormant and can still be activated given the requisite political and economic catalysts.18

ASEAN was relatively complacent about Japan's role in the economic arena until the changing situation produced a demand on Japan to increase its political role. It was argued (in American circles) that as a power with enormous economic leverage, Japan should assume a political role in the maintenance of stability in the region.19 The response from the Japanese leadership was epitomized by Prime Minister Fukuda who made a statement in Manila in August 1977 during his ASEAN tour. He made these points: (1) Japan will not become a major military power; (2) Japan will cooperate with ASEAN countries to help them attain solidarity and resilience (including the pledge of U.S. $1 billion assistance to ASEAN industrial projects); and (3) Japan will endeavor to help create a Southeast Asia in which ASEAN and the Indochinese countries co-exist peacefully.20

The Fukuda Doctrine was positively received, but complaints about Japan's slow action and its failure to rectify some basic problems such as the trade imbalance are still heard. Japan has also been criticized for its policy of not helping to alleviate the refugee problem. Although Japan contributed a large sum for relief purposes, it has not been willing to receive Indochinese refugees, except a tiny number, for settlement in Japan. On the positive side, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone has been supporting the political stand of ASEAN on the issue of Cambodia, that is, the demand for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from that country.21

ASEAN-Japan relations have thus been fairly smooth since 1974 and this trend is likely to continue. However, public outcry against Japan's domination in the economy of the region and the intrusion of Japanese culture in the form of cartoon

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19 The Japanese responded to this demand; see, for example, "Japan Prepared to Play International Roles, Government Says," Yomiuri, April 24, 1981; and "Japan's Political Role in Asia Stressed by Suzuki," Asahi Evening News, September 4, 1981. A similar policy has been pursued by other Japanese leaders including the present prime minister, Yasuhiro Nakasone.

20 Koji Watanabe, "Japan and Southeast Asia: 1980," Asia Pacific Community, no. 10 (Fall, 1980), pp. 88–89.

21 See speech by Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone at the dinner in his honor given by Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda, Bangkok, May 2, 1983, in which he said: "Japan has consistently maintained that a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian problem, based upon the withdrawal of foreign forces from Cambodia and the self-determination of the Cambodian people, is the indispensable first step toward peace and stability in this region" (Press Release, Japan Information Service, Bangkok).

22 Toro Yano, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University. Special lecture given at the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, January 13, 1984.
movies, large numbers of Japanese residents, and Japanese-type bars, serve to warn Japan of possible anti-Japanese resentment and to warn the host governments of the danger of losing economic independence. Yet ASEAN has only limited choices. There is need for technological know-how and grants as well as capital inflow from Japan to assist in the process of industrialization of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. These countries are anxious to join the club of newly industrialized countries (NICs) applying the pattern of Singapore; thus it is necessary for them to maintain the present relationship. In sum, ASEAN needs Japan.

Japan, on her part, views ASEAN as an important grouping from a political as well as an economic standpoint. ASEAN constitutes a vast area with a population of more than 250 million and rich resources. If ASEAN is successful in its economic development and the political changes that follow underwrite national resilience, it can play an important role in maintaining stability throughout Southeast Asia, thereby containing communism. Like the PRC, which would like to see the present stable situation in the region continue so that it can proceed with its four modernizations, Japan also desires a stable Asia, to support its economic programs. If the equilibrium in the region is upset by internal struggles or war, as in Cambodia, it is detrimental for every country concerned, including Japan—perhaps more so for Japan because of its status as a rich, industrial power with great dependence on trade. Thus, the peace and prosperity of ASEAN is to the advantage of Japan, and there is every reason to expect Japan to continue its support for ASEAN. The significance Japan attaches to ASEAN can be seen from the ASEAN tours that each new Japanese prime minister takes, a ritual which has been now practiced for almost a decade.

IV. INDIVIDUAL ASEAN COUNTRIES AND THE MAJOR POWERS

Any discussion of ASEAN as a unit must focus upon generalizations. This has a certain validity because wherever possible, ASEAN is pledged to speak with a single voice, and when this is not possible, an effort is made to shelve the matter or obscure any differences with vague language. Yet it is well known that on some issues there are significant differences, among them issues pertaining to relations with the major powers.

Disagreements are natural, given the different historical experiences, different geopolitics, and different stages of development characterizing the individual ASEAN countries. The Philippines and Thailand have a favorable attitude toward the United States because of their long history of friendly relations, whereas Indonesia, because of a background of pursuing the principle of equidistance, is more careful in expressing its feelings or making commitments. Singapore and Malaysia, members

23 ASEAN will need Japan for its industrialization policy. It also needs Japanese investment, aid, and technology for its domestic development. The only alternative in Asia is probably South Korea. However, South Korea is still not comparable to Japan in its economic capacity.
24 Charles W. Freeman, Jr., Deputy Chief of Mission, American Embassy, Beijing, special lecture given at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, November 10, 1983.
of the Five Power Defense Agreement (the other three being Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand), are indirectly related to the U.S., which has separate agreements with Australia and New Zealand. But generally speaking, they consider the U.S. a strong asset to ASEAN. The U.S. is not a threat economically or politically because of its open-market economy and its democratic political system.

The U.S. is counted on for more investment in the ASEAN countries. Malaysia has recently expressed such a desire. The U.S., moreover, is still a prime source of military aid. Thailand has recently asked for U.S. cooperation in the purchase of modern jets to strengthen its air force. The U.S. is thus seen as a power with which most of the individual countries in ASEAN hope to maintain a close relationship for reasons that encompass security, economic development, and political compatibility.

Japan’s relations with the individual ASEAN countries is most discernible in trade, investment, aid, and technological cooperation, as we have emphasized. All five countries welcome Japan’s economic role, although there has been resentment over the persistent problem of trade imbalance in favor of Japan by certain members, as noted earlier. Indeed, Japan’s success in economic development has become an inspiration for the ASEAN countries to such an extent that Malaysia has advocated a Look East policy. Although this policy can be interpreted as an effort to turn to Asia, it is significant that Japan along with South Korea has been cited as a model. The prime minister of Singapore also would like his countrymen to follow Japanese working habits and ethics. It has been facetiously said that Singapore wants “to Fuji-xerox” Japan in economic production. In Thailand, there has been much discussion about quality control (QC) circles, to name only a few cases.

But the ASEAN countries have one common feeling: while Japan seeks the image of an Asian state, it behaves in many ways like a Western power. Perhaps this is an inaccurate perception. Since Japan is a world economic power, it must balance its global and regional interests. Yet despite the public statements made by Japanese leaders, the commitment of Japan to play a more active political role in the region has left much to be desired. Japan lacks real commitment for ASEAN other than to seek maximum trade opportunities. One ASEAN observer summarized his opinions by quoting a scholar who likened Japanese foreign policy to a bamboo thicket, “full and attractive in appearance, resilient in all kinds of weather, but lacking in real substance and crowding out all around it that are reached by its roots.”

27 General Arthit Kamlang-ek, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Commander of the Army, expressed hope that the U.S. Congress would approve the sale of advanced F16 fighter planes to the Royal Thai Air Force. Bangkok Post, January 13, 1984.
28 A Malaysian scholar who participated in the seminar Japanese Studies in ASEAN: A Survey of Strengths and Weaknesses expressed the view that a Japanese studies center would be established in Malaysia in the near future. He volunteered to organize the next seminar in Malaysia adding that the prime minister who advocated the “Look East” policy would be pleased to have Malaysia serve as host.
29 This view was expressed by Dr. Narongchhai Akrasanee, at the Thai-Japanese dialogue, Bangkok, 1983.
30 This view was expressed by Dr. Somsukdi Xuto, former minister of the Office of the Prime Minister, Bangkok, 1982.
attractive Japanese promises are often unfulfilled; nonetheless, because of its economic prowess, Japan has the capacity to continue to prosper despite a changing strategic situation in the region.32

With the exception of Thailand, which, generally speaking, was spared fighting and Japanese atrocities during World War II, there is still fear of Japanese military expansion in the ASEAN region. The question whether Japan will rearm has become a matter of concern for the ASEAN countries especially the Philippines because of its geographic proximity and its bitter war-time experiences. Thus, when the U.S. urged Japan to increase its defense budget, the ASEAN members viewed the request with mixed feelings. On the one hand, a militarily strong Japan may serve as a further balance against the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China. But on the other hand, a militarily strong Japan may lead to the revival of an aggressive policy. Despite Japan’s claim that its defense budget is only 0.9 percent of its gross national product (GNP), the absolute amount is bigger than the total national budget of Thailand.33 To be sure, present expenditures are not sufficient to turn Japan into a military power, but if the trend of increasing military spending continues, it will cause apprehension.34

Because of its image as “Japan, Incorporated” and because of its wartime military operations, Japan has been moving cautiously in playing a strategic and political role in the region. The Fukuda pledge is certainly aimed at assuring ASEAN that Japan will not become a threat nor a destabilizing factor as a military power. In addition, Japan has tried to shy away even from the role of economic leader for ASEAN, despite suggestions from one ASEAN member that such is the case.35

Given all of the complex factors, one can generalize that Japan and the individual ASEAN countries have been getting along reasonably well although elements of distrust can be clearly detected. In many respects, one can say that Japan and the ASEAN countries have been engaged in a love-hate relationship.

The relationship between the individual ASEAN countries and the Soviet Union does not differ greatly from that of ASEAN as a group. Such variations in relations with the Soviet Union as exist reflect specific circumstances, including attitudes toward, and relations with, the PRC and the U.S. Thailand, having established a close relation with both China and the U.S., and being deeply concerned about the Vietnamese presence on its borders, tilts strongly away from Moscow. Since the resumption of diplomatic relations with the PRC, both M. R. Kukrit Pramoj and General Prem Tinsulanonda have paid official visits to Beijing as prime ministers, along with numerous other groups—scholars, athletes, and dance troupes. No such

32 Ibid.
33 Approximately US$10 billion.
34 The rise of Nakasone at first caused concern among Japan observers because of Nakasone’s reputation as a rightist. He favored a bigger defense budget, which is in line with the present U.S. administration policy.
35 Boonchu Rojanasathien, the former deputy prime minister of Thailand, for example, asked Japan to take the lead by saying: “We know, for example, that COMECON is led by the Soviet Union, and the Western democracies are led by the United States. It is around great powers that other smaller countries rally. In this case, I would suggest that Japan has to fill the role of leader in the ASEAN region.” Japan and Thailand: New Dimensions of Dialogue, keynote address, pp. 6–7.
cordiality has been extended to Moscow, although General Kriangsuk Chomanand when he was prime minister paid visits to both Beijing and Moscow in an effort to balance relations. At present, however, the Soviet press takes a strongly critical attitude toward "ruling circles" in Bangkok.

The Philippines has correct formal relations with the USSR with which it established diplomatic relations a few years ago. However, its ties with the PRC and particularly with the U.S. are much closer, and the latter relationship inhibits great warmth in the Philippine-USSR connection.

Singapore has more meaningful economic relations with the Soviet Union than most other ASEAN members. At least one joint venture was set up, and there is an office of the Narodny Bank in Singapore. Repairs to Soviet merchant ships have taken place there. But ideologically and politically the two countries are far apart.

Malaysia and Indonesia probably offer the best opportunities for increased Soviet influence, primarily because both states view the PRC with greater apprehension than do other ASEAN members. Thus, they are prepared to view with some sympathy any major state that is prepared to act as a restraint on China. Nonetheless, current Soviet relations with these two states are minimal.

The attitudes of individual ASEAN countries toward the People's Republic of China are the most controversial, although the full range of differences has not been brought to the surface. This issue must be discussed by taking into account Vietnam and the Cambodian issue.

The ASEAN member exposed to the most danger from Vietnam and the Sino-Vietnam conflict is Thailand. Being a frontline state having a common border with Cambodia and Laos, Thailand is vulnerable to attack by Vietnamese forces now occupying Cambodia. Violations of Thai sovereignty by Vietnamese troops in hot pursuit of the Khmer Rouge have occurred at various times. Thailand views Vietnam, backed by the USSR, as an expansionist country and a direct threat to Thailand's security. As a balance against this threat, the PRC is seen as the most effective power to discourage the Vietnamese from further aggression. The PRC's pledge to come to Thailand's assistance in the event of an attack by Vietnam has served not only as a moral support, but as a genuine deterrent. The PRC has tied down a large number of regular Vietnamese armed forces along its borders where more than one million Chinese troops are stationed. Although Thailand is aware that the PRC has a different political-economic system and in the long run may pose a danger to Thailand's security, for the time being the PRC is counted as a "friend." Thailand is also aware that the PRC is forced by the Sino-Soviet rift and the Sino-Vietnamese conflict to pursue a policy of wooing Thailand, inducing it among other acts to reduce its assistance to the insurgency movement. Singapore, as the most vocal member on the Cambodia issue, holds a common view with Thailand. Thailand and Singapore agree that the strategy adopted by ASEAN is correct, at least for the present, even though, for domestic political reasons, Singapore does not have diplomatic relations with the PRC.

The cases of Malaysia and Indonesia are different. Because of the 1965 unsuccessful coup in which the PKI played a leading role and which allegedly had the support of the PRC, because of the 1969 racial disturbances in Malaysia, and because
of the important economic role of the overseas Chinese in both countries (and their sizable number in Malaysia), Indonesia and Malaysia view the PRC as a long-term threat to them and to ASEAN. Because of its geographic proximity and because some residents of Chinese origin have been suspected of serving as a fifth column for the PRC, the PRC is viewed as a greater threat than the distant Soviet Union. Hence the present policy of ASEAN toward Vietnam is not the best strategy in the view of certain Indonesian and Malaysian leaders. It is felt that a strong and viable Vietnam might serve as a buffer against the PRC, thus becoming a factor working for the advantage of ASEAN including Thailand. This view is not shared by Thailand and Singapore. Although this difference between Thailand-Singapore and Indonesia-Malaysia has not been made fully public, it is commonly heard in private talks. The point is how long this difference can continue to be hidden under the facade of unity and solidarity. The time may come when Indonesia may say to Thailand that it cannot continue to adhere to the present policy, although this is not likely to be the case for the foreseeable future.  

The Philippines is yet a different case. It is an island nation far from the Asian continent and deeply preoccupied with its internal problems, especially the insurgencies. Unlike the other four ASEAN members, who have adopted a stand on the present policy, the Philippines has remained somewhat aloof. However, the Philippines has endorsed the ASEAN political stand toward Vietnam and Cambodia, and it has also maintained friendly relations with China.

But apart from the frontline argument pursued by Thailand, another dimension must be taken into account in regard to the Cambodian situation. The fact that 180,000 Vietnamese troops have to occupy Cambodia shows that the puppet regime of Heng Samrin cannot survive on its own. A puppet regime has been set up through the armed invasion of an external power. In a sense, this represents a new form of revolution, an alternative to the Maoist model whereby indigenous forces take over the countryside and gradually surround and capture the cities, the center of power. In this case, an outside force—another state—strikes for the capital and then implants a rival indigenous element that takes power under its protection. The Afghanistan situation is another example. If this strategy, forwarded by the Vietnamese and the Russians, is allowed to develop unchallenged, it can be used elsewhere, including Thailand. What is to prevent a foreign force from “liberating” several provinces, setting up a rival government, and causing this government to sign a security agreement with it? Thus, Vietnam’s occupation of Cambodia is not merely a case of a

36 Dr. Lie Tek Tjeng of the Indonesian Institute of Science expressed concern that the present policy of ASEAN, which Indonesia and Malaysia had to follow because of the need to present an image of unity, may run into difficulties if Indonesia one day adopts a different line of thinking. Thailand should not take it for granted that it can always expect Indonesia to adhere to the present policy. Discussions with Dr. Lie Tek Tjeng, Jakarta, September 23, 1983.

37 The Philippine ambassador to Seoul, Korea, said that bilaterally the Philippines had no problems with the Soviet Union, the PRC, and Vietnam, but as a member of ASEAN or with ASEAN as a group, it was different. In fact, said the ambassador, only Thailand had a problem with Vietnam because of its proximity. Discussions with Ambassador N. Jimanez, Seoul, Korea, October 23, 1983.

conflict between two socialist comrades; it has significant implications for the security of Thailand and the region as a whole. In holding these views, Thailand and Singapore differ from Indonesia and Malaysia where the focus is on "the China problem."

Understanding the situation, Vietnam has defended its campaign in Cambodia as a response to the threat from the PRC.\textsuperscript{39} The latter, in turn, views the Vietnamese actions as expansionism, and Vietnam as the Cuba of the Orient.\textsuperscript{40} The parties that can bring about a settlement of the problem are the PRC and Vietnam,\textsuperscript{41} while the U.S., the USSR, Japan, and ASEAN can play supporting roles. For the past four years ASEAN has been preoccupied with the Vietnam issue. In addition to the internal complexities resulting, ASEAN has recently faced problems in its relations with Australia, because of the refusal of the new Australian government to cosponsor the ASEAN-proposed U.N. resolution on Cambodia.\textsuperscript{42} Thus while the Cambodia issue and the Sino-Vietnam conflict have brought ASEAN closer together in many ways and have caused the PRC's policy to shift toward that of ASEAN, these problems have also taken their toll and served to destabilize the region in some respects. The refugee problems arising from the Communist victory in Vietnam and the Cambodian situation have become a time bomb for Thailand. Almost everyone would agree on the desirability of finding a solution, but none is in sight. There is a danger that the Cambodian issue, which has fostered ASEAN solidarity, will eventually become counterproductive because of the different perceptions and interpretations of the member states.

V. ASEAN: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

As in any regional organization there are conflicting interests between the individual members and the unit as a whole. Balancing such conflicts is a delicate art, but ASEAN has survived for almost two decades. Given the magnitude of problems among the member countries, moreover, it has done reasonably well. A discussion of strengths and weaknesses, and an analysis of their implications for ASEAN's future is now in order.

Strengths of ASEAN

In existence since 1967, ASEAN is today a factor in both regional and international politics. It must be taken into account by all of the major powers. An evaluation of its success at this point would be premature, but no one can doubt that it has played an important role in the past decade, providing impetus for collective decisionmaking and helping to shape the policies of the major states also.

\textsuperscript{39} Zhang Qing, see note 14.
\textsuperscript{40} Dhiravegin, "The Super Powers," p. 98.
\textsuperscript{41} Discussions with the counselor of the India Embassy, Bangkok, December 15, 1983.
\textsuperscript{42} In 1983, the new Australian government refused to cosponsor the ASEAN resolution at the U.N. on the Cambodian issue. This has led to verbal exchanges between ASEAN members, notably Singapore, and Australia. The situation calmed down after the visit of the Australian prime minister to the region. ASEAN and Australia now have reconciled their differences. Bangkok Post, January 18, 1984.
ASEAN as an Entity

In recent years, ASEAN has been active in proposing a Cambodian resolution at the U.N. As an organization, it has also become the focus of diplomatic discussions and academic research. Cooperation in such areas as economic policy, cultural exchange, a common political stand, and the ASEAN declaration of making the region a "zone of peace, freedom, and neutrality" (ZOPFAN) has been frequently voiced. Apart from cooperation in various undertakings at the government level, there have been scores of nongovernmental examples of cooperation involving ASEAN members. In sum, ASEAN has become an entity. This achievement can be attributed to the emphasis upon unity and solidarity cultivated by all ASEAN members which in turn reflects the desire of the members to deal with others as a bloc—for example, in relations with the European Economic Community. At the same time, ASEAN allows room for maneuver for individual countries where interests differ.43

An ASEAN Identity

Related to the achievement of an ASEAN entity is the gradual realization of an ASEAN identity. Among the ASEAN members, this sense of ASEAN identity is not usually expressed nor is it consciously noticed. But it is apparent, especially when ASEAN members participate in international seminars. When the issue of regional interests comes up, ASEAN members usually express a common viewpoint in support of each other. Besides, the ASEAN members commonly hold smaller seminars among themselves after the adjournment of international seminars. Although there has not as yet developed a full ASEAN identity, the feeling of being a fellow ASEAN is emerging; this sense of identity will likely become stronger as ASEAN develops a closer relationship among its units and becomes more successful.

There have been talks about adopting an ASEAN language as a medium of communication. Although one would anticipate problems in such an effort, the very fact that talks along this line have taken place suggests that the ASEAN leaders expect the organization to develop a grater degree of integration than exists at present. The absence of a visa requirement for ASEAN nationals who travel in ASEAN countries is one development, psychologically promoting such an identity. At the Jakarta airport, there is a checkpoint at the immigration desk marked “ASEAN.”

ASEAN as an Alternative Model of Development

The past decade has seen the ASEAN nations’ impressive economic growth, which took place even during the oil crisis. The Western capitalist countries suffered

economic setbacks after the oil crisis, and the socialist states did not achieve the growth they had projected, but ASEAN as a whole did well. Some scholars started to talk about an alternative model, “the Asian way” or “the ASEAN way of doing things” (see tables 1 and 2). Although it is too early to say whether ASEAN will be able to continue its present level of performance, the record provides reason for optimism. ASEAN has grown more confident of its economic-political system, giving ASEAN members the belief that its present system may be the most appropriate pattern of development. The alternative pursued has freed ASEAN from the feeling of having to choose between a capitalist model in the U.S. mold and a socialist model of economic development of the Soviet or Chinese type. ASEAN is a hybrid pursuing a semiauthoritarian political system and an open market economy but with governmental support.

Table 1
Demographic and Economic Statistics for Selected Asian Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population (millions)</th>
<th>Area (1,000 km²)</th>
<th>GNP (1981) (US$ billion)</th>
<th>per capita (US$)</th>
<th>Annual growth 1977–81 (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>39.33</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>1,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>3,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong subtotal</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>5,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(62.86)</td>
<td>(135)</td>
<td>(139.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>154.66</td>
<td>2,027</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>50.74</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>48.49</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>14.14</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>1,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore subtotal</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>5,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ASEAN total)</td>
<td>(270.50)</td>
<td>(3,172)</td>
<td>(192.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>118.45</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>1,139.3</td>
<td>9,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,020.67</td>
<td>9,597</td>
<td>328.0</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a 1977–1980
b 1976–1980

Table 2
Structure of the Production of ASEAN Countries, 1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Manufacturing</th>
<th>Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASEAN as an Example of Regional Cooperation**

ASEAN is the outcome of initiatives by its indigenous peoples. Its forerunner ASA was also conceived by the natives of the region. No "outsider" participated in the creation of ASEAN. A diplomat of one of the ASEAN states said half-jokingly: "For better or for worse, ASEAN was born in my house." The membership of the sixth state, Brunei, in January 1984, has strengthened the organization by making it clear that membership is not closed.

One important aspect of ASEAN as a viable organization is the effort made by its leaders to bury, at least for the present, historical conflicts and traditional policy differences. Prior concepts of national interests are moderated by a new sense of regional interests. In this respect, observers of ASEAN from its inception have given credit to the leaders of the organization who have been trying to preserve it through genuine consultation and consensus building.

**ASEAN's Common Political Front**

Although the Cambodian issue can be considered a destabilizing factor for the region, as noted, it has to date helped unify ASEAN and enabled it to present a common political front against the Vietnamese military presence in Cambodia. ASEAN called for the withdrawal of foreign troops stationed in Cambodia, and it supports Democratic Kampuchea as the legitimate government to represent Cambodia at the U.N. For four consecutive years, the ASEAN-sponsored resolution has been approved overwhelmingly in the world organization. In the last General Assembly meeting, the Soviet Union and its allies appeared to launch only a pro forma protest against the seating of Democratic Kampuchea. Despite the weak status of the rival coalition government of Prince Sihanouk, Son Sann, and Khieu Samphan, the Heng Samrin regime has been unable to establish its legitimacy in view of the presence of Vietnamese armed forces in the country. It is not certain how long this diplomatic and political game will continue in favor of ASEAN, but ASEAN has presented its resolution as a common policy to the U.N. members, preventing Vietnam and the Soviet Union from achieving their goal.

**Weaknesses of ASEAN**

Despite its impressive performance, there are areas where the picture is less positive.

**Historical Conflicts among the ASEAN Countries**

Like many countries situated near each other, the most salient conflict among ASEAN members has related to territory. Part of the territorial conflicts stemmed

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44 Discussions with Dr. Thanat Khoman, former minister of foreign affairs and deputy prime minister of Thailand, 1983.

from the colonial legacy. The most serious conflict was that between Indonesia and Malaysia. President Sukarno’s *confrontasi* policy against Malaysia raised concern among all of the countries in the region. Further, a strained relationship arose between Indonesia and Singapore when the latter, in accordance with a judgment by its Court of Justice, executed two Indonesians found guilty of espionage. There has also been the conflict between Malaysia and the Philippines over Sabah. The separatist movement in the four provinces in the south of Thailand where most residents are Muslim Thai of Malay origin is believed to have received support from elements who now reside in Malaysia. Although territorial conflicts have been temporarily set aside, they may again flare up in the future. This type of controversy requires great caution on the part of leadership since it invariably touches on deeply felt nationalist passions. And these passions are not dead. One scholar believes that the next summit, scheduled to take place in Manila, has not been held because the issue of Sabah still remains an obstacle.

**Problems of Diversity**

The historical experiences of the ASEAN countries, which vary from country to country, have led to different interpretations of political situations. The experiences of the ASEAN countries, except Thailand, with Japan during World War II have led to an apprehension of a resurgence of Japanese militarism, as previously indicated. This is especially true of the Philippines. Because of the atrocities of the Japanese soldiers during the occupation period, and because of Japan’s geographic proximity, there is a fear of Japanese encroachment, especially if Japan again becomes a military power. The coup staged by the PKI in 1965, of which the PRC was allegedly supportive, and the 1969 racial conflict in Malaysia following the election, have served as a warning of the potential dangers stemming from any interventionist foreign policy on the part of the PRC and from racial tensions involving residents of Chinese origin in the two countries. Both countries have thus been careful in their relations with the PRC. The fear that the PRC may exploit the ethnic Chinese for political purposes has made Indonesian and Malaysian leaders along with those of Singapore cautious when they have been approached by the PRC to develop a closer relationship. Diplomatic relations between Indonesia and the PRC, in fact, have been suspended since 1967. The PRC’s reaction to the issue of Vietnamese of Chinese origin who were expelled by Hanoi served as a warning to the ASEAN countries that the PRC still considers residents of their countries of Chinese origin as being under PRC protection. In fact, some suspect that Vietnam moved against its Chinese population partly to expose PRC policies with respect to overseas Chinese. Unlike the Chinese in Thailand and the Philippines, the Chinese in Indonesia and Malaysia have generally not been assimilated into the mainstream of the society. The *Bumiputra* (sons of the soil, i.e., Malay) policy of Malaysia illustrates the fact that there is a distinction between the

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46 Sinaga, “ASEAN . . . Problems.”

47 Lie Tek Tjeng, see note 36.
**Effects of Changes**

ASEAN as an organization would certainly be affected by any change of regime in its member countries to one inimical to the existing socioeconomic system. Although such a drastic change is unlikely, the possibility cannot be overlooked. If it took place, the whole structure of ASEAN might be adversely affected, and its goals made irrelevant. One can hardly visualize a Communist Thailand, for example, continuing to work smoothly with the remaining ASEAN members.

Another factor that might affect ASEAN negatively is a change of leadership in the ASEAN countries. The present generation of ASEAN leaders has been working closely together for a common goal. They have shared certain values, especially the need for an ASEAN with an image of unity. They have been willing to set aside national and personal differences to preserve the organization. However, a new generation a decade or so from now may not share the sentiments of the older generation and may set perceived national interests above regional interests. If this came about, ASEAN as an organization would lose vitality. The current ASEAN

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48 The different line of policy was obvious especially regarding the approach to the question of Cambodia. Indonesia and Malaysia adopted a moderate line as opposed to a hardline attitude toward Vietnam. This can be seen from the Kuantan Declaration made jointly by the Indonesian president and the Malaysian prime minister in March 1980. Both leaders expressed the view that Vietnam should be free from the influence of either the Soviet Union or the PRC; further, that Western countries should help Vietnam reconstruct its economy, and ASEAN should recognize Vietnamese security concerns at the same time that ASEAN emphasized the need to alleviate pressure upon Thailand. In April the Thai prime minister visited Jakarta, voicing his uneasiness regarding the Kuantan Declaration. In view of this, Indonesia decided to play it down in order to preserve ASEAN unity. Lau Teik Soon, “ASEAN and the Cambodian Problem,” *Asian Survey*, vol. XXII, no. 6 (June 1982), pp. 552–553.
leaders are hoping that the effective operation of ASEAN will underwrite its appeal to the next generation of leaders.49

Changes in Global Politics

The ASEAN countries' relationship has been cemented by a common political stand and a shared concern on the issue of security, notably the Cambodian issue, reinforced by the shift in regional and global politics, that is, the Sino-Soviet rift, the Sino-U.S. normalization of diplomatic relations, the Sino-Vietnamese conflict, and the Russian-Vietnamese alliance, all of which have created a sense of insecurity and a need for ASEAN to adjust to new situations. This would indicate that ASEAN's viability results in considerable part from the need to react to a changing environment, regional and global, hence making it a product of external circumstances rather than internal growth. What if the situation changes? For example, if the Cambodian problem is solved, will ASEAN continue to function dynamically as an organization of regional cooperation? What if the powers now in conflict (the Soviet Union and the PRC, Vietnam and the PRC) reconcile their differences? How would ASEAN react?51 Would ASEAN continue to be able to maintain its national resilience and uphold the ZOPFAN ideal for the ASEAN region if the socialist states of the area reduce tension among themselves?

Different Levels of Economic Success

The ASEAN members, with the exception of Singapore, are presently more or less on the same level of economic development. They are what could be called a middle-level group in the developmental sequence. Among the five, only Singapore is one of the newly industrializing countries. If other members of ASEAN, for example Malaysia and Thailand, were to follow Singapore while the Philippines and Indonesia lagged behind, the two groups would surely start to speak in different languages. Their interests would increasingly diverge, priorities would differ, perceptions of issues would vary.52 This would probably affect the relationships among

49 This concern was voiced by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew who warned that the newly emerging leaders of ASEAN may not have the same commitment to regional cooperation as their seniors. *The Nation Review*, October 6, 1983. But Dr. Sarasin Viraphol, director of policy and planning of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, is still optimistic. He believes that ASEAN will not change drastically and that the new generation of leaders will pursue similar policies. Discussions with Dr. Sarasin Viraphol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 23, 1983.

50 Whenever the Soviet Union and China or Vietnam and China show signs of compromise, concern is expressed among the ASEAN members. There have been some signs that the Soviet Union and the PRC have reduced tension between them despite the conditions set by the PRC for the Soviet Union to (1) withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, (2) cease supporting Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia, and (3) withdraw troops from Outer Mongolia and along the Chinese border. See footnote 41. See also "Closer to Compromise?" *Far Eastern Economic Review* (December 15, 1983).

51 As already mentioned, basically ASEAN is anti-Communist. ASEAN does not want to see the Communist states establish cordial relations with one another. If the present conflicts among the socialist states continue, the situation is seen as working for the benefit of ASEAN.

52 Already there are signs of incompatibility between Singapore and other ASEAN members because of the different levels of economic development, notably industrialization; see Robert L. Rau, "The Role of Singapore in ASEAN," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 3, no. 2 (September 1981), pp. 107–109.
the ASEAN countries individually and ASEAN as a group. Asymmetrical levels of development among the ASEAN countries could easily lead to asymmetrical relations and hence conflicts of interest. This possibility must be kept in mind. Complaints made by some Thai officials and businessmen against Singapore’s “holier than thou” attitude are related to Singapore’s economic success and hence its different behavior.

**ASEAN and the Prospects for a Larger Organization**

ASEAN’s strength could be diluted if it were drawn into a bigger organization. What are the prospects for some type of comprehensive grouping? There have been several attempts to persuade individual ASEAN countries of the merits of a Pacific structure. The Russian proposal for a collective security agreement for Asia is a case in point. But more relevant is the idea of a Pacific Community earlier proposed by Japan. Despite the argument that ASEAN would stand to gain from joining such an organization—which would include the U.S., Canada, Japan, China, Korea, ASEAN, and others—it is feared that given the level of economic development and the size of the organization, ASEAN would become just a small part of this Pacific Community cooperation scheme. Moreover, some suspect that the Pacific Community idea is a scheme to serve Japan’s interests. Thus certain ASEAN members believe that joining such an organization might not greatly benefit ASEAN, its positive aspects notwithstanding. However, there is flexibility on this matter, and discussions continue.

**VI. CONCLUSION**

The growth of ASEAN reflects the reaction of key Southeast Asian states to the international political situation and, most especially, to regional developments. The evolution of ASEAN has been shaped by its relations with the major powers, who have been increasingly involved in regional politics. ASEAN emerged and achieved cohesion in the context of the Sino-Soviet rift, the Cambodian problem, the Sino-Vietnam conflict, U.S.-Soviet rivalry, the political and diplomatic maneuvers of the PRC, the U.S., the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. Despite efforts made by some elements to drive a wedge into ASEAN to destroy its solidarity, ASEAN has survived its initial tests.

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55 Sirikrai, “Japan-ASEAN Relations.”

56 It has been argued that Vietnam and its ally would try to deal with the ASEAN countries separately instead of as a group. This would inevitably lead to differences among the ASEAN members. However, it has been a normal practice for the ASEAN leaders to consult with one another. Even when the Thai prime minister planned to visit the People’s Republic of China, he consulted with his ASEAN friends on the agenda regarding ASEAN.
The success of the ASEAN countries economically has led to their increasing self-confidence. National resiliency has become more than a phase. There is now "an ASEAN way of doing things." But as ASEAN has grown larger and more powerful as a group in terms of political bargaining with the major powers, ASEAN has to guard against certain inherent problems stemming from within itself and its environment. The ASEAN leaders will seek to reinforce the areas that can be considered strengths for the organization, but it will also be important to take note of the weaknesses that have been discussed.

The new configuration of power in East Asia has created a balance allowing ASEAN to concentrate on its internal development, thereby strengthening its national resilience through economic growth, a more equitable income distribution, and a more open political system in which various forms of participation can take place. Indeed, at this juncture when the Sino-Soviet rift, the Sino-Vietnamese conflict, and Sino-U.S. relations have worked for the benefit of ASEAN, a golden opportunity exists to develop the individual ASEAN countries so that ASEAN as an organization can become stronger. If such an effort becomes successful, ASEAN as a group and its members as individual countries will be better able to cope with problems arising from new power configurations.

In conclusion, ASEAN has to acquire strength by using resources based on its determination to maintain national resilience and to make the region a "zone of peace, freedom and neutrality." But to realize these goals, ASEAN also has to create prosperity, and this achievement within each member nation hinges primarily upon efforts from within each state rather than as a result of utilizing the struggles among the major powers in the region or in the international scene. ASEAN has to cease being a dependent variable; at this stage, it has to use its inner strength for growth and development rather than merely react to international and regional politics.
9. Religious, Ethnic, and Ideological Dissension in the ASEAN States

Juwono Sudarsono

INTRODUCTION

Our discussion centers upon the group known as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In the sections that follow, we shall explore the historical and structural background of the ASEAN states, with an emphasis upon the elements that have been conducive to dissension; the symbolic and organizational expressions of conflicts; interstate and regional issues promoting dissidence; and the patterns of governmental response. Since these subjects are often intertwined, we shall not necessarily deal with them in sequence.

Dissent over religious, ethnic, or ideological issues reflects in varying degree a questioning of the authority and legitimacy of the government of the state concerned. Social scientists continue to dispute the best means of understanding the phenomena of militant dissidence or insurgency. Some would regard religious, ethnic, and ideological conflict as a natural condition rather than a deviation from the normal pattern of political life. Yet the nation-state remains the predominant source of governance in the contemporary world and in order to play its role effectively, it must have a substantial degree of acceptance by the citizenry as the legal (legitimate) source of authority. Hence, dissidence, while it can be accepted within bounds, must not be allowed to threaten the social order.

There can be no clear-cut separation among the religious, ethnic, and ideological components of dissent in ASEAN states, because in almost all instances a fusion is present, with the particular mix unique to each situation. Similarly, the symbolic or organizational expression of dissent has varied greatly, depending upon the specific issues confronted and the particular strategy adopted.

It is also important to realize that the governmental response to dissension may not represent the concerted view of the entire governmental structure, but rather reflect a reaction, relatively spontaneous, taken by only a segment of the government.
It is easy to overestimate the coordination, or the consistency with which governments approach the problems of dissidence. Clear objectives, precisely delineated, are rarely present.

Because of the many variables, and the imprecise nature of the interactions involved, the following discourse must be considered tentative, and the concluding section on future prospects subject to revision.

THAILAND

The Southern Problem

Since Thailand acquired its southern provinces from Malaya in 1909, Thailand's Muslim-populated southern border provinces have frequently voiced dissent over policies of the central government in Bangkok. The people of the neighboring states of Kelantan in Malaysia and Narathiwat in Thailand speak the same language, practice the same religion, and dress in almost the same manner. Family ties and the cross-border influx of Malaysian Muslims into Thailand often cement the ethnic and religious bonds between peoples nominally of two nationalities.

The rise of Muslim dissension in southern Thailand is directly related to the history of the formation of the modern Thai and Malaya (later Malaysian) states. The traditional roles of Muslim royalty and noblemen in Thailand’s Pattani and Satun provinces gradually diminished as the modern Thai bureaucracy took form in the 1930s. With the expansion of the scope and control of the modern bureaucracy emanating from Bangkok, the political influence and role of the Muslims diminished, although Islamic identity continued to be featured in educational, legal, and cultural institutions. The choice of Malay as the main language of communication in southern Thailand later provided impetus for religious and political expression.1

With the advent of political ideologies from the West serving as a counterpoint to the assertion of state power on the part of the modernizing Thai bureaucracy, the stage was set for clashes between two conflicting concepts of political modernization.

In later years, Muslim nationalism in southern Thailand adopted the political symbols of modern nationalism from Malaya and even Indonesia. The Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) was founded as a Muslim-Malay organization of the southern Thai provinces advocating separation from the Buddhist state of Thailand and calling for the union of Malay and Indonesia into a pan-Malay organization.

By 1967 the Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO) was founded in Thailand, followed four years later by the Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Pattani (BNPP). Despite its strong ethnic identification with pan-Malayism, the BNPP gradually became more localist in orientation, with the “liberation” of southern Thailand as its goal. It also openly declared that its aim was to challenge the Thai government’s legitimacy in the region by asserting BNPP’s authority through armed

insurrection and by establishing links with the Islamic Secretariat, the Arab League, and the Palestine Liberation Organization.\(^2\)

Underneath the political and religious contention over national identity and sovereignty, the root cause of the problems in southern Thailand may perhaps be understood in perspective through an analysis of the underlying social structure of the area. The Muslim population of the southern states constitutes about 3 percent of the total Thai population, which is 96 percent Buddhist. In the southernmost provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satul, however, 50 percent of the population of the combined provinces are Muslim. Except in Satul, the Muslims in these provinces are culturally and ethnically distinct from other Thais, speaking a Malay dialect common to the language spoken in the West Malaysia state of Kelantan.

From the beginning, the problem of Thailand's southern provinces was the existence of a varied mix of ethnic, religious, and ideological symbols. The Thai Muslims have resisted political integration and cultural assimilation into the Thai state. The strong identification of Islam with Malay ethnicity has clashed with the priorities of Thai citizenship and the Buddhist religion enshrined in the Thai monarchy and its state bureaucracy.

Throughout 1960–1970, there were periodic tensions between Thai officialdom and Muslims who wanted to retain their cultural identity through Islamic schools and other institutions of education. The limited participation of Thai Muslims in the Thai bureaucracy and the fact that Thai educational facilities were often restricted to Muslims trusted by their Thai superiors in Bangkok frustrated Muslims schooled in the concept of the organic unity between religion and state.\(^3\)

After 1976, however, the Thai government accepted a higher percentage of Thai Muslims in the local bureaucracy in the southern provinces. In addition, opportunities were created for more Thai Muslims to study in Malaysia and Indonesia, a reflection of the impact of ASEAN in the affairs of isolated local governments. Despite these improvements, intractable problems remained, which overshadowed the degree of progress in political accommodation between the central government in Bangkok and Thai Muslims.

The structure of the economy in the four provinces of southern Thailand made accommodation difficult. Suspicion, fear, and distrust remain on both sides. Despite the increase in the number of Thai Muslims working for the local Thai bureaucracy, certain economic issues have not been resolved. Most people in the four provinces make their living from agriculture, fishing, and small holdings in the form of fruit, rubber, and coconut plantations. Because of the seasonal nature of these occupations, a high degree of underemployment prevails. In contrast, Thai-Chinese generally operate the modern commercial economy, while the Thai majority command the small businesses centered in the provincial capitals. Faced with such economic and institutional disadvantages, the Thai Muslims have little trust in a system that in their eyes is permanently stacked against them.

\(^2\) *Asiaweek*, July 22, 1983.

The impact of modern education, brought about by the Bangkok leadership’s commitment to modernization, has resulted in a further erosion of the influence of local Muslim religious leaders on political socialization and ideological commitment.

Lacking the organizational ability to overcome the policies of the Thai state, many younger Muslims in the four provinces have realized that their economic and educational handicaps can only be overcome if they work harder within the system, even at the price of accepting the Thai language as the official medium of the bureaucracies.

Under these circumstances, the combined expressions of ethnicity, religion, and politics have led to varying strategies and styles of dissension. Though up-to-date data are hard to collect, scholars and journalists generally agree that Thai Muslim dissension has been channeled through three main organizations: Barisan Revolusi Nasional, the Pattani United Liberation Organization, and Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Pattani.

BRN was formed about twenty years ago and defines its goals as the “liberation” of all 1.2 million Muslims in Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala, and Satun provinces. BRN’s small armed units total 1,500 men spread over Bannang Sata and Saba Yoi district and Sisakorn, a district of Narathiwat province. There is no firm evidence of BRN involvement in urban terrorism, but Thai police believe that in a series of bomb attacks in Yala and Songkhla provinces between November 1979 and March 1980 BRN’s members killed 12 people and wounded more than 100. BRN’s radicalism has disturbed Thai authorities because of the possibility that a loose alliance between BRN and the Communist party of Malay (CPM) may serve to legitimize Communist propaganda and marshal wider support from the Malay population, a noticeable trend in the mid-1980s.4

PULO is generally regarded as the more effective of the various Thai Muslim dissension movements in southern Thailand. First formed in 1967 and led by Bira, a political scientist who left Pattani 22 years ago to study in India, PULO is believed to have six active field commanders. PULO’s leadership until 1982–1983 maintained contacts in Malaysia, Saudia Arabia, and Syria, which drew the attention of the world media. Despite (or because of) assistance from Arab governments totaling millions of dollars, PULO has not been a successful political organization. Indeed, PULO’s international support and credibility suffers from its involvement in a series of bandit acts throughout 1979–1980. In 1977 a PULO armed unit under a Syrian-trained leader attacked the district police station in Bacho, the first time such an act had been committed in Narathiwat province.

The oldest Thai Muslim movement is the BNPP, which a Thai government official claimed in 1978 to have the active support of the Parti Islam (PI) in the Malaysian state of Kelantan. BNPP traces its root to 1947, and until 1977 was led by the grandson of the former sultan of Pattani, who fled to Malaysia when the end of the absolute monarchy in Thailand signaled his own downfall in 1932. After 1978 BNPP’s leadership consisted of a 15-man committee headed by men in their late

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forties and early fifties who had studied in the Middle East. BNPP had to rely on XYZ, a former gang leader, to command its armed insurrection against the Thai government; he returned after a long self-exile and is currently believed to be active in Pa Na Re, a district in Pattani province. His return was supposedly aimed at reviving the Muslims’ flagging fortunes and at presenting the image of a more united Muslim front.

BNPP suffered its worst setback when in the 1978 state elections in Kelantan the defeat of the Parti Islam reduced the moral and political support for the front. With the death of BNPP’s long-time leader in 1977, many of the organization’s leaders broke away to work in the lumber industry in Sabah or settled down in the border district of Tanah Merah, Malaysia, and accepted Malaysian citizenship.5

The Thai government’s reaction to the Thai Muslims (or “the southern problem” as it is popularly known in Thailand) has varied with the times. Many government and media circles agree that the separatist movements have little support, but the seeds of discontent remain. Major obstacles to an effective policy countering Malay separatism are the generally low regard Thai Buddhists have for the less-educated Muslims, a communication gap between Muslims and Buddhists arising from ethnic and religious perceptions, and civil-rights abuses by Thai military and civil officials. Many Thai Muslims believe that although Marshal Phibul Songram’s nationalistic policies in the 1930s may have been abandoned after World War II, they were revived in the 1950s and again in the mid-1970s.

Successive Thai governments have followed an unspoken doctrine of assimilation and integration, often pursued with vigor but with little sensitivity in the lower echelons of officialdom. The problems of integration show in a number of ways. Traditional Muslim elders believe that the Education Ministry’s curriculum is designed to deflect younger Muslims from traditionally held values. For their part, Thai government officials maintain that the Muslims must move away from the traditional extensive emphasis on the Koran if Muslim schools are to be raised to the standards of modern education. Many state-run schools do not teach Malay, and at least 70 percent of the instructors are Buddhists, perhaps a major reason why Muslim bandits justify arson, murder, and kidnapping by invoking the Islamic religion.

Some attempts at accommodation have been made by Thai government authorities, with varying degrees of success. Because many Thai Muslim intent on a civil-service career do not have the education of Buddhist Thai, the government has in the past four years dispensed with central entrance examinations for certain cases, and has reserved a number of university places for them. But there is a long way to go before structural and political problems relating to political advancement and educational opportunity are solved. In the meantime, several government-supported programs of resettlement, which encourage landless Thai Buddhist farmers to move to the south from the country’s northeast region, have been perceived by hard-core Muslim nationalists as “internal colonization.”

5 Ibid.
Despite a tendency to rule out the prospect of a general uprising reaching revolutionary proportions, Thai officials agree that a widespread awakening of political Islam in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution has taken place in southern Thailand. The main worry for the immediate future, however, is the probable effects of Islamic fundamentalism on the international politics of oil. In 1980, a Thai parliamentary commission investigating the causes of dissension in the southern provinces pointed to the weakness of the bureaucracy and the disturbing linkage between senior officials and influential local elites who command the region's extensive deposits of minerals, rubber, and timber. Corruption (spurred by cross-border smuggling), prostitution, and protection rackets involving Thai officials aggravate the Thai Muslim's grievances. Some progress was made after the October 1981 appointment of a popular general as commander of the Fourth Army Region, but the effects of his policies may have been dissipated since his mid-1983 move to Bangkok.

Overall, despite some welcome flexibility and increased toleration of the Thai authorities, there is a widespread belief that government officiousness and corruption, more than Thai Muslim dissension, constitute "the problem of the South."

The Challenge of Thai Communism

History and geography have dictated much of Communist strategy in Thailand. Unlike the situation in many other Southeast Asian nations, the Communist movement in Thailand was not a truly indigenous movement at its outset, since it emerged within the Chinese Communist party in the 1920s.

The leadership of the Communist party of Thailand (CPT) remained largely in the hands of ethnic Chinese even after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Since the 1950s about 2,000 Thai Communist cadres reportedly have had training in China, not a large number considering the estimated 14,000 armed CPT members throughout the country at the height of Communist strength. Another ethnic factor of uncertain significance has been the existence of approximately 35,000 Vietnamese in Thailand's northeast provinces, culturally different and viewed with suspicion by the Thai, especially since many were reportedly affiliated politically with Hanoi. Because of these ethnic factors, the CPT has faced serious problems in appealing to the Thai people. In addition, the event of the cold war in Asia resulted in the Thai nation allying itself with the Western powers through the South-East Asia Treaty Organization in 1954.

For about fifteen years, until 1966, the CPT movement suffered from varying degrees of government repression. In addition, the ethnic and regional diversity of Thailand made it difficult for the CPT to coordinate ideological training designed to make the rural population aware of their economic and political plight under "bureaucratic capitalism" and "United States imperialism." But the difficulty of adapting Maoist principles to the political and geographical realities of Thailand made the leadership realize that Party work would have to be based on multifacted strategies.

Influenced by the Maoist doctrine of encircling the cities from the countryside, the CPT established links with the depressed areas of northeast Thailand, making
little headway among influential academics and city-based professionals. As in the south, the varying ideologies, ethnicities, languages, and cultures produce an inclination on the part of minorities to preserve their separate identities. Increasingly, however, the modern ideology of communism has added grievances rooted in bureaucratic neglect, corruption, and ethnic discrimination. These structural problems, compounded by the perennial problem of administrative control and penetration, have strengthened regional dissension in Thailand's northeast and in the north.\(^6\)

Poverty, alienation, and administrative inefficiency did not by themselves result in the people of northeast Thailand responding to the calls of communism. Indeed, the very nature of the deprivations suffered led to a fundamental problem, which the CPT had to face from an early point. In the northeastern provinces, the CPT concentrated on political propaganda and cadre training, which emphasized the opportunity of transforming oneself from a condition of abject poverty and humiliation to one of power and strength. At the same time, the CPT, applying coercive and persuasive means, gathered a following from regional diversities, ranging from the Mekong River area bordering on Laos to the northeastern regions toward the border with Cambodia. In building support, the CPT placed heavy emphasis on local grievances. The propagation of Communist ideology had a distinctively Thai flavor by concentrating on political education rather than on a military approach that would challenge the power center in Bangkok. The spread of CPT influence in the northeastern provinces rested upon a strategy of seeking to transform the village-based population in four stages: (1) establishment of a Party organization, (2) local struggle, (3) the creation of liberated villages, and (4) the consolidation of state power in the villages through provincial Party officials who would control local government. By emphasizing the need to gain the acceptance of the local village communities, the CPT sought to establish itself as a mobile political apparatus, able to identify with problems of poverty and corruption, without having to rely heavily on those coercive measures that would result in an immediate government reaction and antagonize the people they hoped to marshal to create a wider political base.

The ethnic factor in political mobilization has been particularly relevant to the CPT's work in the northern provinces. Essentially playing upon cultural differences between Thai from the lowlands and the Meos, the CPT and its China-affiliated Party cadres at one point successfully gained the sympathy, even the armed assistance, of many Meo tribal groups.\(^7\)

Yet could a network of local grievances and ethnic issues—somewhat incompatible in themselves—be built into a national movement? Could broader regional issues be created that would provide the basis for insurrection and the necessary militancy to sustain an indigenous Thai Communist movement? Many outside observers came to feel that the key resistance to the central government generated by the CPT was an incohesive amalgam of ethnic antagonism and local grievances.

The Thai Communist tactics of building support from the grassroots up, derived from studies of Maoist strategy, had a degree of success until the early 1970s. Like

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\(^6\) Girling, op. cit., pp. 262–264.

their Chinese mentors, the CPT leaders talked of the need to consummate a national democratic revolution before achieving a socialist revolution, thereby going through the "managed bourgeois" stage, preserving the peasants' desires for land and other concerns at the local level. Marxian principles of organization, however, were frequently hampered by the deeply rooted traditionalist nature of Thai rural society with its base in patron-client relations and intensive localism.

Given the vicissitudes of rural work, CPT fortunes have been determined more by the shifts in thought and policy on the part of the urban Marxists (including most CPT leaders), centered in Bangkok. It is difficult to determine the degree to which urban Marxism in Thailand has effected a genuine union with the rural guerrilla movement flying Communist banners, despite the fact that Thai culture, urban and rural, is relatively homogeneous.

Whatever the problems of coordination, there has been a correlation between governmental security policies and the degree of success achieved in Communist mobilization efforts, in Thailand as elsewhere. The CPT strategy of encircling the cities through its three-phase program has been steadily confronted with the difficulty of sustaining momentum at precisely the points at which rural- and urban-based activities were supposed to mesh.®

In the 1960s and 1970s, the CPT relied heavily upon rural organizational and mobilization programs, seeing Thailand as an overwhelmingly agrarian society. A recent assessment by the Party's Politburo, however, points to the need to redefine the Party's strategy and tactics (thereby affecting policies, organization, and even ideology) in the light of changing domestic and external circumstances. Gradually, it has been realized that Thailand is rapidly becoming a capitalist society, with its attendant inner contradictions. This development, as the current CPT leaders view it, favors an emphasis on urban-centered united front work, with linkages outward to the rural-based revolutionary movement. In the process of trying to make this change, however, the Thai Communists were suddenly confronted with a major new difficulty. The Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia forcefully raised to the fore the powerful forces of Thai nationalism and ethnicity, with the call for unity to face a common enemy. The call of the CPT for Thai to join an international revolutionary movement could have very limited appeal, especially under conditions where the Chinese and Vietnamese Communists were literally at each other's throats. One might argue, of course, that through the unification of the Thai people against Vietnam, together with the rapid development of the economic modernization program, the Thai national democratic revolution was being brought into existence, thereby providing the basis for a second socialist stage. But this was theory; in practice, the Communist movement faced recurrent weaknesses and divisions under the impetus of the new events.

Whatever its strategic dilemma, the CPT’s primary problems relate to the issue of how to unify an organization based on parochial interests, hence, having different tactics and programatic priorities. As noted earlier, in the 1960s and early 1970s a rural struggle away from the Bangkok area was feasible, both because the government’s degree of control weakened as it was extended outward and because the Party had been able to integrate its central ideological themes with the aspirations of ethnic and peasant groups in the northeast. Moreover, CPT units were often assisted by Communists in China and Indochina.

In the mid-1970s, in the wake of the student uprisings in Bangkok, the CPT gained intellectual favor among some “progressive” students and with labor and farmer unions, despite the problems faced by an individual or organization depicted as a part of a Communist-directed united front. These events promoted heightened CPT emphasis on “foreign domination” (American military bases, Japanese multinationals, and the increased pervasiveness of Western popular culture through urban media). Paradoxically, these fronts were ultimately regarded by the Communists with suspicion because the economic and social status of front members frequently rendered them incapable of sustaining the life style of deprivations undergone by the hard-core CPT members. The return of many Thai students from CPT-controlled base areas at a later point underscores the CPT’s lack of success, both in being able to “reeducate” the students to the life of a guerrilla and in giving them a sense of importance within the movement. By 1983, CPT units were surrendering to Thai authorities, forcing another reappraisal of strategy upon Communist leaders.

Government Reaction and Prospects

The pattern of government reaction to the problems of the southern Thai Muslims and the challenge of the Communist movement can be divided into two periods: before and after 1976. The fall of 1976 marks a shift in government policy from one of repression to one that assumes that both Muslim and Communist dissension emerged from social, economic, and political conditions within Thai society.

Although there were reform-minded governments before 1976 (particularly during the democratic phase between 1973 and 1976), the emphasis on repression and reliance on American counterinsurgency reflected the cold-war mentality that prevailed in the security forces and their leadership. At times, as the literature published by the CPT shows, the reliance on American assistance only strengthened the credibility of the CPT’s claims that Thailand’s governments were serving the interests of foreigners.

After 1976, particularly during the period of General Kriangsak Chomanad’s prime ministership, greater efforts were made to instill an understanding in the Thai public that the problem of the southern provinces and of the Communist insurgencies could only be satisfactorily met by appreciating socioeconomic and cultural perspectives different from those of the majority of Thai.

The question remains, however, whether the government can keep the focus on a new approach, marshal the necessary support for its policies, and overcome the
diversity of priorities among contending factions and political groups to meet the challenge. In the southern provinces, Thai authorities have recently adopted more realistic policies in their effort to undermine support for both Muslim separatists and Communist insurgents. The situation in the south is made more complex, however, because it requires cooperation between the Thai and Malaysian security forces.

The situation on the border comprises simultaneously religious, ethnic, ideological, and military issues, making it difficult to establish clear terms of reference for both governments. From the Thai point of view, the problem was partly solved by the agreement in 1977 that security forces from both sides have the right of hot pursuit up to 20 kilometers within the other state’s territory. The agreement also paved the way for the establishment of a ministerial-level General Border Committee which meets regularly twice a year. Combined operations on both sides of the frontier, initially hampered by mutual distrust, have gained strength for two years as the defense budgets of the two countries have been substantially increased.9

Despite widespread agreement that cooperation between Thai and Malaysian forces has improved, the Thai authorities stress that such cooperation constitutes a minor part of the government’s Tai Rom Yen campaign of winning over the loyalties of several Thai villages, which harbored guerrillas of the Communist party of Malaya.10 In the past, Thai authorities have complained that they have not had the full support of Malaysian security forces in intelligence gathering. The Thai have also taken the Malaysian security forces to task for not suppressing CPM guerrillas dislodged from Thai territory. In addition, the Thai suspect Malaysians of not taking effective steps against sanctuary-seeking Muslim secessionists.

The adoption by Thai military of a more flexible approach to the processing of detainees (aimed at encouraging more surrenders) has in turn annoyed their Malaysian counterparts as being too lenient. Clearly, the differing priorities on the part of both security services have soured relations between the two governments from time to time.

In sum, the problems facing Thailand since 1977 have been five-fold: the 150,000–180,000 Vietnamese forces still in Cambodia as of 1985, having invaded the country to install the Heng Samrin government in January 1979; the some 200,000 refugees from Indochina; the 7,000–8,000–member Communist party of Thailand and its People’s Liberation Army of Thailand (as of 1984); the southern Thai Muslim who continue their quest for autonomy as described above; and the Communist party of Malaya. At this point, however, the government of Thailand has dissidence under control via policies that combine socioeconomic measures and relatively liberal treatment of repentant dissidents with strong military measures when that is considered necessary. But the government has been powerfully aided by the disarray within Communist ranks that followed the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the virtual end of external assistance to the CPT.

10 Asia week, July 22, 1983.
MALAYSIA

National Integration versus Guerrilla Communism

The geography and history of present-day Malaysia explain in large part the differing outlook and policies of the governments in Kuala Lumpur and in Bangkok pertaining to the border areas between them. Whereas Thailand was mostly preoccupied with its northern and northeastern provinces up to the 1975 opening of diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China, the Malaysian government was concerned with Thailand Malaysian guerrilla communism as an immediate internal security problem.

The Malaysians have always regarded the Communist party of Malaya as their top security problem, not least because historically the CPM is identified with one single communal group within Malaysia’s plural society. Guerrilla communism in Malaysia constituted a direct threat to Malaysia’s identity, an identity dependent upon the alliance among the nation’s three main communities (53 percent Malay, 36 percent Chinese, and 9 percent Indian).

Although frontier talks between Britain and Thailand were held soon after World War II, after a Communist insurrection instigated by the Soviet Union was launched in 1947, to the irritation of successive Malayan prime ministers, the Thai government for more than thirty years referred to the Communist guerrilla challenge in its southern provinces as its “backdoor problem.” Even after twelve years from the time the Malayan Emergency was declared (1948–1960), the Malayan government found it difficult to convince the politicians in Bangkok, and Thai commanders in the provinces, that Communist guerrilla activities involving both CPT and CPM elements necessitated joint military intelligence and maneuvers. Only after 1965, when agreement was reached on the stationing of Malayan units in Thai territory, were serious joint operations conducted against armed resistance by both the CPT and the CPM.

CPM activities became increasingly violent with the adoption in 1968 of a Party declaration calling upon members to wage a military united-front campaign designed to reject all forms of participation in the prevailing Malaysian political system. In the years that followed, the CPM embarked on an intensified armed struggle based on Maoist teachings on guerrilla warfare and encouraged by the success of the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.\(^1\)

Reflecting the need to enlist support from Malays as well as Indians if the CPM’s credibility as a cross-communal force was to be established, the CPM sought recruits from the rural areas and plantations distant from the urban-based middle class. The desire to foment a national democratic revolution has led to several attempts to combine Marxist ideology, Islam, and ethnicity in front organizations—the Pary Persaudaraan Islam (PAPERI), the Barisan Tani Malaysia (BTM), and the Malay Nationalist Revolutionary Party (MNRP).

\(^1\) Zakaria Haji Ahmad and Zakaria Hamid, “Violence at the Periphery: A Brief Survey of Armed Communism in Malaysia,” in Armed Communist Movements, passim.

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There has been concern that the CPM throughout the mid-1970s gained some recruits through persuasive manipulation on the compatibility of Islam and communism, perhaps reflecting worry over the CPM's failure to lure Malay recruits into its overwhelmingly Chinese leadership during the period of the emergency. This policy has had to be confronted with the attempt to maintain CPM commitment to the Chinese variant of seizing state power through the establishment of base areas. However, the CPM continues to be overwhelmingly composed of ethnic Chinese and wedded to the Maoist technique of seizing power through the establishment of base areas. Nevertheless, as in the case of Thailand, the Communist movement in Malaysia challenged the government to find effective ways of protecting the Malay population without increasing discriminatory policies against the Chinese and Indian minorities.

In the mid-1970s, as the guerrilla war in Indochina reached its climax, armed units of the CPM attacked urban targets. One attack partly destroyed the monument commemorating the forces involved in the emergency period. Toward the latter half of the 1970s, as border agreements between Malaysia and Thailand were reached and the Malaysian security forces received large increases in their budget, the CPM were steadily forced into retreat.

In October 1976, a combined Thai-Malaysian military operation in the Betong area destroyed base areas of the CPM's insurgent units. The joint operations, which lasted almost two years, were fairly successful despite misgivings on the part of economic planners on both sides of the border. Continued joint operations by Thai and Malaysian units have depended primarily on the relationship between field commanders on the Thai and Malaysian sides; the most successful period was between 1981 and 1983.12

Sources made available by Malaysian security forces revealed that throughout the 1975–1982 period 250 CPM camps were uncovered, 163 CPM guerrillas were killed, and 112 surrendered. CPM units were spread over the states of Kedah, Kelantan, Perak, and Pahang, with CPM assault units active in the first three.

Recent reports suggest that the CPM mainstream guerrilla units were at odds with the CPT counterparts over the allocation of food, base areas, and recruits. Senior Malaysian government officials in 1982 suggested to their Thai civilian and military colleagues a more concerted approach to eliminate the common enemy, the CPM. It was felt that the aging of the postwar CPM leadership would require their replacement by recruits of Thai origin, particularly ethnic Malays who may be more disposed to join an internationalist movement such as the CPM rather than to concern themselves with the parochial problem of Muslim autonomy. Malaysian officials also believe that almost half of the three CPM groupings are ethnic Chinese or Malays born in Thailand; the rest are Malaysian Chinese, with a limited number of Malays and Malaysian Indians.

The CPM group engaged in armed resistance is believed to be divided into three factions: The first, the CPM mainstream, comprises the old 10th and 12th regiments

12 *Asiaweek*, July 15, 1983.
with an overall strength of about 2,300 guerrillas; it is based mainly in the far west of the Waeng district, near the junction of the Narathiwat, Yala, and Perak borders. These units were still believed in 1984 to be led by Rashid Moydin, who is now in his seventies.

The CPM Marxist-Leninist faction consists of the former section within the 12th Regiment that broke away in 1974; it usually operates in the western sector of the Betong Salient. It is believed to number about 530 guerrillas under Ah Lin.

The third faction, the CPM-RF (Revolutionary Faction) with only about 150 guerrillas operates in plantations east of Sadao. It is reported to have some contacts with the CPT, though it is unlikely that any sustained cooperation can be maintained, given the need to compete for scarce recruits, base areas, and food. The CPM-RF’s main feature is its domination by Muslim leadership under Abdullah Laheen.¹³

The Thai and Malaysian authorities have had their share of differences on the most appropriate means to overcome the guerrillas in their respective territories as well as in areas that cross frontiers. The Thai argue that large-scale operations expose troops to booby traps. The Malaysians hold that large-scale sweeps result in panic among CPM units, who are then demoralized after a region or base camp is overrun.

In addition to counterinsurgency measures, the Malaysian authorities have developed economic and social projects in an effort to bolster their first line of defense against the appeals of communism. Although many believe that the net effect of these measures will only be discernible in the long run, many projects have been concentrated on the infrastructure to provide immediate benefits to the population at large and also to destroy the traditional routes of CPM guerrillas.

The largest of the joint Malaysian-Thai projects is the development of the 650-square-mile Sungai Golok Basin, which is being completed with Australian-government assistance. Ferry service between the Thai border town of Batak Bai and the Malaysian town of Pengkalan Kubor and the provision of piped water from southern Thailand to the state of Perlis have enhanced the prospects of weaning away the less committed elements of the CPM.

On the propaganda front, the CPM has fared ever more poorly since its heyday in the period between 1948 and 1954, when it was able to rely on an informal network throughout the Malay peninsula. Currently, with factionalism dissipating strength and consistency, the CPM mainstream continues to get support from the radio station Voice of the Malayan People, which was earlier based in Hengyang, in southern central China. The CPM Marxist-Leninst faction operated its own radio station from southern Thailand in 1976, rivaling CPM mainstream-faction broadcasts. But the CPM mainstream continues to make its appeal; in June 1981 the Voice of the Malayan Revolution was relocated to southern Thailand and renamed Suara Demokrasi.

Constitutional Dissension

What have been the responses of the Malaysian government? Like its predecessors, the National Front government of Dr. Mahathir Mohammad has had to

contend with ethnicity, religion, and language as central and enduring features of Malaysian politics. Following its fresh mandate in the 1982 general elections, the new government sought to imprint a clean and efficient image through a series of changes within the cabinet, providing opportunities for young Malay leaders to rise within the national and state bureaucracies.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, the Malaysian government has had to face a growing challenge from militant Islam, which has sought to depict the government as not being authentically Islamic. Although this attack is not a new phenomenon, the Iranian revolution appealed to younger and militant groups not readily accommodated or coopted within the constitutional process.

At the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) general assembly in 1982, Mahathir sought to deflect criticism on this issue by appealing to his party’s rank and file not to be misguided by using Islam as a political weapon. Steps were also taken to set up an Islamic bank, which would use accumulated capital to invest in Islam-related projects. In addition, the deputy prime minister initiated plans to establish joint ventures between Malay- and Chinese-based holding companies, in order to promote a favorable climate for political-economic accommodation. At the same time, the Malayan Chinese Association, the Chinese component of the National Front government, in its meeting at the end of 1982 also pressured the government to increase its support for the improvement of Chinese education and the teaching of Mandarin.

The government’s response to Malay and Chinese pressures for government-supported programs produced yet another effort to address the perennial problem of reducing the differential between Malay political supremacy and Chinese economic control. Mahathir launched a new “Look-East” policy, which sought to promote an improved work ethic among all Malaysians (especially Malays), urging an emulation of Japan and South Korea.

Whether the government will be able to sustain such a strategy remains to be seen. Unfortunately, policy errors and scandals overtook the Islamic bank venture, creating serious problems for the Mahathir government. The MCA (Malaysian Chinese Association), an important element in the government coalition, moreover, has been plagued with recurrent factionalism, with a permanent split threatened. The Parti Islam (Pas), moreover, has mounted a more substantial challenge to the government than in the recent past, insisting that the UMNO-dominated National Front government is basically secular and must be replaced, with a truly Islamic state established.

Notwithstanding these recent difficulties, the present government can probably retain support from a majority of Malaysian voters, continuing the National Front policies of seeking to balance ethnic-oriented policies (with some tilt toward the Malay) to maintain racial harmony and political stability. For the present at last, the government has been successful in coopting key younger, radical forces within Malaysian society, thereby undercutting the more chauvinistic Malay and Chinese organizations while still pursuing relatively moderate policies.  

Internationally, meanwhile, the Malaysian government has established good relations with many Middle Eastern countries and has allowed the opening of an office representing the Palestine Liberation Organization. It has also cosponsored (with Middle Eastern support) an Islamic University. In meetings of commonwealth countries the government has provided scholarships to students from neighboring Islamic nations such as Bangladesh and Brunei.

Mahathir’s emphasis on administrative efficiency and performance has not endearing him to the old guard in Malaysia. The conflict over the role of Malaysia’s head of state and the sultans in peninsular Malaysia is indicative of the underlying cleavage between a coalition government in a hurry to make changes and a society still dominated by the values derived from the old ethnic, religious, and linguistic policies.

THE PHILIPPINES

Muslim Grievances

As in Thailand, one central problem leading to dissension in the Philippines has been the failure to integrate a substantial number of Muslims into an essentially alien state dominated by precepts of another religion. Further parallels with the Thai Muslim situation include the heavy concentration of the minority in a region distant from the capital city and the political heartland and the difficulty in establishing an effective local administration firm enough to implement national goals, yet sensitive to local issues. Finally, the problem of accommodating grievances has been exacerbated in cases where traditional perceptions of identity, landownership rights, and security are challenged by the national government’s determination to resettle outsiders in these regions.

Although interpretations differ about the causes of recent armed dissension, most observers agree that the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) initially grew out of grievances arising from perceptions of threats to their cultural, economic, and political identity. In addition to the difficulties in assessing which of these grievances constitute primary causes and which are secondary causes, the combination of ethnic, religious, and ideological factors complicates any analysis of Filipino Muslim grievances. Despite the differing interpretations, however, one thing seems clear—again reflecting some similarities with the situation in southern Thailand: the grievances, initially based on religious and ethnic grounds, have been manipulated by ambitious politicians, local bandits, displaced people trapped and thus drawn into the conflict, and disparate groups of young, sometimes idealistic intellectuals, who have been treated with a heavy hand by policy and the military.

Initially, before martial law was proclaimed by the Marcos government in late 1972, the focus of the Muslim grievances was on land resettlement by outsiders and its attendant impact on Muslim identity and regional autonomy. In the mid 1970s, the

aim of the MNLF was to establish a system of Islamic law in the Bangsa Moro district so that the indigenous population would be governed by the laws of Islam, with all vestiges of “Filipino colonialism” removed.

Within the overall support provided by the populace under the banner of Islamic resurgence, however, issues of ethnicity and kinship have caused persistent difficulties in organization and internal dissension. Linguistically, for example, only the Maranoaos in Lanao and the people of Manguindanaon from Cotabato can understand one another; the Tausag language has closer links to Cebuano than to the languages of the regions in its vicinity.

Along with these differences, problems of leadership and organization have arisen, which hamper the MNLF in securing domestic and international support. The MNLF is divided into three factions: the original MNLF led by Nur Misuari (from the Tausag/Samal group), based in Tripoli; the Cairo-based splinter group led by Hashim Salamat, a native of Manguindanaon; and the more recently formed Bangsa Moro Liberation Organization (BMLO) led by Rashid Lucman and Macapanton Abbas. The current estimate of overall strength of all three factions is 30,000 armed guerillas.

Within these constraints, the general pattern of conflict between the MNLF and the Marcos government has oscillated between the two extremes of (1) acceptance of central government dominance while pushing for greater autonomy and self-government in recognized “internal matters” and (2) the conduct of all-out guerrilla and general war on behalf of a separate Moro state. The dominant Islamic component in the conflict has also resulted in both sides focusing on the international dimension.

The MNLF struggle for regional autonomy and secession has had the tacit and often overt support of senior officials in the eastern state of Sabah, from which assaults against Filipino government forces have been launched. The mutual recriminations emanating from Manila and Kuala Lumpur have impaired diplomatic relations between the two countries, further complicated by Philippine territorial claims to portions of Sabah, despite President Marcos’ pledge during the 1977 summit meeting of the ASEAN heads of governments that he would not press these claims.

On a wider front, the MNLF, which at one point had considerable financial and training support from Libya, found this support curtailed. It is widely believed that some of the financial assistance for the MNLF from Libya was siphoned off in transit and that subsequently the donor government drastically curtailed its support.

The high point of international involvement relating to the MNLF was the agreement reached in Tripoli among Nur Misuari, the Philippine government, and the government of Libya. Under pressure from the Islamic Conference Organization, which had regional meetings in 1974, the Tripoli agreement of December 23, 1976, called for a cessation of hostilities and the immediate implementation of autonomy “within the realm of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines.” Despite plebiscites and referendums in the thirteen designated provinces in April 1977, subsequent distrust and mutual antagonism resulted in an

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impasse. With the Islamic revival following the Iranian revolution, the conference of foreign ministers of the Islamic countries stiffened its attitude, pledging moral and material support for the MNLF.

Thus, after the 1979 elections, which the Marcos government won with a considerable majority in the southern provinces, the reconciliation reached in Tripoli could not be extended long enough to accommodate strains that began to resurface in the 1980s. Despite the Muslim appeal of October 1983 in Manila, in which prominent Filipino Muslim politicians called upon the MNLF to participate in yet another round of reconciliation efforts in the wake of the Aquino assassination, the MNLF did not respond.17

Communism in the Philippines

As in many countries where the population is widely dispersed and divided by linguistic and subcultural variations—a characteristic of island nations in particular—the Communist movement in the Philippines, despite successes in the immediate post-1945 era, has suffered historically from poor communications, limited mass support, and factional disputes. It has also faced the dilemma of choosing a proper strategy—whether to seek power through a united front policy, working with democratic forces, or to place primary emphasis on an armed struggle.

The older faction of the Party, the PKP, called for armed struggle in the 1950s, but its insurrection met with strong reaction from the Philippines government, which had succeeded in infiltrating the PKP through intelligence operations assisted by the American military. The government also launched antiguerrilla campaigns, followed by amnesty for those who renounced continued armed resistance.

With the armed struggle defeated, attempts were made, beginning in 1964, to reconstruct the Party organization and rejuvenate its top leadership, with an emphasis on working within the constitutional process, concentrating upon arousing public consciousness of the American economic, military, and cultural preeminence in the country.

The mid-1960s coincided with the global attention being given to the third Indochina war and the interest in revisionist and neo-Marxian theories of underdevelopment and imperialism that sprang up in many Philippine universities. By late 1968, a new generation of Communist leaders had decided on the military Mao Zedong line of revolutionary warfare, although it was realized by the young ideologues that armed warfare without political guidance would have limited effect as a long-term political strategy.

The desire for a party with armed units and an army based on political indoctrination was achieved in March 1969, with the creation of the New People’s Army (NPA).18 Structurally, the NPA was a dispersed set of units. It was led or supported by urban-based intellectuals and professionals who educated the NPA rank

17 Mindanao Journal, October 12, 1983.
and file to win the hearts and minds of the Filipino people; great emphasis was placed on political education and on training the units to avoid extortion or gangsterism. The composite leadership, combining men with field experience in guerrilla warfare and urban-based intellectuals committed to rectifying the society’s ills, constitutes a radical break with the previous reliance on peasant-based recruitment and a wholly rural armed resistance derived from the experiences of the Communist party of China under Mao.

The NPA has gradually spread its operations to various parts of the Philippines. At an early point, it concentrated on Mindanao, especially in the region of Davao. Operations in Samar also got underway. Luzon is now the site of growing NPA activities. Some observers have estimated that by the end of 1984, the NPA had 10,000 to 15,000 full-time members, a larger number of sympathizers, and control or influence in 20 percent of Filipino barrios.

Until the early and middle 1970s, Philippine communism was divided into two camps: The older PKP preferred the strategy of accepting the Marcos government’s amnesty in late 1974 and rendering some support to the government’s effort to effect social programs such as land reform, the revitalization of trade unions, and better living conditions for the working class while opposing armed struggle. However, this strategy worked to the PKP’s disadvantage, because the Marcos government, despite nominal efforts to include the PKP leadership in its local government, appeared to feel confident enough to disregard the PKP leadership’s recommendations.

In the other camp, the Communist party of the Philippines (CPP) saw the introduction of martial law in September 1972 as justification for increased insurrection, although it was careful to maintain its front organizations in Manila as an integral part of its overall political objective. In fact, the establishment of the National Democratic Front (NDF) constituted an important element in the Party’s efforts to raise popular consciousness of the shortfalls of the Marcos government.

By combining a shrewd legal opposition strategy with restrained but effective armed skirmishes in the countryside, the CPP-NPA dual approach also enabled the Party to decentralize its activities, giving local leaders autonomy to develop local resources and to engage the Philippine armed forces as necessary. The Marcos government’s preoccupation with Muslim grievances in the southern Philippines also helped the CPP to extend its support of political education in the archipelago’s important islands of Luzon and Mindanao. Lacking benefit of a border contiguous with a Communist country, its present strategy of combining extensive, long-term education, legal political activities, and armed resistance seems likely to continue throughout the 1980s. Despite the growing political and constitutional crisis within the present political system, the CPP and NPA do not seem to be in a hurry to renew large-scale armed action. The lessons of the PKP’s early experience during the 1950s have not been lost on the current leadership.

SINGAPORE

For obvious geographical reasons, political developments in Singapore have historically been linked to the political, economic, and social trends in the Malayan
peninsula. Concerning dissension directed against central governmental authority, however, Singapore alone among the ASEAN states currently faces the future with optimism, thanks largely to its relatively homogenous political (if not yet cultural) style, its small territory, its effective government (in both manipulative and administrative senses), and its favorable geopolitical setting.

Since its inception in 1955, the republic has emphasized integration rather than assimilation, based on a Singapore “national identity” of a multiracial and multi-religious polity that promotes its constituent ethnic-racial communities. A major feature of the Singapore government’s effectiveness is the provision of low-cost public housing, which also serves as a policy deliberately intended physically to integrate its Chinese, Indian, and Malay communities by eliminating segregated ethnic housing enclaves.\(^{19}\)

The Singapore government’s policies in education, particularly in the promotion of the Chinese language, have faced some problems. The encouragement to speak Mandarin has created some apprehension among the Malays and Indians that this policy may be part of a quiet campaign to develop Mandarin as the *lingua franca* of the island republic. But this fear was mitigated in 1982–1983 when the Singapore government increased budgetary allocations to improve standards in the teaching of the English language through large-scale recruitment of expatriates from the United Kingdom and Australia.

The Internal Security Act has enabled the Lee Kuan Yew government to control political life at almost every level of society. Lee Kuan Yew is experienced in party maneuvering and intrafractional tactics because of his period of accommodation and confrontation with Communist party–affiliated organizations in the early 1960s. The PAP (People’s Action party) leadership under Lee Kuan Yew effectively exposed the nature of Communist-front organizations and especially their links with the Communist party of Malaya. On the legal front, challenges have continued involving Chinese schools, trade unions, and public enterprises.

After the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965, the CPM sought to build up its organization within the legal opposition through student organizations at Nanyang University. Throughout the mid-1960s, continued conflict between the PAP government and the Communist party leadership in Malaya was reflected in issues as diverse as policies regarding the curriculum in the universities, the labor movement, and cultural problems.

Effective measures against Communist-inspired agitation, complemented by the provision of basic amenities to the Singapore population at large, finally forced the CPM to retreat to the Malayan peninsula in the mid-1960s. In effect, the uses of Communist organizational tactics and weapons in the service of the development of a non-Communist model helped to build political confidence in the multiethnic, multiracial, and multilingual policies that constitute Singapore’s version of how to apply political arithmetic to stay in power, policies also adopted by its nearest neighbor.

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Coupled with the fact that more than 60 percent of the population have their own housing and the existence of a mobile, if still hierarchical, structure of political and social advancement, continued growth in the economic sector and a smooth political succession should keep the appeal of radical politics and communism minimal, according to many political analysts.

Singapore's political future remains tied to the political style of its current prime minister. Though now in his early sixties, the prime minister is in good health and is determined to see that the second-generation leaders whom he has nurtured since the early 1970s preserve honest, effective, and responsive government. There is a paradox: the younger leaders, though possessing high degrees of professionalism, can only fully test their political acumen when the current prime minister leaves the political scene.

INDONESIA

Islam and State Identity

Indonesia's political problems have their roots in the character of Indonesian society before independence was proclaimed in 1945. Throughout the 1950s, the parliamentary system adopted by first-generation politicians who had their higher education in Holland, Batavia (Jakarta), and Bandung allowed for the participation of Islamic forces in constitutional and political decisions, although most of the key leaders identified with secular parties.

Under the common pull of nascent nationalism, political Islam worked together with assorted nationalist and left-wing organizations to forge a united-front strategy following the Comintern-directed disastrous strategy of a Communist revolt in 1948-1950. However, the more militant Islamic elements, adopting armed struggle, aimed at the establishment of Islamic states in West Java, North Sumatra, and the South Celebes.20

President Sukarno tried to blend the nationalists, Communists, and Islamic political forces into a coalition that owed ultimate allegiance to his leadership and to his version of political unity. But the disparate groupings were too independent to hold together, a fact that contributed to the ease with which the Indonesian army gradually took effective control over the national and provincial bureaucracies. Following the attempted coup by the Communist party in September-October 1965, the pre-eminence of the army (and later, the armed forces as a whole) was consolidated, extending beyond the national and provincial bureaucracies.

The foundation for the army's role in Indonesian politics was established during the Second Army Seminar in August 1966, five months after President Sukarno's political authority had given way to Lieutenant-General Suharto's gradual consolidation of the instruments of government, a process that continued up to 1968. A prime area of concern was the new leadership's perception of the threat of political Islam,

which was seen as posing a long-term ideological as well as organizational challenge to the precepts of Indonesia’s officer corps. The officer corps had almost all its formative experience under President Sukarno, who identified Indonesia with a cross-communal and cross-religious state, not with an Islamic theocratic state.\textsuperscript{21}

Thereafter, the gradual creation of state identity under this central premise, exemplified by the army and armed-forces seminars of the mid-1960s, culminated in a series of measures that restricted legal and constitutional political activities to persons and organizations considered compatible with the Pancasila state. Political Islam, of differing varieties, was gradually removed from bureaucratic patronage; its political activities thereupon lost their financial base.

Under the pressures of Pancasila, which served as counterpoint to militant Islam and a nationwide organization designed to consolidate the military’s coercive powers, the leaders of the Islamic political parties had to accept the new rules of the game established and defined by the Indonesian armed forces. Since the mid-1970s, Golkar, the ruling government’s functional group which serves as the armed forces’ political arm, was assigned the task of developing conceptually and operationally a unique political system “in accordance with Indonesia’s own cultural traditions.”\textsuperscript{22}

By the mid-1970s the government simplified political life by encouraging the formation of three political forces: Golkar, the United Development party (comprising a loose coalition of the Islamic parties), and the United Development party, which consisted of the old Nationalist party and residual organizations not based on Islam. However, the government made certain that the leaders of these organizations were politicians whose credentials were in tune with the mainstream political guidelines established by the armed-forces leadership and the president’s political advisers from the armed establishment.

Throughout the 1970s, buoyed by rising oil prices, the Suharto administration was able to provide a measure of stability unprecedented in the political history of the nation. There were sporadic challenges from Islamic militants, but these arose mainly outside the constitutional system. They reflected frustration arising from the rapid social and cultural changes that undermined political Islam’s efficacy as a viable political force in the government’s claims to success in development. Indeed, in the general elections of 1977 and 1982, during which the Islamic parties were allowed considerable leeway in the campaign period, there was spontaneous support for the United Development party not so much because of any conviction that it could govern the country better, but because of the Suharto government’s periodic embarrassment over a series of incidents involving corruption, mismanagement, and incompetence in the management of the public and private sectors. To date, dissension is limited to subsidiary issues: the rules governing school uniforms prescribed by the education ministry versus Muslim attire, the definition and nature of interreligious tolerance in


\textsuperscript{22} J. Boileau, \textit{Golkar: Functional Group Politics} (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1982).
matters relating to prayers and attendance of religious celebrations, the proper use of 
dakwah, and the adoption of basic courses in school and university curricula.

Since 1978, the government has initiated new measures to consolidate its 
symbolic and organizational grip on the country through the obligatory undertaking of 
Pancasila courses for all members of the Indonesia civil service, ranking members of 
the Indonesian armed forces, and even leaders of large business enterprises. These 
courses, which are important for career advancement and civil-service employment, 
were instituted to solidify the commitment of the state’s apparatus to Pancasila as the 
ideological basis for the Indonesian state. Thereafter, President Suharto, in his 
address to the nation in August 1983, stressed that the process of socializing Pancasila 
should extend to all social organizations, signaling the start of a more difficult 
political work to be led by the ruling Golkar organization.

By subtle uses of coercion and cooptation, the government has to date limited 
the Islamic parties' room to maneuver in almost the same way that the ruling National 
Front in Malaysia has captured the moderate Islamic center. One cause of the success 
of these policies is the territorial experience that many tanking army officers had in the 
political field during their formative years as field officers and later as staff officials in 
the late Sukarno and throughout the Suharto eras. Avoiding heavy-handed and 
repressive military measures against the Islamic parties (which seem unlikely for 
many years to come), the present pattern of conflict management even in the lean 
years of the mid-1980s is likely to continue.

Left-Wing Containment

Under President Sukarno the armed forces’ leadership had to contend with two 
main strains of left-wing revolutionaries: the old Nationalist party (particularly its 
radical faction, with its blending of nationalism and Marxism) and the Indonesian 
Communist party (PKI) under the leadership of D. N. Aidit.

The PKI had been rebuilt during the early 1950s following the disaster of the 
Zhdanov line in the late 1940s, which had resulted in the defeat of armed resistance in 
many Southeast Asian nations. The revitalized party focused on a united-front 
strategy within the common framework adopted by its sister organizations in neigh 
broring countries, seeking to create a national-democratic alliance with the general 
aim of enhancing the consciousness of the Indonesian masses with the central theme 
liberation from foreign and domestic bourgeois capitalism.

For both strategic and tactical purposes, President Sukarno had used the PKI's 
relatively well developed mass organization to offset the increasing role of the 
Indonesian army, which had gradually worked itself into the constitutional process 
following the nationalist wave of the late 1950s, which resulted in the takeover of 
foreign firms by many ranking officers. As both the army and the PKI jockeyed for 
position in anticipation of the post-Sukarno era, the army began the formation of 
Golkar in October 1964, a year before the PKI’s attempt to seize power in Jakarta.

The PKI under Aidit had emphasized Party-building based on the formation of 
mass organizations, often in alliance with other revolutionary forces. In early 1963 
Aidit launched the PKI’s cultural offensive as part of a general strategy toward
creating and ripening a revolutionary situation. But as the events of October 1965 showed, the PKI was unable to synchronize its core and subsidiary organizations in a manner to match the army's formidable strength. The mass-based organizations had large memberships but could not muster much resistance.

Thereafter, the PKI tried briefly to regroup, offering some resistance in central and east Java in 1967–1968, but it was quickly suppressed largely because the army skillfully applied its special-warfare techniques of infiltration and intelligence gathering. Subsequently, the PKI broke up into a number of emigre groups centered in Beijing, Moscow, Tirana, and East European cities. Both the Beijing- and Moscow-oriented PKI saw fault in PKI-Aidit's strategy, defining it as "right-wing opportunism" and "left-wing infantilism." Having failed, the PKI under Aidit's leadership was variously taken to task for its "ideological muddleheadedness" and "excessive revolutionary zeal." While the Beijing faction called for protracted armed struggle toward rebuilding a new PKI based on Marx-Lenin-Mao Zedong thought, the PKI's Moscow faction encouraged a more Soviet-oriented line following the PKI's failed effort to launch armed guerrilla operation's in east and central Java during 1967–1968.23

Since that time, there has been no evidence of armed Communist activities in Java or in any other of Indonesia's important islands. It would appear that the PKI's failure to regroup is the result of a number of factors, not the least of which is the geographical configuration of the archipelagic state. Java, like Luzon, has no bridges to a neighboring state that might provide aid to Communist guerrillas; and, though mountainous in some areas, it poses little difficulty for army units specially trained in political and guerrilla warfare. On a more subjective note, the PKI apparently overestimated its cadre-building programs of the early 1960s, when it sought to maintain its revolutionary élan in the face of nationalist and revolutionary symbol-wielding from other left-wing organizations under Sukarno's guided democracy.

For the moment, therefore, the question of ideological dissension seems to be under control. The Suharto government's moderate course in economic development in the past 18 years has yielded some benefits to its essentially urban-based political foundation. The larger question to be posed is whether in the difficult years of the mid-1980s—marked by the effects of declining oil prices—the political stability of the 1970s can be sustained. The present government has instituted "national preparedness programs" in a number of government bureaucracies, a measure of the seriousness with which the government takes the possibility of a radical challenge under conditions of relative deprivation. For the moment, however, given Indonesia's natural resources and its relatively favorable credit standing among multilateral agencies and foreign banks, the outlook seems quite good. But another round of government-related scandals in the oil-, gas-, or food-procurement agencies as well as incipient problems of unemployment and maldistribution of income could favor the exiled PKI's call for a new stage in protracted armed warfare or, more possibly, a challenge from Islamic militants, a challenge already signaled by various terrorist acts.

23 See the contributions of Dorodjatun Kuntjoro-Jakti and Donald Weatherbee on Indonesian communism in *Armed Communist Movements*.
CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of our analysis, one could construct a descending order of probable intensity of dissension in the ASEAN states, based on a number of variables. Overall, Singapore would seem to stand out as the single nation capable of dealing effectively with religious, ethnic, or ideological dissension. Its favorable geographical location, its strong historical position as a center of commerce and industry, and its efficient administration make it unlikely that any form of organized dissent—much less an armed one—can be sustained for a long time. In addition, the government, though pervasive and at times oversensitive to potential security issues, has been responsive in providing material benefits to most of its citizens. Its slogan of socialism that works has so far been based on the strong tenet that the government that delivers faces least dissension.

Thailand, despite its vulnerability to the conditions in Indochina, remains a uniquely self-confident nation in overall terms. It has had and will in all probability continue to have its southern problem and the incipient danger of activism from a resurgent Communist party of Thailand, particularly if the Cambodian problem is satisfactorily resolved and accepted by the international community. But there is an asset in the fact that the Thai civilian and military leadership are more sensitive to understanding the causes of grievances expressed in both urban and rural areas, at the center as well as in the peripheries. There remains the perennial problem of bureaucratic inertia, but in Thailand the cultural context of politics is less serious than in the other states of Southeast Asia.

Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines have a greater potential for challenges to the prevailing political structure and dissension over specific issues. Malaysia's geographical configuration—a lengthy peninsula with narrow external land access—and its small total population may be considered advantageous from the standpoint of stability, although the religious and ethnic balance within the state, particularly in the urban sectors, may pose continuing problems of extremism from both Islamic and Chinese chauvinists. The rules of procedure created by the UMNO government have so far survived a number of political and economic crises, but nobody seems to be certain about the success of the New Economic Policy and its subsequent modifications. If intra-elite and intra-ethnic accommodations survive yet another political succession in the post-Mahathir era, then continuity and stability seem assured.

For the moment, the armed forces constitute the only viable governmental force in Indonesia. The policies emanating from Jakarta will largely reflect the drive for intra-elite accommodation with the army serving as the fulcrum of political life. The Suharto government's success in controlling Islamic extremism and left-wing ideologies has been assisted by the prudent course followed in the management of the economy over the past 16 years. Ironically, the present phase of economic austerity may prove to be both the administration's vulnerable point and also a source of political strength. Only in a period of enforced economic retrenchment, it seems, can the government force the Indonesian middle class to scale down its more ambitious projects. The question is whether an awareness of the economic necessities can be communicated in such a way and with sufficient intensity to forestall future recourse to radical religious, ethnic, or ideological movements promising salvation.
As in Indonesia, geography remains a complicating factor in enabling any government in the Philippines to cope with economic growth, political unity, equity, and other requirements of effective governance. More than most ASEAN states, the Philippines possesses the human talent and innovativeness to overcome its current political, economic, and social problems. If its present inter-elite factionalism can be reduced and confidence in the government be restored, even the perennial problem of political succession need not immobilize the system nor contribute to public apathy. The danger is that prolonged factionalism between powerful contending groups within and outside government may result not only in armed rebellion from Muslim and Communist groups encompassing large sectors of the rural Philippines, but equally threatening, in a revolt of urban-based forces eager for a radical change that will end the chaos arising from the absence of effective governance.
10. Indochina and Security in Southeast Asia

Khien Theeravit

INDOCHINA'S PROBLEMS: AN OVERVIEW

When the Communists won their hard-earned victories in Cambodia, South Vietnam, and Laos in 1975, the Indochinese well-wishers expected that peace would prevail in the areas: after all, the Communists got what they wanted. From then on, the well-wishers hoped, the new rulers would divert their energies to their national reconstruction.

It was logical, but it did not happen. The Communists ended their fighting only with the United States and its allies, but not with their own allies and comrades. In Cambodia, power struggles among the new ruling elites were fiercely waged in the aftermath of the Communist rule. That struggle resulted in one of the darkest eras of Cambodian history. Elsewhere in Indochina, “enemies” of the regimes within their countries were identified and victimized in accordance with the new revolutionary ethics. Peace for the people was as remote as ever.

In the confusion of political reorientation, conflicts between the ruling parties of Vietnam and Cambodia reached a climax in 1978, when, one week before the end of the year, the Vietnamese armed forces invaded Cambodia. In the initial stage, Vietnam deployed 120,000 troops to subjugate Cambodia, followed by 3,000 under Heng Samrin’s command.1 The Vietnamese were able to install Heng Samrin as the new leader in Phnom Penh on January 7, 1979. A month later, 600,000 Chinese troops crossed the Sino-Vietnamese border in a month-long punitive attack on the Viet-

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1 Heng Samrin’s government-in-exile was set up in Vietnam by Vietnam on December 3, 1978, under the name “United Front of National Salvation of Kampuchea.” The Vietnamese source identifies Heng Samrin as a former military commander of the Communist party of Cambodia, but the Democratic Kampuchean source identifies him as a former liaison officer of the Communist party of Cambodia who was in charge of the Party’s relations with the Lao Dong party of Vietnam; he is accused of being one of the Vietnamese-planted agents.
namese northern provinces (February 17–March 16, 1979). Soon after the Chinese troops' withdrawal, the Vietnamese reinforced their troops occupying Cambodia and carried out large-scale search-and-destroy operations in nearly all the country, including areas adjacent to Thailand. As a result, nearly one million Cambodians who fled from the Vietnamese invaders to the jungles died from malaria and other diseases. The death toll caused by the Vietnamese invasion was heavy.

Six years later, in early 1985, the country is fragmented; an acceptable leader has yet to be found. The Vietnamese-installed government in Phnom Penh is still weak, unpopular, and almost totally dependent on Vietnam. It has to be kept in power by 180,000 Vietnamese troops and cadres. The areas it controls, especially the countryside, are far from secure. Its 30,000 troops can hardly match the Democratic Kampuchean (DK) forces. Moreover, it is not recognized by the majority of states in the international community.

On the other hand, the Democratic Kampuchean forces are far from collapsing. They were paralyzed by the Vietnamese invasion at the initial stage, and a malaria epidemic in 1979 further crippled the regime's fighting capability. But the old regime has been recuperating steadily: by mid-1980 the scattered fighters were regrouped and restructured. In March 1982 the DK forces passed a crucial test by inflicting heavy losses of lives and tanks on the enemy and by successfully expelling the attacking forces from Phnom Malai. They survived the Vietnamese dry-season offensive of March–April 1983—although this time the DK base at Phnom Chat suffered heavy damage by Vietnamese bombardment. After the end of the dry season, the Vietnamese troops had to withdraw from the embattled areas.

For three years the Democratic Kampuchean regime was able to hold its key bases on the Cambodia-Thailand border. In the dry-season offensive of early 1985, however, the Vietnamese, using tanks and other sophisticated military equipment, overran the various base areas. Yet various reports suggest that guerrilla activity in the interior of Cambodia has intensified. The number of DK fighters has grown from 30,000 to 40,000. The regime has been able to retain the loyalty of a sizable number of committed fighters, and these fighters—men, women, children—maintain good morale. These determined fighting forces have presented continual problems for the Vietnamese occupation forces.

There are other non-Communist resistance forces fighting against the Vietnamese occupation along the Thai-Cambodian border. The Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) under Son Sann's leadership is said to have 9,000 fighters, the number having doubled in the past four years. The Sihanoukist Moulinaka has armed a few thousand men. These two groups have held no secure bases but have expanded their areas of operation in the rainy season to areas which had often been overrun by the Vietnamese troops during the dry season. They were badly battered in the early 1985 offensive but are reportedly shifting also to guerrilla tactics. However, the fighting capacity of these non-Communist forces is far inferior to that of the Communist DK forces.

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Since the formation of the coalition of the three major resistance forces in June-July 1982 (the agreement was signed in Kuala Lumpur on June 22 and the formation of the coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea became effective July 11), they have gained strength moderately both in military capabilities and in diplomatic support. It is not yet known how many Cambodians within the areas under the control of the Vietnam-dominated People’s Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) support the resistance movements. The resistance is termed a “loose coalition.” Its weak point has been that it lacks sufficient coordination or cooperation to fight in unison against the continuing Vietnamese attacks. Each resistance force has tried its best to preserve its individual military power. There have been signs that the DK force is more capable in building its communication network in the villages nominally controlled by the PRK. Khieu Samphan’s Democratic Kampuchea has an extremely poor image internationally and is highly unpopular among people of high social status, but it has gained considerable support from the poor peasants. It remains the strongest among the Cambodian contending forces, and is the only military force with which the Vietnamese occupation must seriously reckon.

The resistance forces seem to be aware of their military weakness vis-à-vis the Vietnamese occupation forces. They seldom take the initiative to engage in battle with the enemy, even in the rainy season. Instead, they concentrate their energies on political work and recruiting new fighters. As noted, however, small-scale guerrilla operations appear to be increasing. Heavy fighting breaks out only during the dry season, when the Vietnamese forces take the initiative. This situation may continue for a long time.

Meanwhile, the Vietnamese occupation forces seem to be confronted with some of the problems familiar to the Americans in South Vietnam in the early 1960s and early 1970s: the unpopular government in Phnom Penh, the unwillingness of the PRK military to fight against the resistance forces, and the increasing incidents of sabotage or resistance in sensitive areas such as Siem Riep and Battambang. Periodically, the authorities have declared even the area around Phnom Penh unsafe.

As of early 1985, a political solution acceptable to all parties in the conflict had not been found. The war in Cambodia, especially in the areas adjacent to the Thai border, and more recently, within Thailand itself, has not only created tensions in the Southeast Asian region but has also intensified great-power rivalries and the military buildup in the area. This situation is the greatest threat to Southeast Asian regional security. In the past, fighting near the Thai border during the dry season involved cross-border shelling and the exodus of refugees into Thailand. Some Thai were killed in various separate incidents. Recently, the hostility between the Thai and the Vietnamese forces facing each other on each side of the border has flared into more

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3 The estimates of the strengths of the contending forces in Cambodia are drawn from various sources. Some put them differently: for example, the estimate of the Nation Review, June 16, 1983: DK (Democratic Kampuchea) 45,000, KPNLF (Kampuchean People’s National Liberation Front) 10,000, Moulinaka (Sihanoukists) 5,000, PRK (People’s Republic of Kampuchea) 30,000, SRV (Socialist Republic of Vietnam) 180,000; in August 1983 the estimate of a Vietnamese authoritative source, whose identity should not be revealed here: DK 33,000, KPNLF 9,000, Moulinaka 3,000, PRK 35,000, SRV 170,000.
serious fighting, with Vietnamese units on Thai territory. The Vietnamese accuse the
Thai of giving sanctuary to the Vietnamese resistance forces and claim the right of hot
pursuit, while the Thai, seeing the Vietnamese as international criminals who have
come to threaten Thailand, have vowed to respond to the invading forces in kind.
Today, six years after the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, peace is still remote.
What are the problems that make the Cambodian crisis so difficult to settle? We now
seek to analyze the security interests of the main actors in the Indochina scene, the
ways they perceive and pursue their interests, the consequences, the security im-
lications, and the prospects for ending the war in Cambodia and building peace for
the region.

THE SOURCES OF INSTABILITY

The United States has its sphere of influence. So has the Soviet Union. Vietnam
has attempted to build its sphere of influence, too. The West did not cry out against
Vietnam’s influence in Laos because Vietnam deployed its military influence in that
country in a way not greatly different from the way the Soviet Union took over eastern
Europe immediately after World War II. But objections have been raised to the Soviet
invasion of Afghanistan as well as the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia because
their military operations constitute outright aggression and perhaps also because their
missions have not been accomplished. The Vietnamese may not like the Russians, as
various Vietnam-watchers have observed, but they behave like the Russians: they too
want to create satellite states. Perhaps Vietnamese actions are natural because the
Vietnamese political structure is modeled after the Soviet Union’s as is Vietnam’s
international behavior. The Soviet Union and Vietnam are allies by political orienta-
tion and share similar problems.

The Security Interest of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

As proclaimed Marxist-Leninists, the Vietnamese leaders formulate policy
with regard to security requirements by seeking to unify all activities—economic,
political, military—into an integral whole. In the 1930s, when the Vietnamese
Communists worked against French colonial rule under Comintern leadership, they
sought to create an Indochinese federation. The concept at the time might have been
influenced by the spirit of Communist internationalism. But since 1960 the in-
ternational character of the Communist movement has been largely destroyed by
splits in the Communist camp. In addition, in the course of the first and second
Indochina wars, the spirit of Communist internationalism in Indochina did not survive
the tests to which it was put: the dominant power of the Vietnamese Lao Dong party
invited distrust and suspicion from Laotian and Cambodian Communists; nationalism
proved triumphant. When this was realized in Hanoi and the negative reactions from
Indochina’s neighbors were perceived, the term “Indochinese federation” was drop-
ped by the Vietnamese Communists.

The idea of an Indochinese federation, however, never died. American military
power during the second Indochina war overawed the Communists in Laos and
Cambodia and set the stage for Vietnamese influence. After the Communist victories in 1975, the Vietnamese sought to create a “special relationship” among the three Indochinese states. Hanoi claimed that Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos have historical reasons to share a common destiny. Inherent in this concept is the perception of an external threat, a sense of socialist solidarity, and a desire to integrate economic development across national boundaries. The Vietnamese believe that the three Indochinese states must share the same economic lifeline. In political and security respects, the three states must form a common policy and strategy against internal and external threats. This concept, if put into practice, would amount to imperialism by Vietnam. Laos and Cambodia would have to limit their sovereign rights under Vietnamese tutelage.

To some Vietnam-watchers, the Le Duan Doctrine is as justifiable as the Brezhnev Doctrine. Vietnam can feel secure only if Laos and Cambodia are friendly to it.\(^4\) Ho Chi Minh city is only 50 kilometers from the Vietnamese-Cambodian border.\(^5\) But advocates of the concept of a “special relationship” ignore the political implications of self-proclaimed rights to expand one’s inner security zone beyond one’s own territory. The present situations in Afghanistan and Cambodia are cases in point: to use force to overthrow an unfriendly government and prop up a friendly one is an exercise of the law of the jungle.

This concept of “special relationship” implies, therefore, a denial of an independent, neutral government in Cambodia (and Laos). Hence, an independent man like Norodom Sihanouk is not acceptable to Vietnam as a leader of Cambodia. Any United Nations resolution seeking to resolve the Cambodian conflict would be accused of interfering in the internal affairs of Cambodia. Evidently, the Vietnamese military operation in Cambodia is seen as an internal matter within the framework of the Vietnamese-sponsored “special relationship.”

Postwar Vietnam faced no major threat until its invasion of Cambodia. How does one explain, then, the psychological roots of the aggressive behavior of Vietnam against its neighbors? The Vietnamese are proud of their past national glories: they say that they have defeated the Chinese, the French, and the Americans, all of whom were first-class powers. The Vietnamese are supremely confident about their destiny. Given that history, moreover, they expected more enemies; hence, an Indochinese collective defense strategy was devised against an anticipated external threat. This appears to be logical, but does not explain the entire story. In the first place, if a nation is confident, it has no reason to force an alliance upon others. Second, if China is perceived as a potential threat, Vietnam needs to mobilize more than the two small Indochinese states to meet it. Finally, Vietnamese troops were dispatched to Laos long before the Sino-Vietnamese split, and the effort to control the Laotian and Cambodian Communist movements through Vietnamese party cadres started even earlier.

\(^5\) Nguyen Quang Tao, director of the Vietnamese Institute of International Relations, spoke at the international conference in Bangkok in June 1980. In ibid., p. 109.
seems that Hanoi viewed the China threat as an obstruction to, rather than a reason for, Hanoi's scheme for establishing a special relationship with the other Indochinese states.

Demographic and economic factors may have played some role in shaping Hanoi's policy toward Laos and Cambodia. Vietnam is highly populated compared with these two states, and the natural resources of Cambodia and Laos are relatively extensive and unexploited. Indeed, Vietnam's economic development potential would be much greater if some form of close economic cooperation could be established with its Indochinese neighbors.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk is suspicious about Vietnam's economic objectives in Cambodia. In an interview with The Nation Review he said: "We used to export a lot of rice. We have abundant supply of fish. Why should the Vietnamese go? They lack everything. They settle in our land. They fish in our lakes and rivers. The Great Lake, the Tonle Sap, is full of Vietnamese fishermen."^7

Is the economic factor an incentive for Vietnam to dominate Indochinese states? If so, it is ironic that the Marxist state of Vietnam is playing the role supposed to be performed by Marxism's ideological opponents (Marx condemned capitalism as a driving force for imperialism). Samir Amin, a political economist working for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, went further, linking Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia with Vietnam's economic dependency on the Soviet Union.®

He suggested that the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia was related to the Soviet economic assistance to Vietnam. As an advocate of socialism, Amin sought to redeem genuine socialism by acknowledging past wrongdoings. Otherwise, he asserted, socialism would never survive. Through individuals like Amin, Marxist writing, once directed against capitalism, now turns its fire on socialism. In this sense, the Chinese-devised term "social imperialism" has a legitimate foundation and may be appropriately applied to any socialist country that seeks to exploit another country. Vietnam belongs to this category.

In its attempts to establish a "special relationship" with Laos and Cambodia, Vietnam has run into trouble only in the latter. Contrary to the situation in Laos, in Cambodia Vietnam's Lao Dong party encountered strong resistance from the Pol Pot leadership. The situation originated in the beginning of the 1970s when the Communist movements in Indochina coordinated their military strategies against the United States and its allies. Hanoi found it difficult to work with Pol Pot because he was too nationalistic. Hanoi missed the chance to impose its military domination over Cambodia in the same manner as it did in Laos because Phnom Penh was "liberated" before Saigon. There was not sufficient justification then for Vietnam to send its

^6 In 1982 the land areas of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos were 127,207 sq. mi., 69,900 sq. mi., and 91,428 sq. mi.; the populations, 56.6 millions, 6.1 millions, and 3.7 millions; the population density, 413.65 sq. mi., 126.89 per sq. mi., and 40.69 per sq. mi., respectively.


forces to “help” Cambodia after a successful unification of Vietnam. In Laos, however, Vietnamese military assistance was “wanted” after the liberation of Saigon. About 40,000–50,000 Vietnamese military men and “technicians” were dispatched to that country to hasten the process of communization. The Vietnamese have since retained the same level of military presence in Laos.

In an effort to impose its special relationship with Cambodia by force, Vietnam has capitalized on the existing anti–Pol Pot and anti-Chinese sentiments to justify its actions. The Cambodian Pol Pot regime was widely condemned as “genocidal.” The Vietnamese leadership proclaimed its championship of humanitarianism in an attempt to justify its overthrow of the “genocidal” government to the international community. By also using the “Chinese threat” to justify its military intervention in Cambodia, the Vietnamese leadership hopes to gain support from those ASEAN members who espouse the much-publicized idea of the “Chinese threat.”

The fear of the “Chinese threat” has not been clearly articulated by the Vietnamese, but Cambodia is said to have been made a Chinese colony before it was “liberated” by Hanoi. Philippe Devillers, a proponent of the Vietnamese theory of the “Chinese threat,” puts it as follows: “Peking could have used Cambodia not only to isolate and threaten (or even attack) Vietnam from the Southwest, but also as a springboard for directing or inspiring actions against Thailand and Malaysia, where Chinese Communist parties are already operating with about the same strength the Khmer Rouge had in 1970.”^9

These arguments are weak. First, when the Pol Pot government was pushed out of Phnom Penh in January 1979, there were some 600 Chinese experts and technicians leaving for home. This number, by any standard, was much smaller than the number of Chinese received by Hanoi before the Sino-Vietnamese conflict. Chinese experts did not make Vietnam a Chinese colony. Laos is not called a Vietnamese colony now when it hosts 40,000–50,000 Vietnamese troops, cadres, experts, and technicians. Second, the argument is not logical. China shares a long border with Vietnam. If China wants to threaten Vietnam, it can strike across the border as it did in February-March 1979. It does not make sense for China to aim at the control of Cambodia so it can attack Vietnam from the southwest. If one assumes that the “Chinese threat” is coming from the north, then the Vietnamese response to the perceived threat should logically be to prepare to counter the Chinese attack along the Sino-Vietnamese border. It is illogical for Vietnam to invade a smaller neighbor in the southwest.

In conclusion: Vietnam aspired to establish “special relationships” with Laos and Cambodia. It was more desirable if the goal could be realized peacefully, as in Laos, but Vietnam never ruled out the use of force, should that become necessary. Force was used in Cambodia because the Pol Pot government was hostile to Vietnam and the Soviet Union, and because the image of the Pol Pot government was sufficiently poor to justify the hope of foreign acceptance. Additionally, Vietnam used the “Chinese threat” as a diplomatic ploy to justify the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and to split ASEAN.

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As of early 1985, the Vietnamese foreign-policy objectives in Indochina have not been attained; it appears that they are too ambitious. Traditional animosities between the Khmers and the Vietnamese and Cambodian nationalism are too strong to permit Vietnam to achieve its objective without a struggle. The ties with Laos have been secured only because of Vietnamese military presence. That in itself is testimony to an uncertain future. Indeed, the present cordial relationship between the two ruling parties exists on a very narrow base. The ties might be loosened by the demise of a few leaders of either party. The presence of the Vietnamese soldiers in Laos may prove to be a growing obstacle to Laotian-Vietnamese friendly relations on a broader basis. Moreover, many Vietnamese themselves, especially the South Vietnamese, are opposed to the Vietnamese policy in Cambodia.\(^{10}\)

The consequences of the presently adopted policy are far-reaching. First, Hanoi has to allocate huge resources for military purposes. In early 1985, it maintained 1.2 million men in active service. In 1982 the military expenditure amounted to 50 percent of the national budget—if Soviet military aid was included.\(^{11}\) Second, because of the military expenditure, coupled with external economic sanctions, Vietnam's economy is in shambles. The economic life of Vietnam has to depend largely on foreign loans and foreign aid. The World Bank estimates that the Vietnamese gross national product (GNP) per capita in 1982 was U.S.$170. Nguyen Co Thach, the Vietnamese foreign minister, admitted that his country was among the poorest in the world. According to Jan MacDowall, in 1983 Vietnam had U.S.$4,500 million in foreign debts, two-thirds owed to Communist countries. In the past, Vietnam has had a poor record of paying debts on schedule.\(^{12}\) Third, Vietnam’s security heavily depends on the Soviet Union. Vietnam had to conclude a treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union before invading Cambodia and to allow the Soviet Union to use Vietnam’s military facilities. Finally, Vietnam’s security situation has deteriorated rather than improved since the invasion of Cambodia. The exodus of refugees is a symptom of the insecure situation, which has been caused by economic, political, and a combination of many factors. Resistance forces have been operating sporadically in South Vietnam. Most damaging of all is the Chinese threat—a genuine and continuing threat since the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.

Although the Chinese threat has become real and although disillusionment among the Vietnamese is widespread, the Vietnamese Communist system is not in danger of collapse. Unlike non-Communist systems, Communist governments maintain control through intensive organization down to the hamlet and block levels and use a large police-military force to keep order. Moreover, many dissidents and politically conscious elements in Vietnam have fled the country. Most of those who remain behind are not actively rebellious and do not constitute a threat to the system—though they may not represent a positive factor to the regime or contribute to national reconstruction. The Chinese threat, expressed in such actions as the punitive

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\(^{10}\) This was revealed by Vietnamese refugees and Vietnamese army deserters from the war zones, in Cambodia.


attack on Vietnam in February-March 1979, is also limited because China is aware of
Soviet guarantees and of the possible adverse effects of a full-fledged attack upon its
relations with ASEAN; besides, the Chinese fear the power of nationalism more than
the Vietnamese. At any rate, it would not be easy for the Chinese to overthrow the
Vietnamese government. With the Vietnamese armed forces scattered through all of
the Indochinese states, the Chinese would have to subjugate the three states to topple
the Vietnamese regime. ASEAN would not tolerate such a military operation, any
more than they are prepared to tolerate Vietnam's military operations in Cambodia
today.

The Russian Interest

Like Cuba, Vietnam is remote from the Soviet Union. Culturally, both countries
are equally distant. The current close association between Vietnam and the Soviet
Union can be traced back to their ideological links in the 1930s when the Soviet Union
still had the design of communizing the world. Since then the Soviet Union has never
stopped supporting the Communists in Indochina. When the Indochinese Com-
munists waged their wars against France, the United States, and China, Soviet
assistance was given on ideological grounds as well as because of the convergence of
national interests: Vietnam's enemies—France, the United States, and China—were,
and still are, the Soviets' opponents. To date, the Soviet Union remains the only victor
among the external powers involved in the Indochinese conflicts. It is interesting,
therefore, to analyze the national interests of the Soviets in the area and how they have
pursued and maintained those interests.

The primary interest of the Soviet Union in Indochina has been fashioned in
accordance with Soviet global strategy and the international environment of South-
east Asia. For 55 years since the formation of the Indochinese Communist party in
1930, the primary foreign-policy objective of the Soviet Union has been to protect its
own national security. In pursuing this objective, the Soviets have often appealed to
the spirit of Communist internationalism, but in reality the ideological factor has been
consistently subordinated to the Soviet national interest.

The strength of the successful Communist movements, however, lay in their
ability to blend internationalism and nationalism. By employing this tactic, local
Communists were able to camouflage to some extent their dependence upon the
Soviets. Ironically, socialist internationalism and nationalism were often the products
of actions of Soviet opponents or the old establishment associated with colonialism.
The Soviets uncovered or created the revolutionary forces, organized them, and
pushed them to power under the banner of the Communist revolution.

Between 1930 and 1945 the Communist revolution in Indochina was part of the
world-wide international Communist movement, with its revolutionary headquarters
in Moscow. Colonialism was an attractive target. The Indochinese Communist
leaders were able to capitalize on the existing nationalism for their revolutionary
cause. All Communist revolutionary activities in Indochina were coordinated as one
operational theater without consideration of national divisions.

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After World War II, between 1946 and 1975, France and the United States belonged to the established order and therefore were Soviet opponents. They came to Indochina to defend the existing systems for their national interest, but lost the wars at a cost of tens of thousands of lives. The Soviets won these wars without sending a single combat soldier. As a consequence, Soviet credibility was enhanced and its influence expanded.

By humiliating France and the United States, the Vietnamese military must have been rated high in the minds of the Soviet military strategists—as Israel is being rated high by American security strategists. At last, the Soviet Union had found a credible ally in a strategic part of Southeast Asia.

However, well before the Soviet allies in Indochina won their victories against the West, the Sino-Soviet rivalry for influence in Indochina had started. Throughout the war years, Vietnam skillfully kept war supplies flowing from both powerful allies by being neutral in the Sino-Soviet conflict. After the war Vietnam could not maintain this neutral stance. First, during the war years, Soviet military supplies to Vietnam were mostly modern weapons whereas the Chinese supplied light arms. Modern heavy weapons required training and advisors more than light arms. As a result of the association during the war, the Soviets had better access to Vietnam’s policy-making apparatus than the Chinese. Second, compared with the Soviet, the Chinese will and capacity to influence Vietnam’s policies were relatively weak. Third and most important, the Vietnamese foreign-policy objectives in Laos and Cambodia were incompatible with those of the Chinese.

The Cambodian situation gave the Soviet Union an additional edge over China. Moscow viewed the Pol Pot government as a Chinese surrogate. Its forces stormed the Soviet embassy when it seized Phnom Penh, and the new government refused to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Before that, the Soviet Union still kept a foothold in Cambodia by maintaining an embassy in Phnom Penh; the Lon Nol government (the United States surrogate) was, in the eye of the Soviet leadership, better than the Chinese surrogate. No doubt, it was in the Soviet interest to see the Pol Pot government overthrown.

On this issue the Russians and the Vietnamese had a convergent interest. The Soviet Union had neither the means nor a justification to take military action against the Pol Pot government; only the Vietnamese could do this. Both parties must have been aware that if they went all out to overthrow the Pol Pot regime, their already worsening relations with China would be aggravated. But the Soviet Union had nothing to lose and everything to gain. It could regain a foothold in Phnom Penh and could embrace Vietnam firmly in the Soviet camp. If the Kremlin leaders had any doubts about the possibility of turmoil in the area, they probably welcomed the prospects. The Moscow security strategists might have seen it as an opportunity to ease the Soviet tension with China on the Soviet border areas by diverting Chinese energy to the South. These considerations are consistent with the Soviet strategy to isolate China.

It should not be assumed, however, that the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia was initiated in Moscow, or even that it was a conspiracy between Hanoi and Moscow.
There is no evidence for that. Circumstantial evidence suggests that Hanoi decided to overthrow the Pol Pot regime in August 1978. When Pham Van Dong visited ASEAN capitals a month later, in September, he meant to neutralize ASEAN or, if possible, to secure support from ASEAN for Hanoi’s contemplated military operations in Cambodia. Apparently, the Vietnamese leadership initiated the decision with a clear understanding that the invasion of Cambodia would receive Soviet blessing. A trip to Moscow by the Vietnamese top Party leaders in early November was to conclude the decision-making process. For fear of China, Vietnam would never have dared to overthrow the Pol Pot government without Soviet support. The Kremlin leaders must have consulted about the situation in Cambodia and evidently endorsed the Vietnamese initiative. The Soviet-Vietnamese treaty of alliance (officially termed “Soviet-Vietnamese Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation”) was signed in Moscow on November 3, 1978. That cleared the way for the invasion.

In supporting Vietnam, the Soviet leadership might have been reluctant on two points. First, the Soviet Union would not like to see the Sino-Vietnamese tension explode into a large-scale war. The Soviet Union also aimed at improving relations with ASEAN as a long-term global strategy. The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia may have created anti-Vietnamese/Soviet sentiments among ASEAN members stronger than Moscow expected. However, if the Soviets could not kill two birds with one stone, they could be content with the isolation of China rather than the improvement of relations with ASEAN.

So far, the Soviet Union has gained footholds and influence in Indochina through Hanoi. In recent years, the Soviet Union has been able to expand its activities and influence into Laos and the People’s Republic of Kampuchea. Now the Soviet Union sends its military, economic, and technical assistance directly to Laos and Cambodia. The Vietnamese may or may not be happy with the increasing activities of the Soviets, acting independently from Vietnam, in those two countries. But the Soviet assistance to Laos and Cambodia is not necessarily incompatible with the Vietnamese interests because Vietnam has limited resources to offer to its client states. Moreover, the economic conditions of those two countries, as well as of Vietnam, are in disarray. External assistance is needed to sustain the lives of the people, as well as the life of socialism. So long as Vietnam’s national survival has to depend on Soviet assistance, the Soviet Union may carry out its independent diplomacy in Laos and Cambodia.

How much Soviet influence can contribute to Soviet security is difficult to assess. The military structures of the three Indochinese states are increasingly oriented toward the Soviet system. The Soviet Union maintains 7,000 advisors and technicians in Vietnam, 700 in the PRK, and 2,000–3,000 in Laos. The Soviet Union has access to the naval facilities in Danang and Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, and Riem in Cambodia. Port facilities in Kampuchea and Vietnam are open to Soviet ships. In wartime, air bases in Indochina, many of them built by the Americans, could be made available to the USSR. These military facilities have enhanced the Soviet military posture in Southeast Asia. The Soviet Union has started using TU-16 Badgers and TU-95 Bears stationed at Cam Ranh Bay for surveillance missions in the Asia-Pacific.
region. It seems that the Soviet Union may be in a position to project its power beyond the Indochinese states. Any political settlement concerning the future of Southeast Asia (such as neutrality or a peace zone) would require Soviet participation.

**National Interest, Socialist Internationalism, and Colonialism**

Socialist internationalism in practice is dead. During three years and nine months in power, the Pol Pot government aspired to build Cambodia by strong appeals to the nationalist sentiments of the people. The Pol Pot government failed because its inward-looking nationalism was confronted by a Vietnamese expansionist nationalism. The Vietnamese formula for building a special relationship in Indochina is basically on behalf of the Vietnamese national interest. The prolonged border war between Cambodia and Vietnam before the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia was also a manifestation of national interest supposed to have been repudiated by professed Communists. In reality nationalism, not internationalism, dominates communism.

A Cambodian defector, Dy Lamthol, has given a vivid account of the Vietnamese control mechanisms in the PRK. Aged 33 when he defected to Thailand in May 1982, he had served, before his defection, as chairman of the Department of America and Western Europe, Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He concurrently served as special secretary to Hun Sen, the Kampuchean foreign minister. According to Dy Lamthol, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was divided into seven departments. There were 17 Vietnamese advisors in all departments of the ministry, two of whom were personal advisors to Hun Sen (one was the Vietnamese ambassador to Kampuchea, Ngo Din; the other was identified as Mr. Cau). In addition, the Vietnamese dispatched a special unit called B68 to oversee all advisors working in Kampuchea. Hun Sen regularly held top-level meetings of Cambodian officials to brief them on policy and to make certain that the policies set forth by Hanoi were followed. Dy Lamthol said that when he was sent to participate in a conference or to negotiate with a foreign delegation, he had to follow the line set in a written paper, in English or French, prepared by a Vietnamese advisor.13

Vietnamese control in the Laotian foreign policy-making structure is not so clear. We know that Kaysone Promvihane, secretary general of the Lao People's Revolutionary party, has a family connection with Vietnam. Top party leaders may agree or disagree with the present policy of close association between Vietnam and the Soviet Union, but they have to play the political game in accordance with the prevailing power balance. Kaysone and his associates may have made foreign-policy decisions by their free will, but indications are that they have no choice but to follow the Soviet-Vietnamese lines of foreign policy. Vietnam maintains 40,000–50,000 troops in Laos to guarantee the continuance of Laotian-Vietnamese solidarity. In addition, the Vietnamese now maintain about 6,000 advisors, experts, and tech-

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nicians in Laos. No doubt many of them are party cadres working for Vietnamese, not Laotian, interests. In every Laotian government agency, there are Soviet and Vietnamese advisors. In the economic agencies Soviet and Vietnamese advisors are more or less equally represented. In high-level technology areas, such as communication and intelligence-gathering activities, there are more Soviet advisors than Vietnamese. But in education, Vietnamese advisors are heavily represented.

Whether Laos can develop its own foreign policy remains to be seen. Since the Communists gained control in Laos at the end of 1975, its foreign policies on major issues are identical with those of Vietnam and the Soviet Union. In this period, two problems have undermined the improvement of Thai-Laotian relations. The first has been the appearance of Laotian dissident groups operating from inside Thailand along the Thai-Laotian border. Although the Thai government has no policy of supporting them, it has no policy of controlling them either. Second are the border incidents, caused by the legacy of French colonial rule, which left some parts of the boundaries undemarcated. These two problems could be settled peacefully if political relations between Thailand and Laos were amicable. When relations worsened, Thailand imposed restrictions on the transit of goods from Thailand’s ports to Laos. Relations between Thailand and Laos would be better if Laos were independent from Vietnam and the Soviet Union. On the other hand, Vietnam and the Soviet Union could hardly maintain their present position in Laos if Laos were to have harmonious relations with Thailand.

The deterioration of relations between Laos and China was certainly not caused by ideological factors, because both countries are Communist. China’s assistance to Laotian Communists contributed significantly to the Communist victory in Laos. Sino-Laotian relations were cordial until Sino-Vietnamese relations deteriorated. The deterioration proves that Laos’ relations with its neighbors have been influenced by Vietnam’s foreign policy. The national interest of Laos has been greatly damaged by the severing of relations with China. Vietnam cannot make up the economic loss suffered by Laos when China discontinued its aid after Laos took Vietnam’s side in the Sino-Vietnamese quarrel. By siding with Vietnam, Laos is actually threatened by China: various Laotian resistance forces (Laos Socialist party, Laos Salvation Movement, Laos United Liberation Front) have been receiving support from China. China does not have a major interest in overthrowing the Laotian government; like Thailand, China would be satisfied if Laos would dissociate itself from Vietnam’s aggressive policy in the area.

It appears, therefore, that the national interests of both Cambodia and Laos are incompatible with those of Vietnam. Yet at present, the foreign policies of the regimes in Phnom Penh and Vientiane are dictated by Vietnam. An image of united strength for Vietnam’s international posture may exist, but in reality, Vietnamese policy has generated conflicts and tension in Indochina and with Indochina’s neighboring countries. Laos and Cambodia can only expect insecurity. The Vietnamese scheme of a “special relationship” in Indochina could never have been put into practice had it not been supported by the Soviet Union. Indeed, neither Vietnam’s military structure nor its aggressive policy could be sustained without massive Soviet support.
EXTERNAL OPPOSITION TO THE VIETNAMESE SECURITY PROGRAM

The Vietnamese scheme for a special relationship among Indochinese states has met with serious resistance not only from within but also from countries outside the area. Because of their special interests in Southeast Asia, these outside powers have played and will continue to play a significant role in shaping the future of Indochina. Hence, it is essential for us to analyze how Vietnam views these countries, what the interests of these countries are, and to what extent Vietnam and these countries may be able to reconcile their differences.

People’s Republic of China

China is a major problem for Hanoi. Arguing that Hanoi has adopted an expansionist policy, China cites the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia to support its argument. Hanoi on the other hand contends that it has invaded Cambodia because there was a Chinese threat and that it cannot withdraw the occupation force because the Chinese threat still exists. In fact, the roots of Sino-Vietnamese differences are deeper than these simple arguments.

Vietnam acknowledges that China supported Vietnam throughout the first and second Indochina wars, and it has no argument with the figure often quoted by Beijing that the total amount of aid China gave to Vietnam between 1950 and 1978 was more than U.S.$20 billion, but Hanoi asserts that the Chinese provided such support for their own interests. And according to Vietnamese spokesmen, the Chinese never hesitated to sell out Vietnam when they had a chance: Hanoi now believes that China urged it to compromise with the West to secure the Geneva accord (1954) and the Paris agreement (1973) because these agreements served Chinese interests and that the Chinese never wished to see Vietnam unified. This is now the Vietnamese official view. It is not clear, however, how many Vietnamese and their leaders agree with these interpretations.

The Vietnamese also view the Chinese as expansionists. Incidents in history are often cited to show how the heroic Vietnamese successfully expelled Chinese invasion forces. The Chinese takeover of the Paracels (Hoang Sa Islands) from South Vietnam on January 19, 1974, was a major source of Sino-Vietnamese conflict. China and Vietnam have also contested their claims over additional areas of the South China Sea, especially the Spratlies, which have been occupied partly by Vietnam, partly by the Philippines, and partly by Taiwan. China is seen by Vietnam as a nation that threatens Vietnam’s sovereign rights and its right of navigation. In a practical sense, it is not clear which acts constitute the most serious Chinese threat in the Vietnamese perception. Support that the Chinese have given to Indochinese resistance forces are certainly a part of the problem. What else the Chinese would have to do, or refrain from doing, to satisfy Vietnamese demands is not clear. Would Vietnam be satisfied with the status quo in regard to contesting claims to the South China Sea?

The Chinese leadership played positive roles in bringing about the Geneva accord of 1954 and the Paris agreement of 1973. Both agreements indicated the
principle of independent status for Cambodia and Laos. The current position of the Chinese with regard to Cambodia is clear. Beijing calls for a Vietnamese withdrawal from that country and for the Cambodian people to settle their own affairs. What is relatively vague is the extent of China’s determination to oppose hegemonism in Indochina and the policies directed toward this end that it will follow. Apart from the Cambodian issue, indications are that today’s heavy Vietnamese presence in Laos may not be acceptable to China. The 1973 Paris agreement was hailed by Chinese official circles as being a success for Chairman Mao’s strategy to defeat both the United States and the USSR in Indochina. The implication was that the accord would bring peace to Indochina and that both the Americans and the Soviets would have no justification for remaining in the area. Later events proved that the Chinese understood their former enemies (the Americans) better than their former allies (the Vietnamese and the Soviets). The Americans withdrew, but the Soviets remained with increasing strength. That strength has been turned against Chinese interests: it has threatened not only Chinese security but also the Chinese-aspired independent status of Cambodia and Laos. Almost certainly, the Chinese will continue to object strongly to the heavy Soviet presence in Indochina.

As already stated, the Chinese responded to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia by staging an attack across China’s southern border in February-March 1979. Since then, China has rendered military and economic aid to Democratic Kampuchea and other resistance forces. So far, China has been the only country that has openly declared its determination to provide supplies to strengthen the Indochinese resistance forces.

The Sino-Vietnamese conflict is linked with the Sino-Soviet conflict. Tension would be eased if Sino-Soviet relations were to improve. But it is wishful thinking to assert that the Soviet Union is willing to reduce its influence in Indochina. It is also unlikely that the Soviet Union will put pressure on Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia. These factors have created and will continue to create tension in the area. Sino-Vietnamese territorial disputes may last indefinitely, but so long as the Cambodian problem remains, the territorial issue will be considered secondary by both China and Vietnam.

Thailand and ASEAN

In pursuing its interests in Indochina, Vietnam has confronted opposition from its southern neighbors as well as its northern neighbor. While China is the strongest military power in Asia, ASEAN is considered one of the strongest political forces in the region. These two collaborators, Communist and non-Communist, have differences in their societal goals and interests, but their interests in Indochina have converged since the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.

When the Communists gained control over the Indochinese states, ASEAN countries were prepared to accept peaceful coexistence with their Indochinese Communist neighbors. Except for political ultrarightist rule in Thailand (October 1976–October 1977) and ultraleftist rule in Democratic Kampuchea (April 1975–December
1978), the countries of Indochina and ASEAN strove to normalize their foreign relations. For a brief time, the political atmosphere in the area seemed peaceful and stable. But when the Vietnamese dramatically thrust their armed forces into Cambodia, the ASEAN foreign ministers gathered in Thailand to formulate a joint policy on the Cambodian problem. They demanded an immediate cease-fire in Cambodia and the withdrawal of foreign forces. Thereafter, ASEAN has been campaigning against Vietnamese military presence in Cambodia through the United Nations. ASEAN has also tried to put pressure on donor countries to cease giving aid to Vietnam. In the international political arena ASEAN has won every battle, with full support from China.

In formulating policies and strategies against Vietnam's military presence in Cambodia, Thailand has been playing a leading role because of its geographical position as ASEAN's front-line state vis-à-vis Indochina. Thailand naturally monitors the situation in Indochina with special attention. The other ASEAN members recognize Thailand's leading role; Thailand has relatively few conflicts of interest with other ASEAN members. However, important roles are played by various ASEAN members. Each country has contributed in some form to the success of the ASEAN policy with regard to the Cambodian conflict. Lee Kuan Yew, the prime minister of Singapore, invited the Khmer leaders—Sihanouk, Son Sann, and Khieu Samphan—to meet in Singapore in 1981 to pave the way for the formation of a coalition government to fight against the Vietnamese occupation. In June 1982, the Malaysian government hosted a meeting to bring the three Khmer leaders together again to formally establish a coalition government. Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore performed remarkably well diplomatically, as members of the nonaligned movement, in gaining support from the Third World countries for the ASEAN-sponsored United Nations resolution on Cambodia, calling for a Vietnamese withdrawal. Malaysia and Indonesia have been most effective in persuading the Islamic nations. The diplomats of Singapore and the Philippines have been equally skillful in lobbying friendly states to support the resolution. As a result, the resolution, annually voted upon in the United Nations General Assembly, has gained increasing support from United Nations members. The demonstration of ASEAN unity has discouraged Vietnam from singling out Thailand as its enemy—at least publicly.

There has been speculation in academic and journalist circles that ASEAN may be split over the Cambodian issue because there are different perceptions among ASEAN members. The speculation refers in particular to Indonesia and Malaysia, which traditionally perceive China, rather than Vietnam, as a greater potential threat to them. This may be logically true. Malaysia and Indonesia have had bitter experiences with a portion of their Chinese communities and the Chinese-led Communist movements in their countries; part of the problem relates to the overseas-Chinese of the People's Republic of China. Ethnic cleavages and diverse historical experiences have been popularly depicted as potential sources of ASEAN differences. Such themes are sometimes played up out of proportion—mostly by the mass media. Consequently, the Vietnamese are encouraged to devise strategies to split ASEAN. For example, in rejecting the United Nations-sponsored proposals, especially that advocating an international conference in Cambodia, Vietnam proposed a regional
conference on Cambodia implying, unofficially, that the meeting could be held at Kuala Lumpur or Jakarta if ASEAN chose such a site; in rejecting any United Nations peace-keeping forces in Cambodia, Vietnam proposed a Thai-Cambodian safety zone with neutral observers, implying that Malaysia and Indonesia were eligible for observer status. This proposal was a diplomatic ploy because Vietnam was sure that it would not be acceptable to ASEAN. So far, Vietnam has not been able to exploit the existing conditions to its advantage, and the possible divisions among the ASEAN countries that have been speculated on have not materialized.

Rather, ASEAN unity on the Cambodian issue has been demonstrated in all joint meetings of ASEAN policy-making bodies. In the meeting rooms, ASEAN policies toward Indochina are discussed and formulated on the basis of political realities and ASEAN national interests; sensitive ethnic issues have not been reflected in the ASEAN policies. As stated, Thai interests have been well recognized.

What are the Thai national interests in Indochina? Thailand shares its border with Laos (1,750 km) and Cambodia (798 km) and has unwillingly hosted more than one million Indochinese refugees in the past ten years. Its interests are to maintain the independence of Cambodia and Laos and to see peace preserved in all of Indochina. An independent Cambodia and an independent Laos signify for Thailand buffer states between Thailand and Vietnam. The weak states by themselves pose no threat to Thailand. Without Vietnamese troops in the two countries, there would be no border clashes with the Vietnamese, which have taken place occasionally since the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. But with Vietnamese control over Laos and Cambodia, the way is paved for Vietnam to be in a better position to support the Communist movement in Thailand. Without peace in Indochina, more refugees will flee into Thailand; there will be cross-border fighting between rival forces, cross-border shellings, and hence instability on the Thai side of the border.

Merely by its geographical proximity Thailand has provided an invaluable asset to Vietnamese resistance forces. Thailand maintains a policy of no military intervention, but it has given political and moral support to resistance forces; foreign supplies, military or nonmilitary, are allowed to reach the resistance; occasionally the Thai army at the border returns fire; more recently, it has been forced to attack Vietnamese forces within its territory. Thailand’s diplomatic efforts, however, conducted jointly with other ASEAN members, have so far produced no tangible results; as noted, Vietnam has ignored all United Nation resolutions about Cambodia. The cessation of foreign aid by most Western donor countries has undoubtedly hurt Vietnam badly, but as yet, it will not compromise on the Cambodian issue.

Vietnam has been frustrated by Thailand’s hostile attitude and has accused Thailand of giving sanctuary and support to the Khmer rebels. But there are limits to what Vietnam can do to Thailand. It does not want to escalate the conflict with Thailand greatly because it is overextended militarily, and isolated politically. Vietnam occasionally hinted that it might exercise the right of hot pursuit into Thai territory, but that has not deterred Thai policy. The Thai believe that Vietnam forfeited its right to talk about principles of international law. Besides, the Thai are confident that, whatever the scale of fighting on Thai soil, they can defeat the Vietnamese. Vietnamese incursions into Thailand have produced no gains for Vietnam, while
Thailand has obtained international support. The greatest damage done to Thailand pertains to the refugee problem. During the dry season (December through April), the Vietnamese mount large-scale military operations against the resistance forces adjacent to the Thai border. Large numbers of Khmer refugees are driven into Thailand along with some Khmer soldiers. Most of these refugees have been under the protection of the non-Communist resistance forces, since the Communist resistance tends to keep its people within Cambodia. The 1985 Vietnamese offensive, as noted earlier, was especially large and sustained, provoking clashes with Thai forces and the exodus of large numbers of refugees, some of whom have been moved further into Thailand, at least temporarily.

Other Major Forces: The United States, Japan, Australia, and the United Nations

After the Vietnamese victory in South Vietnam, China stopped giving Vietnam military aid and reduced its economic aid. Economic aid from Japan and the Western powers (Australia, Canada, and the European Economic Community) started flowing into Vietnam. For three years before the invasion of Cambodia, the amount of aid Vietnam received from the West may have exceeded that being given by the Soviet Union in the same period. Vietnam highly valued this aid, and its economic planning was dependent on it. Vietnam also expected war reparations (officially called “reconstruction funds”) from the United States. Had Western aid continued to flow into Vietnam, the economy of Vietnam could have recovered and stability could have been restored to Vietnam and the region as a whole. But aid from Western countries stopped after Vietnam invaded Cambodia.

American interest in Indochina at present is related to American interest in ASEAN: no hostile power should dominate ASEAN and no outside power should threaten interests vital to American friends and allies. Vietnamese expansion in Indochina has Soviet support and threatens the interests of the United States and its allies. However, the United States has played only an indirect role in opposing Vietnam and the Soviet Union in Indochina. The limits have been mainly a product of the “Vietnam syndrome” and the negative image of Pol Pot’s DK government among the American public. This image has discouraged more extensive American involvement in Cambodian affairs. But the United States cannot be a mere bystander in view of the active Soviet support of Vietnam. As a result, the United States has adopted a policy of following the ASEAN lead. It has played a supporting role in the following ways: (1) the United States has helped strengthen Thailand’s security by increasing arms supplies to the Thai military (mainly on credit under the Foreign Military Sales program); (2) the United States has used its influence to limit Vietnamese access to aid from non–Soviet bloc and international financial institutions; (3) the United States has shelved plans for normalization of relations with Vietnam and for the controversial “reconstruction funds.”

Even this limited role has been condemned by the Vietnamese official organs as “U.S. imperialism in collusion with the Chinese reactionaries and their lackeys.” Other than rendering assistance to refugee relief efforts, the United States has given
no material help to the Indochinese resistance forces, though rumors often circulated among the media, such as the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, that the United States has financed the Son Sann forces. In the spring of 1985, Secretary of State George Shultz announced that while assistance to the non-Communist Khmer resistance would be limited to humanitarian supplies for the present, the United States would not rule out military assistance at some future point.

The Japanese interest in Indochina also is related to its interest in ASEAN, which is basically commercial and strategic. The Southeast Asian sea lane is vital to Japanese security. It is Japan’s transit point to Middle East oil. Japan must ensure that its floating oil pipeline is controlled by friendly nations. Japan’s commitment to ASEAN economic development promotes its interest in ASEAN security. Since this has been firmly established, however, Japan’s interest in Indochina is secondary.

During the aftermath of the Communist victories in Indochina, Japan led other powers in rendering economic assistance to Vietnam. Japan concluded agreements pledging economic aid to Vietnam in the amount of ¥16,000 million (approximately U.S.$800 million) within four years. Another ¥20,000 million loan was pledged. At the time of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, the amounts transmitted to Vietnam for grant aid had amounted to ¥14,000 million and for the loan ¥10,000 million. Since then, the Japanese government has withheld aid and has imposed economic sanctions against Vietnam in accordance with the ASEAN recommendation.

Australia, Canada, France, and the European Economic Community imposed economic sanctions similar to those put into effect by Japan. At the end of 1981, however, France resumed its economic aid to Vietnam in the modest amount of 200 million francs (U.S.$40 million). The Australian Labor government, which replaced the Liberal government in March 1983, considered resuming economic aid to Vietnam. ASEAN resisted, and Canberra yielded to ASEAN’s pressure. Other countries have been receptive to ASEAN sentiments and have pledged to withhold their aid to Vietnam until it withdraws from Cambodia. These actions are most costly for Vietnam: it has been deprived of economic aid in the total amount of U.S.$1,500 million yearly, including international financial institutional aid. Otherwise, Vietnam would have been the world’s leading aid-recipient country.

The United Nations, established to resolve international conflicts, has been unable to solve the Cambodia problem because of the veto power of the Soviet Union. On January 15, 1979, the Security Council voted 13 to 2 in favor of the seven nonaligned nations’ motion to condemn Vietnam for its invasion of Cambodia, but the USSR used its veto. The voting pattern was repeated on March 16, 1979, when an ASEAN-sponsored motion was put forward; this motion called for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Cambodia and Vietnam after the latter was invaded by China. At the United Nations General Assembly annual meeting, two issues were put forward by voting: the question of a legitimate Cambodian government to be represented at the United Nations and the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. In every session on both issues the votes were cast with wide margins in favor of retaining the Democratic Kampuchean government seat in the United Nations and
calling for the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. Other mechanisms were employed by the United Nations to pressure Vietnam: a United Nations special conference on refugees held in New York on November 5, 1979; a United Nations–sponsored ministerial conference on Cambodian refugees on June 26–27, 1980; and a United Nations–sponsored international conference on Cambodia held in New York on July 13–17, 1981. All these were opposed and ignored by Vietnam, with Soviet support.

Vietnam is a member of the United Nations. It has enjoyed the benefits of membership through the United Nations special organizations, but it has consistently refused to accept the authority of the United Nations in dealing with the Cambodian conflict, arguing that it is an internal matter. Because any enforcement measure would have to be adopted by the Security Council, which is subject to the Soviet veto, all the United Nations can do is to confirm the principle of self-determination by adopting one resolution after another.

THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN SECURITY

The Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia is a classic example of a conventional war between two countries. If a conquest by one party is completed, neighboring countries and the world community will sooner or later recognize whatever rules are imposed on the subjugated country by the victor. This was the case in Uganda, when the Amin government was overthrown by Tanzanian invasion forces in 1979, and in Grenada, when the Austin government was overthrown by American invasion forces in October 1983. However, if the conquest is incomplete, the invasion force will have a difficult time legitimizing its regime. Two cases in point are Afghanistan, invaded and occupied by the Soviet Union since 1979, and Cambodia, here under study. In both cases, the resistance forces, not strong enough to engage in direct combat with the invasion forces, resort to guerrilla warfare. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge resistance force is the strongest among the native factions. Without foreign intervention, the DK forces would return to power in a matter of months.

The irony for Vietnam and the Soviet Union is that hitherto they were the principal proponents of wars of national liberation. Until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Moscow championed national liberation wars by supporting rebel forces, training them in the use of guerrilla tactics. The present Vietnamese government is a result of this Soviet policy: it struggled to power by relying mainly on guerrilla warfare tactics, fighting against a government allegedly under the yoke of

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14 The record of votes is as follows: in 1979, 71 voted for retention of the DK government, 35 against; 91 voted for withdrawal of foreign troops, 21 against; in 1980, 74 for DK government, 35 against; 97 for withdrawal, 23 against; in 1981, 77 for DK government, 37 against; 100 for withdrawal, 25 against; in 1982, 90 for DK government, 26 against; 105 for withdrawal, 23 against. In 1983 there was debate but no vote on accepting the DK government; 105 voted for withdrawal of foreign troops, 23 against. In 1984 the U.N. General Assembly accepted the DK government without voting; 110 voted for withdrawal of foreign troops, 22 against.
foreign powers (France and United States). Why, then, is Hanoi convinced that it and its sponsored regimes in Phnom Penh and Vientiane can control the Indochinese peoples who have refused to be ruled by “puppet” regimes and foreign powers? Apparently Vietnam did not regard itself as a foreign country when it expanded into Laos and Cambodia or thought that the geographical factor shielded it from being perceived as a foreign power; perhaps it considered itself invincible.

Hanoi has followed the classic expansionist pattern. When it failed to completely conquer Cambodia, it blamed outside supporters of that country. To rally support from the international community, especially in the Kremlin and, to a lesser extent, from its own people, Hanoi has attempted to describe itself as the victim of an international conspiracy “led by Beijing and Washington and supported by ruling circles within ASEAN.”

The superiority of the Vietnamese with regard to colonial control techniques has yet to be demonstrated. Compared with the Soviet Union and the United States, Hanoi has had little experience in dealing with satellites, allies, or colonies. Its strategies differ greatly from those of the United States and are similar to those of the Soviet Union. The Soviet-Vietnamese model gives priority to the military approach with little consideration to civic action. It does nothing to appease the people of Cambodia with ballot boxes or to broaden the political base of the puppet government. The question of human rights is irrelevant, and economic development is made wholly dependent on political development. This approach is a challenge to the West. Should Hanoi succeed in establishing permanent control over Laos and Cambodia, it signifies that coercion and organization work better than humanitarianism.

The fact cannot be ignored that Vietnamese rule in Laos and Cambodia operates under certain advantages. Other than the geographical proximity already mentioned, the similar skin color of the Indochinese people may provoke less nationalism than the color of the white people once did in this area. Moreover, the maintenance of the Vietnamese troops in Laos and Cambodia is no financial drain for Vietnam. In Cambodia, in particular, the Vietnamese troops have made a fortune out of the plentiful fish supply in Tonle Sap. In addition, potential rebels are either put in jail, sent to “education camps,” or pushed out of Vietnamese-controlled territories. There are few dissidents left to cause trouble to their governments. Finally, open hostility at home is not tolerated. Unlike the American government, Hanoi does not have to fight a war both at home and abroad. It has one policy, and a unity of purpose in carrying out that policy.

On the other hand, there have been symptoms of failure. First, the flight of the Indochinese people from the Vietnamese-controlled areas, although weakening the revolutionary potential from within, deprives Vietnam of benefiting from qualified human resources. Second, desertions from Vietnamese armed forces and the Phnom

15 In July 1983, the Vietnamese authority at Seam Reap issued a proclamation restricting fishing in Tonle Sap by the natives. There was an organized protest from the local people. An organized demonstration was suppressed resulting in approximately 90 casualties. See The Nation Review, July 20, 1983, pp. 1, 2.
Penh regime have occurred. Third, military clashes between the Vietnamese and the Khmers under Heng Samrin’s command at Sisophon in August 1982 have been reported. Finally, distrust of Vietnamese among officials of the Phnom Penh regime has been widespread. Even Vietnamese sympathizers who visited Phnom Penh admitted that most Khmers were imbued with resentment against the Vietnamese. The Vietnamese may not be able to interact with indigenous governments any better than the Americans, who also had difficult times in dealing with their client regimes in Indochina in 1960–1975.

Conflicts and tensions within Indochina have far-reaching implications for Southeast Asian security. Much has been said about the negative side of this matter, but the situation in some respects has created positive conditions for security in ASEAN countries.

First, the Communists have overrun Indochina, but communism has lost ground elsewhere in Southeast Asia. The Communists are fighting among themselves. They have been unable to fulfill their promise of improving the people’s living conditions: the exodus of refugees, especially of those bony bodies reflecting half-starved people, were revealing. Vivid messages were conveyed to the people in ASEAN through the television screen. Thailand, the first host of the Khmer refugees, has been psychologically most affected. Anti-Communist slogans are no longer needed.

Second, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, and the conflicts and tensions among Asian Communists, have united ASEAN. The Vietnamese threat created a sense of urgency among ASEAN leaders to consult with each other and map joint strategies to meet the possible Vietnamese challenge. Quarrels among the Communists helped ASEAN leaders gain confidence in their own political systems, as compared with the Communist system. A spirit of ASEAN unity has gradually developed through meetings at various levels to formulate policies relating to Cambodia. If sometimes a decision took unusually long because the consultative system was working clumsily, the long-term result is that the ASEAN governments have been given opportunities to consult among themselves. Through these practices they have gained experience and confidence in themselves as individual countries and as a collective body. This has been conducive to cooperation in other areas, especially economic and cultural—areas originally set up as primary objectives. Additionally, the ASEAN countries have earned the respect of external powers with interests in Southeast Asia. This may have a far-reaching implication: subversion and interference in internal affairs of ASEAN may be reduced—interference from a friend

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16 In July 1983, 647 Vietnamese deserters were detained in the special camps at Si Kew (Koraj province) in Thailand; see Nation Review, July 5, 1983, p. 6. In August 1982, Moulinaka forces at Nong Chan received 300 deserters from the Phnom Penh army; see Nation Review, August 16, 1982. In June 1983, Son Sann claimed that between June 5 and 10, 1983, his headquarters received 1,439 Kampuchean deserters from the Vietnamese control zones in Oddar Meanchay, Seam Reap, and Battambang; see Nation Review, June 15, 1983, p. 6.
18 Ibid., October 27, 1982, p. 5.
or ally can sometimes be as destructive as interference from a foe. There is now a better prospect for ASEAN security.

Third, the threat from domestic and external communism has been greatly diminished. It is not within the scope of this essay to discuss the reasons in detail, but here they are in brief: (1) The Communist movements in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines have lost confidence in the Communist ideology in the aftermath of the intra-Communist wars in Indochina. (2) All Communist movements in ASEAN have been ideologically linked with the Beijing brand of communism. When Beijing turned to seek cooperation with ASEAN governments to oppose Vietnam, it chose to trade off its interest by cutting its support to the Communist movements: the radio stations “Voice of the People of Thailand” and “Voice of the People of Malaysia,” both situated in southern China, were closed. (3) The Communist movements in Thailand, because of a strong tie with Beijing, no longer enjoy the right to use Laos and Cambodia as sanctuaries. Moreover, communications by land between Yunnan and Thailand were cut as soon as the Sino-Vietnamese split became open. (4) The ideological crisis in Beijing was a final blow to all Southeast Asian Communist movements; how could they continue to advance the Maoist brand of communism when Maoism had been already rejected at its home?

All these factors have constituted both ideological and practical crises for the Communist movements in Southeast Asia. As a result, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, and Jakarta have each employed a different approach to resolve their Communist problem, but they have all been successful. In Thailand, the Communist fighters shrank from 20,000 in 1976 to 2,000 in early 1984 and are still fading. They no longer present a major threat to the nation’s security.

Finally, the nature of the Communist threat to ASEAN security has been transformed from one based on ideological strength to one based on force of arms. Wars and tensions in Indochina brought a Soviet military presence in the air and on the sea. In the longer run, this may have adverse political and military implications for the Southeast Asian region as a whole.

PROBLEMS AND IDEAL SOLUTION

The present security structure in Indochina is abnormal and not conducive to peace in Southeast Asia. What is likely to develop from now on depends upon several major factors. Foremost are the psychological makeup and military power of the fighting forces involved directly in the conflict, the Khmers and the Vietnamese; second, the development of political and social conditions in Cambodia and Vietnam; third, the changes in the Khmer political forces (Moulinaka, KPNLF, DK, PRK) and their policies and in the policies of the countries involved in the conflict (Vietnam, USSR, China, Thailand); last, the manner in which the leaders of the Khmer resistance forces and the outside powers articulate and pursue their interests. When these factors are assessed, optimism is difficult to sustain.

The future of Cambodia looks dim. As of 1985, political and armed conflicts in Cambodia have reached a stalemate. All Cambodian factions know that they no longer have the capacity to settle their own problems. Hanoi does not know how to
secure peace with hegemony over Cambodia, but it has learned how to live with violence. Other external powers tend to think only of their national interests. It seems that the interests of the ruling groups of the countries involved are greatly divergent, and their interests in seeking peace have little relevancy to humanitarian concerns. Under these circumstances, we must expect prolonged military conflict and political tensions in Indochina.

A political solution to the Cambodian problem may not be worked out until the next generation of leaders assumes power in Cambodia and Vietnam. By then, the new leaders in Hanoi may conclude that there is no chance for Vietnam to win the war in Cambodia and that it would be in the interest of Vietnam to revise its foreign policy. However, this will happen only if the present foreign policy continues to have a negative impact on Vietnam’s national development and to receive strong opposition abroad.

The immediate question is Who will move first to change the current destructive course? But even if someone should conceive a way out, he may discover that he is not free to make the first move. Hanoi might have to get approval from Moscow, Phnom Penh, and Vientiane. Bangkok might have to consult ASEAN, China, and the Sihanoukists, the KPNLF, and the DK. Similarly, Beijing might have to consult ASEAN and the resistance forces in the war zones. Given the fact that friends or allies of Vietnam, Thailand, and China have divergent interests, it seems impossible to find a solution acceptable to all.

Cambodia may end up being partitioned among the various Khmer factions. Some factions may come under Vietnamese influence, others under Thai influence. The Mekong River could become a dividing line between the Vietnamese sphere of influence on the eastern bank and the Thai sphere on the western. This is a dismal picture for Cambodia. In the politics of violence, Cambodia as a national entity might be saved only if the war is widened to include either Thailand or China, though greater bloodshed would surely result.

There is an alternative: to restructure the Southeast Asian security system in accordance with the spirit of ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality) announced in Kuala Lumpur by ASEAN in 1971. The Cambodian issue could be a motivating force to work toward that goal. Practical steps can be devised at an appropriate time. At this point we can see conditions favorable to an establishment of a new security structure in Southeast Asia. Basic to this scheme are the security interests of all countries in the area and of some external major powers. Their minimum security requirements would be met through the distribution of the available “security commodities.”

The first condition is recognition that nationalism in Southeast Asia is a strong political force and that any attempt to impose a single country’s brand of internationalism will be resisted. Where these two forces have clashed, internationalism has become hegemonism. Consequently, the Southeast Asian peoples will reject the new formula of international relations devised by Hanoi—as previously they rejected the imperial system. Instead, conventional international principles of equality and peaceful coexistence should be applied.
The second requirement, it thus follows, is that Cambodia’s territorial integrity and national independence be restored. Because of the abnormal conditions that have so far evolved, Cambodia must accept some externally imposed conditions: it must be neutral and tolerate some external influences. We must start with the only common interest of the various factions in Cambodia: national independence.

Vietnam’s interests come third in order of priority. By giving up some interests presently pursued (by force, and illegally) in Cambodia, Vietnam must be compensated by having comparable interests met. The formation of an independent and neutral government could mean a cessation of support to anti-Vietnamese Khmer factions, thereby meeting a Vietnamese demand. The resumption of foreign aid to Vietnam by the non-Soviet bloc would be another major benefit. The Chinese threat, if it is real, could be met by expanding ASEAN to cover all Indochinese states. This would be particularly attractive to Vietnam because it has attempted, with no success, to sabotage China-ASEAN relations. Psychologically, Hanoi would gain by having a closer association with ASEAN.

Beijing must receive something, too. ASEAN with Vietnam as a member would not be and should not be hostile to China. Indonesia and Singapore would establish diplomatic relations with China in due course. Moreover, China’s relations with the Indochinese states could be changed from the present negative pattern to a constructive one. With peaceful southern neighbors, China could expect the Soviet Union to have no reason to maintain a military presence in the southern flank of China.

Bangkok would benefit from this plan by the restoration of peace and stability in its border areas, repatriation of refugees to their homelands, and the avoidance of the further influx of refugees. Moreover, Cambodia once again would become a natural buffer state between Thailand and Vietnam. However, Thailand would have to find means to prevent its soil being used by Laotian and Cambodian antigovernment elements.

Recognizing that a prolonged conflict in Indochina would force the United States, China, ASEAN, and Japan to develop closer ties, the Soviet Union also might wish to seek a new Asian-Pacific security arrangement. Since the Soviet economy has been deteriorating and the Japanese military potential growing, Moscow might be interested in working out a moratorium in the arms race with the United States. It might agree to remove its military presence from Vietnam and endorse ZOPFAN together with the Cambodian resolution advanced here, if the United States would agree to pull out of Subic Bay Navy Base and Clark Air Base, and if Japan would slow down its rearmament.

On the surface, the United States is the only loser in this process of exchange of interests. But in reality, Washington has nothing to lose. American wisdom in urging Japan to rearm is questionable, at least from the perspective of Asian security if not from the perspective of American global strategy. The American military bases in the Philippines have been, and will be, a destabilizing factor in the Philippine political system. Sooner or later, the United States will have to give up those bases. The Asian people have no reason to endorse a U.S. policy that uses Asian territories as part of
American global strategy against the Soviet Union. But if the U.S. presence in the Asia-Pacific region is in the common interest, then peace and stability within the framework of ZOPFAN would be able to satisfy Washington.

Unfortunately, this proposed solution may be utopian. It requires the wisdom and skill of a diversity of political leaders willing to take a long-range view of national interests and to make the necessary compromises for that purpose. But the politics of the present are being played on a futile win-lose basis.
The states of South Asia have no common threat perception. As a consequence, their security policies toward each other and toward powers outside the subcontinent are quite different. This lack of a security consensus has been shaped by competing symbols of group identity among the billion people of South Asia, by the disparity in size, population, and wealth between India and its South Asian neighbors, and by the differential location of the South Asian states within the subcontinent.

The major, though by no means sole, perceived security threat to India's neighbors is India. India is primarily concerned with insulating the subcontinent from external intrusion. Insulation would assure New Delhi the regional preeminence that its policy makers perceive as an essential prerequisite for the great power status.


that Indian elites seek for their country.³ Acquiring regional preeminence has been complicated by the efforts of some neighbors to enlist external support in order to strengthen their bargaining position vis-à-vis India. The close proximity of two huge outside powers—China and the Soviet Union—has further complicated the Indian goal of reducing external influence in South Asia, as have the periodical surges in U.S.-Soviet tensions, which have occasionally spilled over into South Asia.

South Asia demographically contains an intricate array of languages, religions, and social organizations. India alone has 14 official languages, 80 principal dialects, 550 subdialects, six major religions, and immense ethnic diversity. Language and religion are major symbols of identity in the subcontinent, and they compete with each other for the loyalty of its people, as well as with narrower loyalties of caste, kinship, and locality, and with the broader loyalty to the developing states. These symbols are used both to broaden group identity and to undermine existing political units. Evocation of Islamic unity in British India, for example, led to the development of a powerful mass movement demanding the creation of Pakistan, causing the formation of two successor states instead of one in 1947. The unresolved demands of the Bengali Muslim linguistic-cultural group of East Pakistan ultimately led to the secession of Bangladesh in 1971.

Almost every South Asian state contains dissident cultural groups.⁴ Dissidence can have a direct impact on neighboring states, complicating interstate relations and sustaining suspicions regarding the involvement of neighboring states in domestic affairs. The mass migration of Bengali-speakers, mostly Hindus, from East Pakistan in 1971 was a major factor in the Indo-Pakistani tensions that eventually resulted in a war between the two states. A decade later, the migration of some 3 million refugees from Afghanistan to Pakistan has similarly exacerbated Pak-Afghan relations. The growing disenchantment of Sri Lanka’s Tamil-speaking minority has aroused the sympathy of India’s 50 million Tamils. While New Delhi resisted the demands of some Indian Tamils for intervention in Sri Lanka, such forebearance might weaken in the face of a mass migration to India of Sri Lankan Tamils. Indo-Bangladeshi relations would similarly deteriorate sharply if the Hindu minority of Bangladesh (about 10 percent of its 93 million people) were to migrate in large numbers to India as a result of pressures against Hindus in Muslim-majority Bangladesh. In this case, Hindus, particularly in north India, would probably exert pressure on New Delhi to take a tougher line toward Bangladesh. The continuing migration of Bangladeshi peasants, largely Muslim, to the northeastern region of India is a major factor in arousing nativist sentiment against outsiders there. This problem will escalate unless the economic situation in Bangladesh improves.

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³ See, for instance, the contributions of several Indian scholars regarding the subject in S. P. Varma and K. S. Misra, eds. Foreign Policies in South Asia (Delhi: Orient Longmans, 1975). Very good general discussions of fundamental principles underlying Indian foreign policy are J. Bandyopadhyaya, The Making of Indian Foreign Policy (Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1980) and Shashi Tharoor, Reasons of State: Political Development and India’s Foreign Policy under Indira Gandhi 1966–1977 (New Delhi: Vikas, 1982).

⁴ An excellent theoretical discussion of the problem of ethnicity in South Asia in Paul Brass, Language, Religion and Politics in North India (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974).
Powers outside the subcontinent have occasionally exploited dissidence among South Asia's cultural groups to advance their own interests. China, for instance, supported tribal insurgencies in northeastern India with arms and training until the mid-1970s, partly to dissuade Indian from assisting Tibetan dissidents. Pakistan is concerned that the Soviet Union might exert pressure on Islamabad to come to terms with its client regime in Kabul by assisting dissidents. Indian commentators frequently talk of a "foreign hand" supporting various dissident groups, now most active in the northeastern state of Assam and the northwestern state of Punjab.

Cultural variations among the political elites in the South Asian states have also influenced foreign policy. The Muslim elite of Pakistan has stressed ties with the Islamic states of Southwest Asia rather than with South Asia, a propensity that became more obvious after the loss of East Pakistan in 1971. Some Pakistani analysts now even refer to Pakistan as more a Southwest Asian state than a South Asian one. Pakistan's efforts to project itself there, however, have been complicated by events in Iran and Afghanistan. Bangladesh's Muslim elite since 1975 has also preferred developing closer ties with Southwest Asia. The high-caste Hindu elite in Nepal has identified with India's Sanskrit culture and the geostrategic world of South Asia. Sri Lanka's Sinhala Buddhist elite on the other hand seeks to cultivate Southeast Asia as an alternative to India, but the results so far have not been as successful as the efforts of Pakistan and Bangladesh, both recipients of considerable economic assistance from Southwest Asia. India's elite sees itself and India as the successors of the legacy of the great Hindu states in the period before the eleventh-century Muslim invasions of the subcontinent. There is among them a strong nationalist undercurrent that aims at reviving India's role as a major Asian power.

A second factor contributing to the lack of a security consensus is the vast difference in the size, wealth, and population of India and its South Asian neighbors. The smaller South Asian states are all concerned with the Indian potential to dominate them. India, the core country of South Asia, constitutes 72 percent of its area, 77 percent of its population, 78 percent of its GNP, and by far the most advanced industrial and technological base, including an indigenous armament industry that is the largest among third-world non-Communist states in value, volume, diversity of manufacture, and research and development facilities. Indian defense plants now turn out an extensive range of conventional weapons—small arms, field and anti-aircraft radar/recoilless guns, howitzers, mortars, support electronics; antitank, anti-aircraft and naval missiles, armored tanks and personnel carriers; trainer, piston, transport, subsonic, supersonic, and helicopter aircraft; antisubmarine warfare frigates, fast patrol and missile boats, seaward defense gunboats; and a variety of other specialized missiles and ordnances. The other South Asian states, including Pakistan, lag far behind Indian on arms production and must rely on arms imports for a

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broad range of their defensive requirements. Indian arms expenditures are about two-and-one-half times as much as all its South Asian neighbors combined ($5.5 billion to slightly more than $2 billion for the others, according to 1982–83 estimates). By the 1980s, India had acquired the world’s fourth-largest standing army, fifth-largest air force, and eighth-largest navy. Indian officials maintain that its relatively large defense expenditures are needed because of both regional (i.e., Pakistan) and extraregional (e.g., China) threats. Indian political elites have also apparently accepted the proposition that a powerful military is a necessary factor in the great-power status that India seeks. The bottom line regarding India’s South Asian neighbors, however, is that none of them could on its own withstand a direct Indian attack.

New Delhi fears that its neighbors, particularly Pakistan, will align themselves with powerful outside powers and thus give these extraregional states a competitive voice in South Asian affairs as well as potentially threaten India militarily. In the case of Pakistan, Indian analysts express apprehensions regarding a potential China-U.S.-Pakistan axis and some even note a possible alignment among the oil-rich Islamic states of Southwest Asia, Pakistan, and the United States. They also speak of the possibility of outside powers (usually the United States and China) acquiring bases in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. (New Delhi would be most concerned if the Soviet Union acquired bases in Pakistan, and it is a long-time Indian worry, though the prospects for that do not now seem likely.) India has traditionally insisted on bilateralism as the principle governing relations with each South Asian state to prevent outside powers from acquiring a voice in subcontinental affairs. Indeed, this issue is one of the major stumbling blocks in India’s relations with its neighbors.

India’s neighbors for their part have devised various strategies to deal with India’s relative economic and military superiority. At the economic level, they have tended to look outside the subcontinent for trading partners for two fundamental reasons: to limit Indian influence and to protect their nascent industries from Indian competition. As it is, India traditionally has had a large favorable trade balance with its South Asian neighbors. At present, intraregional trade is a very small fraction—about 5 percent—of total trade. Bilateral Indo-Pakistani trade in 1980, for example, amounted to only $40 million of their overall trade turnover of over $8 billion for Pakistan and $20 billion for India. In the case of Bangladesh, only 4 percent of its imports and 7.5 percent of its exports are regional. Nepal and Bhutan are exceptions, but even those two landlocked states have tried to diversify their trade patterns. This situation can be traced in part to a lack of complementarity, but the low levels of trade are also due to a lack of political effort to exploit a real potential for cooperation.

At the military level, only Pakistan has the means to forge a credible deterrent to India. A prominent Pakistani analyst recently summarized the case for the relatively

8 For example, see Amit Gupta, “Pakistan’s Acquisition of Arms,” ISDA Journal (New Delhi) XIV, No. 3 (January-March 1983), pp. 422–443.
high percentage of GNP allocated to defense (the highest among any South Asian state and about twice that of India).

The threat to the national integrity of a state (in a direct military sense) is from the neighbor [i.e., India]. The potential enemy is the neighbor, only the neighbor, and always the neighbor, provided there is a clash of interests strong enough and vital enough to make the waging of war and its attendant destruction acceptable. Moreover, the threat is seen in terms not of intention but of capability. Intentions can change overnight; capability takes years to build. Intention can change with a change of government; capabilities do not change easily. Thus, if a neighbor with a clash of interests has the capability to attack us, we must have the capability of defending ourselves.  

In the early 1970s, Pakistan’s defense expenditures averaged more than 6 percent of GNP and a little more than 5 percent in the latter half of the seventies. This compares with an Indian expenditure of between 2.5 percent and 3 percent of GNP during the same period. The other states, whose armed forces’ missions are almost exclusively limited to law and order, are much lower. For Bangladesh, it has averaged about 1.5 percent during the past several years, for Nepal about .9 percent, for Sri Lanka about .8 percent, and infinitesimal amounts for Bhutan and the Maldives.

However, not even Pakistan can expect to match India on the battlefield. Experience has also demonstrated that outside powers (the United States in 1965 and 1971 and China in the 1960s and 1970s) will not back Pakistan militarily in an Indo-Pakistani war. The relatively large Pakistani arms expenditures are intended as a deterrent against an Indian attack. Besides presenting a conventional strategic deterrent, Pakistanis are also thinking of a nuclear deterrent. Pakistanis, according to Stephen Cohen, “are virtually unanimous in their perception of a military nuclear threat [from India].” He notes that Pakistanis assume that India already possesses several nuclear weapons and that such weapons are directed primarily against it and not China. Thus, if Pakistan is a potential target, a modest Pakistani nuclear program is another deterrence strategy. Indeed, a Pakistani nuclear weapon would also serve as a deterrent to Indian superiority in conventional weapons—hence, Islamabad’s pursuit of fissile material through both the reprocessing and enrichment routes, which leaves open the option of developing nuclear weapons. Besides a military deter-

10 Akram, op. cit., p. 9.
12 Ibid., p. 52.
13 The Bangladeshi defense budget increased from 13 percent to 32 percent of revenues after the coup deposing Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in part because of the resulting deterioration in Indo-Bangladeshi relations in the post-Mujib era. See Hossain, op. cit., pp. 16ff.
rence, Pakistan has also moved vigorously in the 1970s to strengthen its diplomatic links with a variety of states in the expectation that India will avoid taking aggressive steps that could undermine Indian interests in good relations with such important states as the oil-rich Islamic states of Southwest Asia, or the United States and China. (India has also cultivated better relations with these same states, in part to reduce the chances of their backing Pakistan in its bilateral disputes with India.) In addition, Pakistan has floated a number of regional disarmament proposals that would reduce the potential for either an Indian nuclear or conventional attack. India has just as vigorously opposed such disarmament efforts because such regional schemes might weaken India vis-à-vis other security threats from outside South Asia (e.g., China).

The smaller South Asian states, unlike Pakistan, are too weak to even consider the option of a military deterrent. Therefore, they have concentrated on diversifying ties with outside powers—much the same states that Pakistan has cultivated and for much the same reason. Bhutan has been more cautious, in large part because of its economic dependence on India and because of India’s long-standing strategic doctrine that defines its northern borders with China as India’s strategic frontier in the Himalayas.

Finally, regional fears about being dragged into a renewed East-West confrontation along the periphery of South Asia seems to have contributed to political support for increased regional interaction in an area which up to now has been virtually devoid of regional institutions. Such cooperation is most directly demonstrated in the support for the seven-nation South Asia Regional Cooperation (SARC) forum, formally established in 1983 after three years of negotiations, to work out regional solutions to common economic and technological problems. Initially Pakistan and India were hesitant about participating. Pakistan was apprehensive that India would dominate it, and India that its neighbors might gang up against it on political questions. While the participants have been careful to avoid divisive or political issues, one factor contributing to the support of SARC appears to be a common recognition that increased cooperation reduces chances of South Asia being drawn into East-West controversies. All South Asian states recognize that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has brought the new cold war to the door steps of South Asia, though they differ about how to respond to the Soviet action.

Location has also played a major role in threat perceptions. The historical legacy of invasion and conquest, particularly from Central Asia through the passes of the mountains along the northwest frontiers of the subcontinent, has made the South Asian states sensitive about the subcontinent’s land frontiers with western and Central Asia. Western imperialism by sea in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries was an aberration that is unlikely to be repeated under contemporary geopolitical circumstances. India has expressed concern about the buildup of superpower navies in the Indian Ocean, but the most difficult political and security problems remain the

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16 Probably, the best recent study of SARC is in Ahmad, op. cit., pp. 84–101.
17 For a discussion of the importance of location, especially the critical northwest of the subcontinent, on foreign-policy perceptions of India, see Leo E. Rose, “India and Its Neighbors: Regional Foreign and Security Politics,” in Ziring, op. cit., pp. 35–66.
vulnerable land frontiers of the Northwest. The other South Asian states are less alarmed by the naval buildup of the United States. The Pakistanis perceive it as a counterweight to the Soviet Union and India; the others view it as a counterweight to India.

The northwestern frontier of the subcontinent—most of it controlled by Pakistan and Afghanistan—has been the scene of the difficult security problems in the subcontinent. Until recently, however, the principal security threat for India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan has come from within South Asia rather than from outside (i.e., India versus Pakistan, and Afghanistan versus Pakistan). Nonetheless, all three states were aware of the potential of a Soviet threat to Afghanistan and Pakistan. But as long as Iran and Afghanistan maintained their sovereignty under moderate regimes and various international deterrents were operative, the opportunities for intervention by the Soviet Union were seen as limited and manageable. Consequently, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India could devise strategic and security policies to advance their respective goals vis-à-vis each other rather than the more distant but potentially more serious problem of Soviet power in Central Asia. But developments in 1978–80, in particular the direct Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan and the collapse of the Shah’s regime in Iran, forced both Pakistan and India to reconsider their priorities. Pakistan for the first time faced potential major security threats on both its eastern and western borders. The USSR for the first time posed a major problem for Indian security interests in South Asia because the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan was a catalyst for a revived American interest in a security relationship with Pakistan.

In contrast to the Northwest, the central Himalayas in 1947 were considered virtually impenetrable by external forces. The government of India assumed the security role of the departing British Raj in the three Himalayan kingdoms (Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan) and New Delhi arranged for treaties with them in 1949–50 in response to the initial Chinese moves to absorb Tibet. These Himalayan states, however, were not to pose security problems for India until after the complete Chinese absorption of Tibet in the wake of the 1956–59 Tibetan rebellion. The situation along the Himalayan frontier was further complicated by the Sino-Indian border dispute which involved in varying degrees the three mountain kingdoms. This problem became even more complex after the 1962 Sino-Indian War and the subsequent Sino-Pakistani collusion in their separate but related border disputes with India. It was only after India’s victory in the third Indo-Pakistani war in December 1971, during which China failed to provide any real assistance to the Pakistanis, that New Delhi’s concern over the dangers of such collusion gradually diminished.

In the 1950s, the frontier region to the northeast was seen in India more as an internal political than an external security problem. The northeastern region possesses a number of tribal groups somewhat removed from the Indian cultural mainstream who have sustained insurgencies against the central government in New Delhi. Burma poses no real problem regarding this situation except as a sanctuary. Burmese central authority, virtually nonexistent in much of the area bordering India, is unable to prevent the insurgents from passing back and forth across the border almost at will. As relations with China plummeted in the late 1950s, Indian began to worry about external interference in the region.
Still another internal problem in the northeast is the growing antagonism of the “native” population, particularly in the state of Assam, toward illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The “sons-of-the-soil” fear that unless this migration is checked, they will soon become a minority in their own land. Already, one area formerly with a tribal majority, Tripura, is now two-thirds Bengali-speaking. This fear has led to increasingly strident demands, often accompanied by violence, to push the Bengali-speaking population out, or at least to disenfranchise it. Bangladesh denies the existence of an emigration problem. Bangladesh, almost totally surrounded by India, is extremely sensitive to the possibility of Indian pressure on this and other bilateral problems.

The southern sea frontier of the subcontinent faces no realistic external security threat, despite the buildup of superpower military forces in the Indian Ocean since 1979. Sri Lanka, with its historical memory of invasions from the sea, not surprisingly took the leading role in the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace (IOZP) resolutions at the United Nations and within the nonaligned movement. However, its enthusiasm regarding IOZP has become muted recently with the growing strength of the Indian navy and air force. Sri Lanka, like several other Indian Ocean littoral states, does not relish being left alone in the Indian Ocean with the Indian navy, the most powerful littoral-state navy. Sri Lanka, in addition, is apprehensive that India may use military intervention on behalf of the increasingly disgruntled Tamil minority.

SOUTH ASIA AND ITS FRONTIERS

The Northwest

The post-independence elites of India and Pakistan inherited the basic British security views regarding the strategically important northwestern sector of South Asia, although they applied the historical lessons of the Raj differently. For both India and Pakistan, a stable and neutral Afghanistan was perceived as a necessary buffer to outside intrusion from Central Asia. Indeed, both opposed any outside power developing links with its regional adversary, and thus weakening its position in this strategically important region.

In the case of India, the protection of its interests in the Northwest was complicated by the fact that all of the highly strategic frontier regions in the Northwest, with the exception of the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh, are part of Pakistan and Afghanistan and thus, in India’s view, in uncertain and potentially unreliable hands. India’s fears of Pakistan as a conduit to such outside influence were realized by Pakistan’s security alignments with the United States in the 1950s (i.e., the 1954 Mutual Defense Assistance Treaty and followed soon after by Pakistani membership in U.S.-sponsored SEATO and the Baghdad Pact/CENTO) and then with the closer Sino-Pakistani relationship in the late 1960s that aroused Indian fears of Sino-Pakistani collusion on their respective frontiers with India. New Delhi was also

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18 For an Indian view of the Assamese problem, see Mahesh Joshi, Assam: The Indian Conflict (New Delhi: Prachi Prakashan, 1981).
concerned by the warming of Soviet-Pakistani ties in the late 1960s, which resulted in a significant sale of Soviet arms to Pakistan and a Soviet request, albeit rejected, for a naval base. Pakistan for its part perceived such outside ties as necessary balances to its much larger and more powerful eastern neighbor.

The Northwest was a contentious region for both India and Pakistan even before their independence in August 1947. Both claimed the princely state of Kashmir, which borders on both, and fought a war over it which left the state divided between them when the fighting came to an end on January 1, 1959, through a United Nations ceasefire resolution. The dispute, however, has never been formally resolved, and both sides continue to claim the whole state as legitimately theirs. The subcontinent found itself engulfed in other Indo-Pakistani conflicts in April 1965, September 1965, and December 1971. A perpetual concern with military preparedness led to an arms race between them, which in turn provided foreign powers with a critical role in the affairs of the region. Pakistan, as already noted, joined American-sponsored military alliances through which it acquired more than a billion dollars worth of arms, equipment, and training. India diverted a large sum to the acquisition of arms and military technology from diverse sources after 1963, especially from the Soviet Union. In a sense, the cold war was injected into the subcontinent through such arms relationships, thus permitting the intrusion of outside powers aligned with a regional adversary—the very situation both India and Pakistan wanted to avoid.

The question of Kashmir took on particular saliency to India with the marked deterioration in Sino-Indian relations in the late 1950s, culminating in a war in 1962 stemming from the Chinese occupation of the disputed Aksai Chin area contiguous to Sinkiang, Tibet, and Kashmir, which India claimed (and continues to claim). Pakistan, upset by Western arms support to India during the 1962 Sino-Indian war and perceiving the strategic value of closer ties with China, altered its policies toward China in a way considered dangerous by India. For New Delhi, there now appeared the possibility of a two-front war, which would have affected India's entire frontier, and in particular its critically important northwest sector in Kashmir. This possibility added new emphasis to the strategic importance of those sections of Kashmir under Indian control and made any political settlement with Pakistan more unlikely. No Indian government would agree to a settlement that obligated it to withdraw from the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh because such a withdrawal would leave India virtually unprotected in the highly volatile northwestern frontier region that protects the political heartland of the country. The continuation of the dispute with Pakistan and China, therefore, was a more acceptable option. Pakistan was just as unlikely to withdraw from its part of Muslim-majority Kashmir since such a step would call into question the country's legitimacy as the Muslim state of South Asia. Similarly, China, which occupied Aksai Chin in the 1950s to build a strategically important road linking Tibet with Sinkiang, had no intention then (or has now) of pulling out, particularly because this road has strategic importance in the continuing Sino-Soviet confrontation.

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New Delhi’s Soviet policy since the 1950s has been conditioned by India’s strategic weakness in the Northwest. India has consistently acted to prevent close Pak-Soviet relations, which would pose a greater problem for New Delhi than a Pakistan allied with either the United States or China. Forestalling such a development was (and remains) a major factor determining India’s decision to forge close ties with the Soviet Union. India moved vigorously in this direction in the mid-1960s when Moscow and China assumed increasingly nonpartisan positions on Indo-Pakistani relations. New Delhi was extremely alarmed by Moscow’s decision in 1968 to compete with China in replacing the United States as the principal source of arms to Pakistan. In 1969, India even agreed to sign a Soviet-proposed Treaty of Peace and Friendship to obtain an agreement from it to terminate arms aid to Pakistan—finally signed in August 1971. The low-key public Indian reaction to the Soviet’s 1979 occupation of Afghanistan has probably been conditioned in part by the fear that Pakistan might exercise the “Soviet option,” which Moscow has clearly indicated is still available to Islamabad. Indeed, India’s “special relationship” with the Soviet Union has the continuing advantage of complicating any expansionist Soviet ambitions into South Asia by linking Moscow to New Delhi on regional affairs. For this reason, New Delhi will proceed with caution on its present policy of establishing greater balance in its foreign-policy relationships.

The Pakistani response to the Soviet Union was conditioned by the dual threat it perceived on its eastern and western frontiers. On the west, Afghanistan refused to accept the 1400 kilometer long Durand Line boundary as legitimate, claiming all the North-West Frontier Province and part of Baluchistan. Afghanistan even voted against Pakistan’s application to join the United Nations. India for its part provided Afghanistan with limited arms assistance and gave financial support to Kabul-based dissidents from Pakistan to keep Pakistan off guard and place it in a two-front situation. Following Pakistan’s alignment with the West, the USSR also backed Afghanistan’s claims against Pakistan. Soviet concerns regarding the region were further heightened by the closer ties forged between Pakistan and China in the wake of the 1962 Sino-Indian war. The Soviet response to these Pakistani moves, however, was ambiguous. These developments, ironically, provided the USSR a strong incentive to wean Pakistan away from the United States and the Chinese, a decision that forced India to outbid Pakistan for Soviet support.

For Pakistan, China replaced the United States in 1963 as the major external support in its disputes with India and a point of pressure upon Moscow to moderate its support of Afghanistan’s expansionist ambitions and India’s regional security policies. However, Beijing’s failure directly to assist the Pakistanis in 1965 (and later in 1971) persuaded many in Pakistan that China is not an effective counterforce to India—or to the USSR. The American decision in 1965 to impose an arms embargo on Pakistan, at a time when it was almost totally dependent on American arms imports, clearly underscored the American unwillingness to assist Pakistan vis-à-vis India, at least in circumstances in which it was Islamabad that was taking the initiative.

in a military confrontation. Washington had concluded the security agreements with Pakistan as part of the containment policy against the USSR and China, and not against India. Pakistan, however, saw them as a way of recruiting a powerful outside balancer against India. China was never perceived as a major threat and the USSR was viewed as only a potentially serious threat. In the wake of the stalemated 1965 war arbitrated by the USSR, Pakistan exploited to the fullest the opportunity to play off China, the United States, and the USSR on both its northwestern frontier with Afghanistan and the western and eastern borders with India. This policy had some successes in the late 1960s, but met with a disastrous end in 1971 when none of these balancers directly backed Pakistan against India or even asserted sufficient pressure on India to forestall the fighting. Indeed, the USSR, although initially opposed to a war, actively supported India diplomatically and with arms assistance after the war broke out.

The 1971 war was a watershed event for the northwestern policies of both India and Pakistan. India became far more self-confident regarding its power on the subcontinent. Not only did the Indians recognize that they could handily blunt any military threat from within the subcontinent, but they saw that the major outside powers were unwilling to intervene directly against it. This refusal to intervene was interpreted as a justification of India's policy of maintaining a powerful military establishment, and some Indians even argued that it further demonstrated the necessity for developing nuclear weapons. India's desire for acceptance of its pre-eminence in South Asia seemed finally within its grasp. In 1972, Pakistan agreed at Simla to resolve all regional problems on a bilateral basis. The new "line of control" that replaced the line in Kashmir was viewed in India for all intents as an international boundary, and Indian Kashmiri political forces moved even more actively into the Indian political mainstream. India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran were considering various ways to encourage greater economic cooperation. Even the security threat to Pakistan's western border, which was one cause for Pakistan's search for outside balancers, seemed to be diminishing as the regime of Afghan Prime Minister Sardar Daoud Khan (1973–78) moved to reduce Pak-Afghan tensions in the year before his overthrow by pro-Soviet "Marxist" military officers. As a sign of Indian self-confidence, New Delhi initiated moves that led to a resumption of diplomatic relations with China and Pakistan.

When the Janata party took control of the government of India in March 1977, efforts to expand and improve relations with Pakistan moved into higher gear. The new Pakistani military government of General Zia-ul Haq welcomed India's "good neighbor" policy. The first serious attempt to negotiate an economic relationship that would be more comprehensive than the customary occasional short-term ad hoc agreements was started. Cultural and intellectual exchange programs were initiated, and the terms under which the residents of one country could visit the other were

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21 For a summary of the Indian argument favoring the acquisition of nuclear arms, see Marvah, op. cit., pp. 91–92. A more detailed defense of such acquisition in Krishna Kant, "Should India Go Nuclear?" IDSA, XIV, No. 3 (January-March 1982), pp. 307–328.
liberalized. Simultaneously, American-Pakistani relations plummeted, primarily because of the American concerns regarding Pakistan’s nuclear program. The United States in 1978 pressured France to drop an agreement to sell a nuclear reprocessing facility to Pakistan. Islamabad pulled out of CENTO in March 1979. In April, the United States cut off aid under the Symington Amendment to Section 677 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, and the American Embassy was burned in November.

The pre-1971 Indian policy of backing Afghan claims against Pakistan and supporting, even if only at a low level, Pakistani dissidents was now plainly counterproductive. Domestic turmoil in the Northwest would guarantee its becoming an arena of competitive involvement by other powers with important interests at stake—the USSR, China, and the United States—as events in Afghanistan in 1979 were dramatically to demonstrate. Such involvement would create an explosive situation that would undermine India’s fundamental policy of insulating South Asia from powerful outside states. But this presumed a Pakistan unable to challenge India militarily (either alone or with an outside balancer), and that assumption was held up to close scrutiny in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and countering moves by the United States.

The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in December 1979 and Indira Gandhi’s reassumption of the prime ministership about three weeks later added new complications to the Indo-Pakistani rapprochement process, but did not halt it. However, India’s initial justification of the Soviet invasion during the January 1980 United Nations debate on the subject shocked all other South Asian states (and others as well, including many in India’s foreign-policy establishment), even though India did pull back somewhat by abstaining on the United Nations vote condemning the Soviet Union. In the view of its South Asian neighbors, India has failed in its self-proclaimed role as the preeminent power on the subcontinent and since then has failed to do anything concrete to counter intervention of an outside power.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi initially argued that quiet diplomacy would be more effective in achieving a Soviet withdrawal. In fact, Indian efforts at quiet diplomacy have led nowhere. The Soviets, having blundered into Afghanistan, appear reluctant to leave because they cannot be assured of a pro-Soviet regime there once their troops leave. Indeed, even though Afghanistan is a South Asian state whose fate impinges on Indian security, the USSR has not bothered to consult India either on the intervention or on its subsequent steps there. Clearly, India will have to try something more than quiet diplomacy to get the Soviets to pay attention to India’s concerns. Otherwise, it risks being taken for granted by the USSR. India’s recent moves to improve relations with the United States and China may in part be intended to gain some leverage with the USSR. However, even these moves do not seem to have made Moscow more sensitive to Indian concerns regarding Afghanistan, though the Soviet Union has sought to mollify India with generous arms offers, including Moscow’s most sophisticated aircraft, and offers to help India expand its nuclear-powered generating capacity.

Pakistan now for the first time finds itself faced by the prospect of a real two-front threat, with a superpower on the other side of the Durand Line. Few
Pakistanis believe that the Soviet objective is limited to pacifying Afghanistan, fearing that the USSR will soon turn on Pakistan, perhaps in collaboration with India. However, India would only under the direst circumstances go along with any such scenario since that would give the Soviets a role in Pakistan. India has consistently tried to prevent that development. The USSR for its part is not likely directly to confront Pakistan militarily, but might, when circumstances permitted, support dissidents in Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province to exert pressure on Pakistan. There also exists the possibility of Afghan and Soviet military units engaging in “hot pursuit” against Afghan freedom fighters. Indeed, there have already been frequent Afghan intrusions into Pakistani air space. The presence of about three million Afghan refugees, which the Kabul regime and Moscow claim are supporting the freedom fighters, further fuels Pakistani apprehensions regarding the possibility of “hot pursuit,” which would probably be intended to get Pakistan to block any cross-border assistance to the freedom fighters.

This difficult situation, however, has not sent Pakistan rushing out in search of a military alliance. Experience had taught it the unreliability of such arrangements. Rather, Islamabad has astutely forged a policy that includes the acquisition of sophisticated weapons from the United States under a strictly limited security relationship as a deterrent (to both the USSR and India), the pursuit of a diplomatic dialogue with the USSR (on the Afghan issue) and India (on a nonaggression pact), and strengthening ties with the Islamic states of the Middle East.

India reacted sharply to the 1981 American/Pakistani agreement which calls for $3.2 billion in military and economic assistance during a five-year period, as it did to the separate American decision to sell 40 F-16 fighter bombers to Pakistan. New Delhi officially charged that the United States was introducing (again) an arms race to the subcontinent, a rather thin argument considering the Indian decision in the late 1970s, before the development of the Afghan crisis, to modernize its own military forces. New Delhi also charges that American arms assistance to Pakistan constitutes the primary threat to its security and to the peace and stability in the subcontinent, which overlooks the fact that the introduction of troops into South Asia by the Soviet Union has completely disrupted the superpower equilibrium in all of southern Asia. What in fact seems to disturb India most is the possibility of interlocking security arrangements that Pakistan might work out with the Islamic states of the Middle East on the one hand and with the United States and China on the other. One scenario is that such security alignments will induce Pakistan to become less willing to negotiate its bilateral differences with India. Still another, and more alarmist, scenario is that Pakistan would again be encouraged to launch an attack on Kashmir, expecting international demands for a ceasefire, and thus internationalize the Kashmir question. Since Pakistan tried and failed to do this in 1965 when conditions were far more favorable to Islamabad, it would seem far-fetched to expect Pakistan to launch a war that could be its last one. Some Indian analysts argue that Pakistan is developing a nuclear-weapons capability in order to blackmail Indian to achieve the same objective.

But India is in a dilemma regarding the Pakistan response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Indian interests would be most damaged should Islamabad accommodate itself to Moscow’s desires. That could bring a superpower to India’s own
borders, perhaps including Soviet military facilities on Pakistani soil. At the same
time, India opposes closer security relations between Pakistan and the United States.
Yet, the American military support to Pakistan is one major reason that the feared
Pakistani-Soviet accommodation has not occurred. There are prominent Pakistanis
who argue even now that such an accommodation with the USSR is necessary to
effectively meet the major threat—India. What New Delhi apparently would prefer is
a Pakistani willingness to entrust Pakistani security to India. But so far, India has done
little to inspire confidence that it would vigorously defend Pakistani interests in the
face of Soviet threats or moderate its own demands on Pakistan. In any case, few
Pakistanis would be willing to accept the erosion of sovereignty that such a move
would involve.

Yet, despite the occasional “clouds of war” rhetoric that Indian politicians use,
there have been some encouraging signs of South Asian cooperation since the Soviet
incursions—and in fact may have been a result at least in part of the Soviet action.
Indians recognize that the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan was a major
catalyst for the American reaction. The Indo-Pakistani nonaggression talks, which
got off to a shaky start in 1982, resulted in the establishment of a joint commission in
March 1983, setting up for the first time a permanent institutional mechanism to
increase bilateral exchanges. The South Asia Regional Cooperation mechanism was
established in August 1983 to lay the groundwork for regional cooperation on a range
of economic, cultural, and technological efforts. Already, scholars and others from
across the subcontinent are engaged in a greater interchange of views than at any time
since 1947. However, India in late 1983 began to step up its criticism of alleged outside
involvement in South Asian affairs. This rhetoric appears to be Indian pressure on its
neighbors, especially Pakistan, not to go much further in their security relationship
with the United States. These demands for strict bilateralism in regional affairs are
unacceptable to most of India’s South Asian neighbors. Since Rajiv Gandhi became
prime minister in late 1984, India has again begun to consider the possibility of
regional approaches to South Asian problems.

Pakistan for its part is negotiating with the Soviet-client Karmal regime in
Kabul under the good offices of the United Nations, though the talks seem to have
reached an impasse over such questions as a timetable for Soviet troop withdrawal,
the type and composition of a regime in Kabul once Soviet troops are out, and the
future political role of the resistance. Soviet spokesmen constantly state that their
troops will leave once “intervention” ceases, which overlooks the fact that the
rebellion stems from domestic causes. Pakistan is of course aware of the domestic
roots of the rebellion which probably makes it reluctant to sign any agreement with the
USSR that would permit the return of Soviet troops to defend a client regime, which is
why the question of a successor regime is important. In addition, most of the some
three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan would probably not return home if there
were a Soviet client regime in place. Pakistanis admit that the USSR has a legitimate
interest in a stable friendly regime in Kabul, but they also recognize that short of
Soviet troops in place the only way to get one is to put together a government of all
major contending factions. So far, the USSR has not been willing to consider a regime
including the major resistance elements, apparently because such a regime would not
be pliable.

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The USSR is willing to live with the present level of resistance in Afghanistan. Even in the unlikely event of a sharp escalation, it would probably not move directly against Pakistan. Such a step would run the risk of drawing in the United States directly and certainly would antagonize India. More likely would be assistance to dissidents in Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province. However, the Soviets hope to be able to wear down the Afghan resistance so that Karmal (or another pliable client) can survive. They want a Mongolia, but are not likely to get one because there is no stable political consensus in Afghanistan regarding domestic and foreign-policy issues. Consequently, the USSR is likely to maintain troops in Afghanistan for some time. Thus, India and Pakistan over the long haul will have to devise policies to deal with the presence of a superpower (the USSR) in the critical northwestern area of the subcontinent. There are contradictory trends in both countries over how to handle this development. Indeed, a major bilateral problem between them will be how to handle the situation.

The Himalayan Frontier

The Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1950 pushed back India’s northern strategic front to the Himalayan crest, which now forms the 4000 kilometer boundary of China with India and the three (now two) Himalayan kingdoms of Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim.\(^{22}\) India as a consequence became more active in its efforts to insure that China would not be in a position to undermine the security of these states or undermine Indian influence in this buffer area. New Delhi adopted the approach of the British Raj regarding them. One of the central principles guiding British policy was that the Himalayan kingdoms must accept India’s “advice” on security and foreign relations issues in exchange for varying degrees of autonomy. (Nepal and Bhutan were able to retain virtually complete autonomy, Sikkim much less). India worked out treaty arrangements in 1949–50 with all three that were essentially modeled after earlier British treaties.

The responses of the Himalayan states to India’s frontier policy since 1950 have varied over time. Nepal initially accepted the concept of a “special relationship” with India, but in the late 1950s began a long-term effort to modify its dependent status. Bhutan’s case is almost the reverse. Bhutan initially sought to avoid any direct involvement in the Indian security system by maintaining its traditional isolationist policy, but since 1960 has closely integrated both its economic development and defense policies with those of India. Sikkim had no real options because its administrative structure after 1949 was closely supervised by Indian officials and its defense was made the responsibility of the Indian army under the Indo-Sikkimese Treaty.

Nepal with its 1100 kilometer long border with Tibet is a vital part of India’s security system. The crest of the Himalayas runs along Nepal’s northern borders. The

\(^{22}\) A representative Indian view regarding its relations with the Himalayan states in S. D. Muni, “India and the Himalayan Kingdoms: Security Interests and Diplomacy (1947–75),” prepared for the series on Indian Foreign Policy and Contemporary Diplomacy, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1977.
Treaty of Peace and Friendship concluded with Nepal in July 1950 was arranged in the wake of the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Article 2 of that Treaty states that both India and Nepal would "inform each other of any serious friction or misunderstanding with any neighboring state likely to cause any breach in the friendly relations subsisting with each other." The "secret" letter exchanged along with the treaty further stipulated: "Neither Government shall tolerate any threat to the security of the other by a foreign aggressor. To deal with any such threat, the two governments shall consult with each other and devise effective measures."\(^{23}\)

Indian apprehensions regarding Nepal's domestic stability as a result of its archaic administrative structure led Prime Minister Nehru to intervene directly in Nepalese domestic affairs in 1950–51, which resulted in a dominant Indian influence over Nepal's internal politics and external relations. This intervention was not welcomed by a large part of the Nepali elite. After the death of King Tribhuvan (who had been a beneficiary of India's intervention) in 1955, his successor—King Mahendra—moved to reduce Indian influence domestically and to diminish Nepali dependence on India by strengthening relations with China. Nepali statesmen were laying the groundwork for a move to get Indian and Chinese recognition of its neutral status, a running irritation with India, which is not about to accept such a proposition.

The relative cooling in Indo-Nepali relations in the late 1950s occurred just as Sino-Indian relations were rapidly deteriorating. The Sino-Indian border war of 1962 brought into sharp focus the importance of Nepal (as well as the other two Himalayan kingdoms), though India did not invoke the 1950 treaty. Indian apprehensions regarding Nepal's balance-of-power maneuvers forced New Delhi to reconsider its policies toward Kathmandu. A more conciliatory tactic was attempted. New Delhi reined in the antiroyalist politicians, many of whom had operated from contiguous Indian states since the royal edict banning party politics in 1961, and acceded in the late 1960s to Nepal's request to withdraw both its Military Liaison Mission attached to the Nepal army headquarters in Kathmandu and its communications operations on the Nepal-Tibet border. (The actual removal of both came in 1970.) But New Delhi never agreed to proposals for the amendment or abrogation of the 1950 treaty.

King Birendra, who came to the throne in early 1972, has intensified Kathmandu's efforts to gain New Delhi's acceptance of Nepal's neutral status, with as little success of his predecessors. His major diplomatic vehicle has been the proposal that Nepal be recognized as a "zone of peace" and thus presumably remove Nepal as a part of the Indian security system on the Himalayan frontier. India opposes the concept because New Delhi rightly recognizes that its acceptance would constitute a major blow to the thrust of the 1950 treaty (i.e., Nepali acceptance of India's security interests in Nepal). The major world powers (with the exception of China's low-key acceptance) have refused to give official support to the "zone of peace" notion, usually expressing diplomatic interest, but essentially leaving the question to be worked out first by regional states, a formula which avoids offending India gratuitously.

\(^{23}\) Kapileshwar Labh, "India and Nepal's Zone of Peace Proposal," *Foreign Affairs Reports* (New Delhi), October 1978, p. 171.
Nepal's efforts to use China as a balancer had had only limited success—and for obvious reasons. There is no way China can replace India as Nepal's predominant trading partner. Nepal's trade and transportation routes lead south. Indian ocean ports are a relatively short distance away. The Himalayan mountains and the long distances to the economic heartland of China probably rule out any chance of a significant expansion in Sino-Nepalese trade. There is an economic symbiosis between India and Nepal that does not exist between Nepal and China. For example, India and Nepal are on the verge of developing Nepal's river resources for electricity and irrigation, and there is an enormous potential in both areas and eager customers in India. Nepal's exports, both legal and illegal, find ready markets in India. In addition, Nepal is not nearly as significant a security concern to China as it is to India. For this reason, India is willing to pay a greater cost (e.g., economic assistance) to make sure that it maintains the predominant influence.\(^{24}\) China has never been willing to make a security commitment to Nepal.

Since the late 1970s, the Chinese have even encouraged the Nepalis to come to terms with India as part of Beijing's general effort to wean the Indians away from the USSR. China, having concluded in the mid-1970s that India would not assume the role of a Soviet surrogate in South Asia, decided that amicable relations between India and its neighbors would reduce India's perceived need for Soviet security support, and that would suit Chinese interests.

India's inherently dominant position regarding Nepal gives it a number of instruments to exert pressure on Kathmandu. Among the most effective are economic measures. A wide variety of tactics can be employed—delaying Indian exports to Nepal through procedural complications, restricting access to Indian markets for Nepali products, and failing to provide transport and storage facilities for Nepali imports and exports in transit through India. New Delhi can also extend support, if only veiled, to opposition forces, many of whose leaders have taken refuge in India. Of course, there is the ultimate weapon of force. Nepal's elite must ponder on the fact that no country moved beyond vocal criticism when Sikkim was absorbed by India in 1975. Sikkim, however, was a unique case in that it was always more dependent, somewhat more politically unstable, and most importantly, astride the shortest route between Tibet and the plains of north India. Nonetheless the two remaining Himalayan kingdoms were jolted by annexation, and reminded of what could lie in store for them if New Delhi were to conclude that developments within their borders or their external policies constituted a serious threat to Indian security interests.

Bhutan is not just a smaller version of Nepal. Its elite are Buddhist, and quite different from the Sanskritized Hindu elite of Nepal. The country possesses a coherent political leadership determined to manage domestic and foreign policies in ways that limit the prospects of domestic unrest of Indian antagonism. On both scores, Bhutan has been quite successful.

Initially, Bhutan pursued its long-standing isolationist foreign policy to limit Indian influence (as it had earlier tried to limit British influence), but this stand was

modified in the wake of the Chinese annexation of neighboring Tibet with its culturally and religiously related population. Official Chinese maps showing parts of Bhutan as Chinese were disquieting, as was the Chinese construction of a road complex parallel to the Bhutanese border with Tibet, which raised the possibility of Chinese military intervention.

The Chinese for their part argued that Bhutan (and large parts of the Indian northeast) were historically linked politically to China and would now be so were it not for a combination of Chinese weakness in the nineteenth century and British imperialist policy. At least in the case of India, China has continued to claim that the Northeast Frontier Agency (now the state of Arunachal Pradesh) is Chinese, but Beijing’s public campaign on this has declined considerably since the early 1960s. Indeed, as early as 1959, Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai proposed to India that the two countries work out a compromise in which China would accept India sovereignty south of the MacMahon Line (the contested border in the eastern frontier region) if India accepted Chinese control of the Aksai Chin region along India’s northwestern border with China. This has remained the fundamental Chinese bargaining position. India has officially rejected the compromise out of hand, but there seems to be growing support in India for some version of it, by which the Chinese would make adjustments in Ladakh, where it seized some territory during the 1962 war. Such a compromise would, however, arouse considerable political debate in India, where many insist that Aksai Chin is Indian. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s overwhelming parliamentary victory in late 1984, in the wake of his mother’s assassination, gives him considerable freedom of political maneuver on this question, but he may not yet feel confident enough in his new position to reorient Indian policy. In the interim, the Chinese and the Indians continue to maintain their twice-yearly dialogue on the border and other issues.

China itself has approached Bhutan to work out a negotiated settlement of their border, but India until recently had always demanded that Beijing deal with New Delhi on this question, and China has refused to use an intermediary on an issue it considers bilateral. The 1949 Indo-Bhutanese Treaty gave India the right to “advise” the Bhutan government on external relations, though this right was of little utility as long as Bhutan continued its modified isolationist policy (i.e., restrict relations to India). Bhutan also agreed to major Indian involvement in developing Bhutan’s economy, road system (which also serves Indian security needs), and the training and arming of its military.

By the mid-1960s, Bhutan began to perceive the need for moving gradually away from its modified isolationist stance. The very development process that India had encouraged and financed created new international contacts, as well as a desire in Bhutan to handle its own overseas affairs more directly. The first steps in this direction were its application, with Indian backing first assured, for membership in the United Nations and its various affiliated organizations (up to then, its only diplomatic post

was New Delhi), as well as a modest diversification of foreign economic assistance. Bhutan also took advantage of a warming in Sino-Indian relations to make at least a nod toward future relations with China. At the time of the coronation of King Jigme Singye Wangchuk in 1974, a Chinese official was publicly received for the first time since 1908. India has agreed to Bhutanese-Chinese bilateral talks, held in April 1983, for the purpose of delineating their border. In 1980, Bhutan established diplomatic relations with Bangladesh, and in 1983 launched a national airline. In 1985, Bhutan had diplomatic relations with several West European states.

Bhutan has also demonstrated a measure of independence from India in its foreign policy. Indeed, the Bhutanese have argued that Indian “advice” stipulated by Article 2 of the 1949 treaty is not necessarily binding. Bhutan, for example, has since the 1979 Havana Nonaligned summit voted differently from India on the contentious Cambodia issue (as have all of India’s South Asian neighbors). Nonetheless, the Bhutanese elite seems determined to manage change in ways that are not perceived in India as threatening to its security interests. New Delhi in turn sees its interest served by the maintenance of the status quo in its relationship with Bhutan.

The Northeastern Frontier

The northeastern frontiers of South Asia, unlike its northwestern borders, are almost all part of India, with the exception of the relatively short stretch of border between Bangladesh and Burma at its extreme southeastern segment. Bangladesh otherwise is imbedded in Indian territory. The Northeast is also different in that it is relatively free of the competitive strategic interests of powerful outside states. For these reasons, New Delhi’s handling of this frontier area is considerably less troubled by international considerations than the northwestern or even the Himalayan frontiers.

Nonetheless, there are serious problems. One of the major difficulties is the presence of tribal guerrilla movements. The Northeast is a mosaic of ethnic groups, many of whom have little in common with the Sanskrit culture of the “ plains” Indians that dominate the political, economic, and social systems. Some of these tribal groups contain elements who have only partly accommodated themselves to the Indian political system. The second problem is the steady stream of illegal migrants, mainly from Bangladesh, one of the world’s poorest and most densely packed countries, eastward to areas which are relatively lightly populated and which offer economic opportunities to the Bangaldeshi peasantry. But such migration has also triggered countering “sons-of-the-soil” movements in Assam and most of the hill states. The Assamese are now only a slight majority in their own state and they fear being submerged politically and culturally by “outsiders.” Most of these “outsiders” speak Bengali, but there are also considerable numbers of Marwari businessmen, Nepali and Behari plantation laborers, and others. The Assamese look with apprehension at Tripura, a small state to the south which had a substantial tribal majority in the 1971 census, but now is two-thirds Bengali-speaking. The migration problem has also affected other northeastern states as well and the tribal populations there have also reacted violently to the occupation of traditional lands by “outsiders.” Over the long
run, this could create major problems for India because such discontent could mobilize additional support for the various tribal guerrilla movements.

At independence, the region of India east of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was a single political unit with a Sanskritized Assamese population in the Brahmaputra Valley, and a myriad of tribal communities in the surrounding hills and mountains. New Delhi gradually conceded tribal demands for separate states, in part to reduce the opportunities of outside interference in the region. The Chinese, starting in the early 1960s, provided arms and training to tribal dissidents partly in response to Indian support of dissident Tibetans and partly to tie up Indian troops. Chinese assistance terminated in the mid-1970s when the policy ceased to advance its security interests. Pakistan for its part had also provided support to tribal dissidents, but such assistance largely ceased after Bangladesh became independent in late 1971. Even at the height of Chinese and Pakistani assistance, the Indian army never came close to losing control of the situation, though the guerilla movements managed to tie down a sizable number of Indian military and paramilitary units (and still do). The Indian task is eased by the inability of the tribal groups, who have little in common culturally and politically, to cooperate.

The borders with Burma and Bangladesh pose a problem as the tribal dissidents cross over to sanctuaries in Burma (and Bangladesh) to get arms and to seek safehavens. Rangoon does offer what help it can to India and even shuts its eyes to Indian “hot pursuit.” But the Burmese government is unable to stem the cross-border flow of dissidents in part because Rangoon’s writ barely extends to much of the tribal belt that covers northern Burma. And both the Burmese and the Bangladesh governments have to contend with their own tribal rebellions.

The porous Indo-Burmese border is at present an irritation to India, but would be a real security threat only if Chinese influence spread to the cross-border territory. For this reason, India closely watches the continuing rebellion of the pro-Chinese Burmese Communist party (BCP), which exercises a tenuous control over a fringe area on the China-Burma border. China’s support of the BCP has varied considerably, and it is now on the down side. But in the late 1960s during the Chinese cultural revolution, the Burmese (and the Indians) were alarmed that the BCP, backed by direct Chinese assistance, might attempt to dominate Burma. At the time, President Ne Win of Burma made a hurried trip to New Delhi to solicit assurances of Indian support and received a positive response. However, this scenario now seems rather remote. Burmese-Chinese relations have improved significantly since then as part of the Chinese effort to reduce opportunities for increased Soviet influence. As a result, the Chinese support for the BPC is presently minimal. But should the Chinese at some future date again assert pressure, Rangoon would probably try to reactivate the tacit Indo-Burmese agreements of the 1960s.

Bangladesh for its part does not represent a traditional security threat to India. The somewhat anti-Indian orientation of the succession of military regimes since 1975 is at most an irritant. Bangladesh’s five army divisions and its minuscule air

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force and navy represent no military threat. They are intended to maintain domestic law and order. Nor are there any powerful neighbors which could use Bangladesh to threaten India. The chances of any country seeking a base in Bangladesh are minimal, despite considerable speculation about this among Indian analysts. Bangladesh after all is too remote from areas of strategic importance. Any Bangladeshi regime that attempted to work out such a security arrangement with an outside power would soon find itself subject to the potent pressures that India could exert, most notably regulating the flow of water (India controls all upstream rivers) on which the country’s farming and transportation system depends. But India is not likely to have to resort to such extreme measures.

Rather, Bangladesh is a problem because of the poverty and overpopulation that have triggered a substantial migration to India. Stability and economic development are the only effective ways to stem this tide. Both are problematic for Bangladesh. As long as this remains the case, millions of Bangladeshi peasants will continue to look longingly at the greener pastures on the other side of the border, and there is no way India (or Bangladesh) could halt this human flow, despite the Indian government’s decision to build an expensive wire fence around Bangladesh. The proposal is theater directed at the Assamese nativists because the terrain makes it almost impossible to closely supervise the 4000 kilometer Indo-Bangladeshi border. The root cause of the migration is the economic situation in Bangladesh, and some improvement of the Bangladeshi economy offers the only hope of stemming the tide of refugees. The country has 93 million people in 88,000 square kilometers and the population is growing at 3 percent per year. These statistics underscore how difficult it will be, even under the best of circumstances (good harvests and lots of foreign assistance), for the economy to keep ahead of population growth. But until something is done significantly to improve the lot of the millions of Bangladeshi peasants, the human avalanche of refugees will continue to move toward India’s northeastern region.

The only long-term solution for Bangladesh is closer cooperative efforts with India. Better control of the abundant water resources of the Northeast would permit significantly increased crop yields. Development of the enormous upstream hydroelectric potential could supply the energy for industrial development, and joint efforts to mesh transportation systems could provide access to markets. In 1985, India began to talk for the first time of a multilateral approach to the complicated water issue. Whether the politicians in the two states have the foresight to move in this direction is still an open question. Bangladesh as a “basket case” is not only a human tragedy for the Bangladeshis, but is also a contributing cause for development of really massive social unrest in India’s northeastern regions.

The Indian Ocean Frontier

All the littoral South Asian states have looked more closely at their ocean frontiers in the wake of greater superpower strategic interest in the Indian Ocean and
the subsequent escalation of military/naval forces in the region. The littoral South Asian states have become more attentive to Indian Ocean disarmament issues in the past decade, though the Indians and their neighbors differ somewhat on their respective approaches to such issues. India wants to limit—and remove if possible—the military presences of non-Indian Ocean states in general and of the superpowers in particular. This is somewhat of a shift in Indian policy from the early 1970s when India tended to look at the USSR as a balancer to the United States. The change on India’s part is probably due to India’s greater post-1971 self-confidence regarding its military capabilities, and to its recognition that the Soviet military buildup is a catalyst of an enhanced American naval presence. India’s South Asian neighbors, in contrast, not only want to limit the potential for East-West confrontation in their region, but also seek to limit the potential military threat from India. Consequently, they support disarmament proposals that would reduce the size of all navies in the Indian Ocean and that would ban the nuclear weapons of any power. In addition, superpower rivalry on the Indian Ocean has made Indian policy toward its southern island neighbors of Sri Lanka and the Maldives increasingly important.

Regarding New Delhi’s relations with Sri Lanka and the Maldives, India has sought, as it has with all its South Asian neighbors, to restrict their involvement with outside powers. The two island republics, like India’s other South Asian neighbors, have generally encouraged a substantial foreign presence to provide greater flexibility in the conduct of its relations with larger neighbors: India in the case of Sri Lanka, and Sri Lanka in the case of the Maldives. However, both island republics have been careful not to let this foreign involvement include a security relationship that would antagonize India.

Sri Lanka’s traditionally close ties with China are a matter of concern to the government of India, as is the recent warming of ties between the United States and Sri Lanka. Colombo’s relations with Beijing have been rooted in economic ties, with the rubber/rice exchange its major component, though the motivating factor is acquiring an important friend outside South Asia. Sri Lanka, however, has been careful not to let this relationship assume any security dimension. Sri Lanka’s links to the United States also rest on an economic foundation (though again the political dimension is important) and have recently grown more significant as a result of President J. R. Jayewardene’s effort to encourage investment and trade with the West (and elsewhere) as a way of stimulating his country’s sluggish economy and widening foreign political contacts as much as possible. As part of this effort, Japan and the ASEAN states have also become major sources of trade, investment, and assistance. The Sri Lankan government has even advocated Sri Lankan membership in ASEAN to take advantage of the economic and political opportunities offered by that dynamic association, but the ASEAN states do not seem anxious to expand their association to

South Asia. They do not want to get embroiled in the problems of South Asia; there is little economic incentive presently for including Sri Lanka in ASEAN; there is no common threat perception that might propel the two sides closer to each other. India for its part would be very concerned by this kind of institutionalized linkage of a neighbor with an outside grouping whose foreign policies differ from India's on several important questions (e.g., relations with Vietnam).

New Delhi at present is more concerned that President Jayewardene's policies might result in closer Sri Lankan security ties with the West. Indian analysts have speculated about possible American access to Trincomalee Bay, one of the best anchorages in the Indian Ocean and one used extensively by Great Britain in World War II, as well as the construction of oil depots there for the use of the U.S. Navy. Sri Lanka, however, is not likely to permit either because Colombo is well aware that any such agreement would be considered threatening by India and that any gains would be offset by Indian hostility. Sri Lanka in 1981 did lift its ban on the visits of warships to Trincomalee, but the access to the harbor facilities there is open to all navies. Indeed, Sri Lanka welcomes the port visits of any navy in order to collect harbor, bunker, and victualing fees. India does not seem overly bothered by this essentially economic arrangement.

Sri Lanka for its part is concerned that domestic communal problems will lead to Indian interference in Sri Lankan affairs. Indeed, the most important—and most insoluble—problem in Indo-Sri Lankan relations is the presence of a disgruntled Tamil-language minority in Sri Lanka (about 20 percent of the population). Partial efforts were made to resolve the problem through bilateral agreements in 1964 and 1974, providing for the repatriation of a part of the Tamil population to India and the granting of Sri Lankan citizenship to the remainder. But this agreement only covered the “Indian Tamils” (about one-half the Tamil-language population which came from India in the late nineteenth century to work on the tea and rubber plantations), and not the Sri Lankan Tamils, who constitute a majority in the northern and eastern provinces and who consider these areas of the island their ancestral homeland. Indeed, Tamil kingdoms existed in those areas before the British united the island under their control. This memory of a separate past is a contributing factor to the growing Tamil nationalism. Still another factor is the Sinhala-language majority's largely successful political efforts to eliminate the Tamils' relatively privileged position in the bureaucracy, in education, and in business. The majority group has even on occasion tried to restrict the use of the Tamil language.

The past effort to limit Tamil influence has received the enthusiastic backing of the island's influential Buddhist clergy. The reactive development of Tamil nationalism, involving a call for autonomy by moderate Tamil politicians and for independence by a growing minority of the Tamils, has formed the backdrop for the increasingly violent communal riots since 1983 and the growing militancy of Tamil groups committed to independence.

President Jayewardene has probably done more than any prime minister to bring about a reconciliation between the two communities, but his government since coming to power in 1977 has not been able substantially to stem the increasing animosity at the popular level. The two leading regional Tamil political parties in India, which had until recently adopted a rather low-key approach to Sri Lankan communal problems, have begun to outdo each other in their espousal of the Sri Lankan Tamils' grievances. In the wake of violent riots in mid-1983, the Indian Tamil political parties demanded that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's government intervene in Sri Lankan affairs on behalf of the Tamil minority. Sri Lanka for its part began to spend more money on its security forces so that they could better handle the Tamil separatists in Sri Lanka and prevent the smuggling of arms and dissident activitists from India into Sri Lanka. A flurry of high-level visits between New Delhi and Colombo took place in the wake of the mid-1983 riots, and the major goal of each side seems to have been the reduction of apprehensions of the other regarding its respective handling of the Tamil-Sinhala problem. Indira Gandhi apparently wanted to assure Jayewardene that India desired only a reconciliation between the two communities, and her government even publicly advised visiting Sri Lankan Tamil politicians to negotiate with the government of Sri Lanka. President Jayewardene for his part sought to assure the Indians that his government wanted to negotiate those issues of greatest concern to the Tamil minority—a devolution of power that would permit greater self-government in Tamil-majority areas. The Tamil politicians, after initially rejecting a compromise, have been persuaded by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to participate in negotiations brokered by the Indian government. Two talks were held in the capital of Bhutan in mid-1985, but the two sides have yet to arrive at a compromise that provides enough autonomy to satisfy the Tamils or sufficient power for Colombo to be satisfied that the unity of the island will not be undermined. A successful resolution of the talks is still problematic not only because the two communities are so distrustful of each other, but also because no Sri Lankan government may be able to give the Tamils what they want without losing the support of the Sinhala majority whose support it must retain to stay in power.

The other question of mutual concern to the two governments are Indian Ocean disarmament issues. Sri Lanka under the more leftist government of Mrs. Bandaranaike in the early 1970s had taken a line on Indian Ocean disarmament issues very similar to that of India. It was Sri Lanka which introduced the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace (IOZP) concept to the 1971 Nonaligned meeting in Lusaka, which submitted the IOZP proposal to the United Nations the next year, and a Sri Lankan has chaired the UN's ad hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean since its formation. Yet, there were always differences between Sri Lanka and India. For example, Sri Lanka, like Pakistan, has called on the littoral states to renounce nuclear weapons, a step India cannot take and still retain a nuclear option vis-à-vis China. Indeed, as some Indian analysts have noted, India may need a nuclear weapon to deter low-level threats from the superpowers. Still another difference between the two countries is the restrained Sri Lanka reaction to the American decision to construct military facilities on Diego Garcia and to American naval maneuvers in the Indian Ocean. Although Sri Lanka publicly supports a United Nations-sponsored conference on the Indian Ocean, it has
refused to take a hard-line approach to the question as long as the United States and the West have problems with such a conference as presently conceived. Some Sri Lankan politicians, journalists and scholars even question whether it is in Sri Lanka’s interest to be “left alone” in the Indian Ocean with the Indian navy, by far the largest navy of any littoral state.

In general, the foreign policy of the present government in Colombo seeks a more balanced “equidistance” relationship with India, China, the USSR, the United States, ASEAN, and the more moderate West Asian states, in contrast to the previous regime’s policy of leaning toward the socialist bloc. But, in fact, this “new” approach constitutes the reemergence of the long-range objective of broadening the range of foreign contacts adopted by Sri Lanka in the early 1950s rather than a dramatic innovation. India may not be totally pleased by this reassertion of a balance-of-power approach in Sri Lankan foreign relationships, but New Delhi seems relatively satisfied that Sri Lanka will not take any steps (e.g., granting naval facilities) that would constitute a security threat to India, and that outside powers will try not to antagonize India by seeking such facilities. There was grumbling in New Delhi when the Press Trust of India reported alleged Sri Lankan efforts to work out security relationships with a number of countries (e.g., the United States, Pakistan, the United Kingdom) in the wake of the mid-1983 communal rioting. The press reports apparently lacked a firm basis in fact, but the Indian reaction underscored New Delhi’s concern to keep outside powers away from its Indian Ocean frontiers.

The importance of the Maldives to its neighbors and other powers is due to its strategic location in the Indian Ocean and to the presence of the now closed British air base on Gan. (Britain completely withdrew from Gan in 1976 as part of its “east of Suez” policy.) The USSR made an attempt to rent Gan from the Maldives for $1 million a year ostensibly for rest-and-recreation facilities for its Indian Ocean fishing fleet. Mahe declined the offer and is not likely to be any more receptive to another bidder with a potential military stake on Gan.

The Maldives has adopted an “open to all” development policy. India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the USSR, the United Kingdom, China, Japan, and several ASEAN and West Asian states have made contributions. This assistance has enabled the Maldives to reduce somewhat its economic dependence on Sri Lanka, though Sri Lanka still is a major source of food in a rice/fish barter arrangement. India (and Sri Lanka as well) may not be overly pleased by the Maldives’ open courting of fellow Islamic states in West Asia and North Africa, but such efforts represent no threat to either as long as the objective is economic and not some sort of political affiliation with them. Although Libya in particular has made a major investment on the islands, the people of the Maldives do not seem inclined to become an Islamic fundamentalist outpost off the coast of South Asia.

CONCLUSION

The major security problems in South Asia as elsewhere among Indian Ocean regions have their roots in regional instability. The proximity of the Soviet Union and China to South Asia guarantees their interest in events on the subcontinent, and their
exploitation of regional instability if involvement is perceived as advancing important foreign-policy objectives. The proximity of South Asia to the oil-rich Persian Gulf region provides a Western interest in South Asian events as well. The Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan in large part because of the growing domestic rebellion against the Marxist regime there, and the Pakistanis welcomed a limited security relationship with the United States because of its fears regarding India and the Soviets in Afghanistan. India responded, as it has before to such situations, by getting tougher toward its neighbors as a warning against stepping over intolerable limits of foreign involvement.

After the 1971 Bangladesh War, India appeared on the verge of being considered regionally and internationally as the preeminent power in South Asia. No regional power could challenge it militarily. The major outside powers (most importantly the United States and China) had refused to intervene on behalf of Pakistan in its wars with India. Détente between the United States and the USSR reduced superpower interest in the affairs of South Asia. (This was more true with the United States than with the USSR, which still looked on India as a major Asian counterweight to China.) Indians seemed more self-confident about themselves and about their country’s potential.

Developments in and around South Asia in the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, revived old problems and also raised new ones. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, whatever its original purpose, was considered a threatening move by the United States, which reestablished a limited security relationship with Pakistan as an additional element in the protection of the important Persian Gulf region. At the same time, both superpowers moved to build up their naval forces in the Indian Ocean and also searched for facilities for their warships. These events again demonstrated that India cannot insulate the subcontinent from outside influence if powerful countries decide that important interests are at stake.

The recent round of superpower confrontation has affected South Asia somewhat differently from earlier episodes. None of the South Asian actors this time is formally linked to an outside security system, undoubtedly because they all know that external powers will not intervene in strictly South Asian conflicts. This alone has made India’s neighbors careful not to involve outside powers in ways (e.g., granting basing rights) that New Delhi would consider dangerous. Even Pakistan has considered it necessary simultaneously to reject any kind of formal security relationship with the United States and to carry on nonaggression talks with India. Secondly, Soviet arms in South Asia are in many ways incompatible with Indian regional interests for the first time in well over a decade. This development could over time erode the foundations of the “special relationship” forged between the two countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This problem is presently masked somewhat by the Indian government’s greater worry now about the security threat from American arms to Pakistan than about the Soviet threat to Pakistan. But an external power has again moved its troops into the key northwest gateway of the subcontinent, and India will eventually have to formulate plans to get them out or at least to insulate the rest of the subcontinent from them. Even without the supply of American arms to Pakistan, the Soviet presence in Afghanistan would be a threat because of the leverage the USSR
possesses in luring Pakistan to itself. The last thing India wants is a pro-Soviet Pakistan on its borders. Still another potential Indo-Soviet problem is divergent views on regional stability. The USSR has a long-term interest in a measure of South Asian instability (e.g., tense Indo-Pakistani relations, domestic instability in Pakistan) to protect its gains in Afghanistan, while India desires stability as a way of reducing the chances for outside interference in subcontinental affairs. Already, all of India’s neighbors talk openly (and many in India as well) about this potential danger from the USSR, and have blamed the Soviets for supporting subversive elements.

On all counts noted above, the distant United States represents much less a threat than the closer USSR. There are no American troops or bases on South Asian soil, and the security relationship is limited to supplying weapons. The United States, like India, perceives regional stability as necessary to restrain foreign involvement (especially the USSR) in the subcontinent. Another advantage that the United States has over the USSR is American possession of the technology, markets, and financial resources that all South Asian states desperately need for their economic development. The one resource which the USSR has in abundance is arms, and Moscow has offered New Delhi a series of lucrative arms deals during the past few years in an effort to retain the “special relationship.” In the long run, the emerging new elites in India (and elsewhere) are likely to come to terms more realistically with the potential Soviet threat. The new elites tend to be more Western-oriented, less ideological (certainly less socialist) than were their predecessors, and less inclined to think that the USSR is a “natural” friend. India may maintain a good relationship with the USSR, but it will be for pragmatic and not romantic ideological reasons. Another factor inclining India to pragmatism is that socialism as an organizing economic principle is under attack by intellectuals and politicians in all South Asian states, and that erodes elite perceptions of the USSR.

One of the casualties of the limited superpower confrontation in South Asia has been India’s comparatively liberal policy toward its neighbors of the mid-1970s. The response of the other countries to this tougher mood has been predictable: concern with avoiding actions that unnecessarily irritate India combined with a determination to pursue their own interests in critical regional and international issues. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had adopted a somewhat more conciliatory approach in the two years before her assassination in October 1984 than during her first year in office in 1980, partly because India’s initial fears regarding the consequences of superpower confrontation did not materialize, and partly because all South Asian states have prudently avoided antagonizing India unnecessarily. India is more self-confident about itself and its capabilities. One significant sign of this greater self-confidence is its support for the South Asia Regional Cooperation forum, which represents one of the most hopeful recent initiatives for building trust in South Asia—an ingredient that up to now has been in short supply. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who led his Congress party to an overwhelming victory in the December 1984 elections, also seems to be more self-assured than was his mother. He is less inclined to be suspicious regarding the motives of other leaders. He is less burdened by India’s political past. Indeed, he represents a new generation of Indian elites—more self-confident, less ideological, and more certain that India can resolve its own problems. He has moved
in rather bold ways to reduce bilateral tensions: resuming India-Pakistan normalization talks stalled in mid-1984 because of Indian suspicions of Pakistani assistance to Sikh militants demanding an independent Punjab; extending a water-sharing agreement with Bangladesh; brokering peace talks between the government of Sri Lanka and several Tamil groups advocating a separate Tamil state on the island.

Nonetheless, India's responses to its neighbors have varied (and will continue to vary) between accommodation and belligerency, depending on circumstances. In late 1983, Indian rhetoric toward Pakistan began to approach the harsher tones of 1980, apparently sparked by the decision of the United States to sell the Harpoon missile to Pakistan, a decision which in India's view had no logical connection with the threat from the Soviets in Afghanistan and might presage closer security ties between the United States and Pakistan. In addition, Pakistan provides a convenient scapegoat for any signs of dissidence among Sikhs in Indian Punjab. Sikh discontent was underscored by the fact that two of the prime minister's Sikh bodyguards killed Indira Gandhi, touching off bloody anti-Sikh riots in Delhi and elsewhere. The situation in Punjab calmed down considerably when the moderate leaders of the Akali Dal, a Sikh political party, agreed in July to a peace accord. Punjab state elections, in fact a referendum on the accord, in September 1985 gave the Akali Dal a large victory. However, any revival of discontent would exacerbate Indo-Pakistani relations because of Indian conviction that Islamabad is prepared to help Sikh militants. The escalation of belligerent rhetoric between India and Pakistan in 1984 underscores the still fragile nature of rapprochement between the two largest South Asian states. In addition, the communal problem of Sri Lanka is a long-term one and is likely to cause problems in Colombo's relations with New Delhi for some time, as is the likely continued migration of Bangladesh's desperately poor peasants to India.
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