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2. Korea: Cockpit of Con-
frontation in NE Asia (Ann. 2)

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October 31, 1975

KOREA: Cockpit of Confrontation in Northeast Asia*

As North Vietnamese troops were marching into Saigon, North Korea's President Kim Il Sung flew to Peking. President Ford and Secretary Kissinger wasted no time in issuing strong statements about the necessity of honoring the US-Republic of Korea Mutual Security Treaty. The American press began speculating about the future of Korea and the US role therein. For example,

"Korea is a war waiting to happen...US could stumble on its tripwire defense...and it might create another Vietnam... Will Korea be next?...Quit Korea, Hanoi warns...there would be plenty of arguments to fight again on the Asian mainland...to aid South Korea would be to risk another 500,000 casualties and another \$150 billion in trying to salvage another military government..."

The target of these salvos is the American troop presence in South Korea. Remove them--so the argument goes--and the chance of US involvement in a possible war on the Korean Peninsula is removed. The problem is that given the current state of deterioration in the international psychological/political balance in Asia resulting from the communist victories in Indochina, removing US troops, even partially, from South Korea is likely to bring about the conflict the US and the other powers seek to avoid.

South Korean President Park Chung Hui's undemocratic style further complicates the issue for the United States because it could alienate both the American people and the Congress from continuing military and economic support to South Korea. Three critical questions, therefore, highlight the nature of the dilemma the United States faces in Korea:

*Annex 2



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1. Will the United States be able to continue support to South Korea or will US domestic opposition to Park and his authoritarian practices lead to major cuts in the US force presence and military aid?

2. Would such reduction of US assistance and troops, designed to show disapproval of President Park's repressive measures, destroy belief on both sides in the credibility of the US defense commitment and help precipitate an attack by North Korea?

3. On the other hand, will support provided to South Korea through a repressive regime, with the implications of support for that regime which it inevitably conveys, contribute to build up of explosive forces that will so weaken South Korea as to encourage a North Korean attack?

A. South Korea's Strategic Value

United States access to the most strategic area in all of Northeast Asia and one of the most strategic points in the entire world is a direct result of the Korean War. The three great atomic powers (PRC, USSR, US) interact in Korea and throughout Asia. The three greatest industrial powers (US, Japan, USSR) and three of the six most populous nations of the world (PRC, USSR, US) meet in Northeast Asia.

South Korea continues, therefore, to be the point of intersection of the interests of the three major power competitors in East Asia--Japan, the Peoples' Republic of China, and the USSR. All three countries have fought with or over Korea on at least one or more occasions and the Koreans have no natural affinity with any of them. It is natural that South Korea, threatened



by North Korea and surrounded by three major powers, would find an alliance with ^{the} United States, some ten thousand miles away, indispensable. South Korea, thus, is one of the most cooperative and motivated of any allies associated with the United States.

Today, this alliance and US access to this area is under serious challenge in the UN where the Third World appears prepared to support an immediate primary objective of North Korea: removal of the UN command and US forces while excluding South Korea from discussions regarding the future of South Korea. The US has also proposed dissolution of the UN command providing the Armistice Agreement remains in effect and the US and South Korean forces continue their functions in place of the UN forces. This transition is provided for in Article VI of the Armistice Agreement. The Algerian or "Hostile Resolution" calls for dissolution of the UN command and withdrawal of all foreign forces from South Korea.

While the US security commitment to South Korea would continue even after removal of the UN command, the removal of UN presence under such obvious and intense pressure by the Soviet Union, the PRC, and the North Koreans with widespread Third World support will constitute a political setback for both South Korea and the United States, which both states appear prepared to accept as inevitable. Removal of the UN command might further the concerted drive by the communist powers to reduce increasingly South Korea's diplomatic relationships.



It is important to consider carefully this activity in terms of Kim Il Sung's overall strategy. To begin with, the threat of a North Korean attack on South Korea is actually less real than it appears. This threat is more likely a part of Kim Il Sung's war of nerves strategy designed to play upon isolationist anti-war liberalism in the United States. Kim does not intend to start another war á la Korea 1950. In terms of Korea itself his objective is to try to create a civil war situation in a "liberation" context. Instead of a peasant war of the Vietnam type, however, Kim would hope for an urban uprising and quick overthrow of the Park government.

Internationally, Kim's objective is to undermine the US political position in South Korea, separate South Korea politically from the US and Japan and thereby weaken the overall credibility of the US commitment. Kim, with considerable support from other communist states seeks to enhance his position with Third World countries and in the process make Park Chung Kui's South Korea an international pariah following the North Vietnam vs. South Vietnam scenario. The expectation is that the US Congress will finally cut off all supporting assistance to South Korea. The recent refusal of the UN Security Council to even consider South Korea's application for membership and the US command issue are merely the first two steps in this political assault.

If such attacks continue they might achieve substantial spin off adverse to South Korea in the United States. Such gains for Pyongyang could be followed by a series of military attacks and perhaps even an all-out



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assault against South Korea if internal political dissention continues to intensify as well and create a "liberation" context for the assault.

Korea thus, is the pressing test of US credibility in the Western Pacific. Kim Il Sung is carrying out a psychological assault on the US determination to honor an ironclad commitment, the mutual defense treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea which came into force October 1, 1953. The continuing significance of this treaty requires clarification particularly to Congress in light of the contemporary situation facing the US in the Korean Peninsula and all of Northeast Asia.

The presence of US forces in South Korea has tended to cloud analysis of the exact role which South Korea plays in the security umbrella which the US provides Japan. Suffice it to say the US cannot find in Japan alone the means of providing Japan the security which issues from our presence in South Korea.

The emergence of Japan as both the third largest industrial power in the world and the most important United States ally in the Pacific has made Japan's forward shield, South Korea, a most significant security outpost for the United States. It is most unlikely that Japan would feel confident of its own security even under the United States' nuclear umbrella if Korea were to be unified under the control of Pyongyang.

Communist domination of all of Korea, by whatever process it might come about, would force the Japanese to face far-reaching new decisions in its foreign and security policies. The internal debate necessary to reach



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these new decisions would, in turn, produce post-war Japan's most dangerous internal confrontation and could seriously affect the future prospects for Japanese democracy.

There is thus, an integral relationship between stability in Korea and the security of Japan and the peace of Asia. Japan's past apparent passivity concealed a real, though latent, apprehension of being faced with a continental Asia solidly under communist control. Since the fall of Vietnam, discussions in Japan on the strategic importance of Korea to its security have increased markedly.

During his visit to the United States on August 5 and 6, 1975, Prime Minister Miki reconfirmed the relationship of South Korea to Japanese security:

"...Under the present circumstances we view the continued presence of American troops in the Republic of Korea as an important contribution to Korean peace and to Asian stability. We trust there will be no sudden change in the US policy."

Japan aside, our military posture in the entire Pacific and our concepts of forward defense and defense in depth depend heavily on a credible US presence in South Korea. We could not rebuild overnight elsewhere in the Pacific Asia area the complex arrangements, base structure, military strength and mutual understanding so essential to affect security should we withdraw now from South Korea. Moreover, US presence is more welcome in South Korea than in any other non-US territory in the Pacific--perhaps the world.



It is for these reasons that South Korea is already, and can be made more so, the anchor of US defenses in the Northwest Pacific region. US bases in both Japan and Okinawa may not be as accessible as those in Korea a few years from now, particularly if leftist opposition in Japan agitates against the presence of US military forces in the same fashion as they have already agitated against visits by American ships powered by nuclear reactors.

The long-term access of the United States to bases in the Philippines is less assured now than before the debacle in Indochina. Withdrawal from Korea would only add to Philippine nervousness about US credibility and the utility of US bases in the Philippines. But even so, the Philippine bases are too far away to contribute as directly to the stability of the crucial Northwest Pacific region. If the United States is to continue to emphasize naval strategy based on access to the island chain stretching from the Aleutians through Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia down into Australia and New Zealand, anchoring this security chain to the mainland through South Korea gives it a stability and permanence which it would not otherwise possess.

The US position in South Korea, for all of these reasons, plays an indispensable role in the balance of power in Asia and can affect directly the nature of continuing Soviet-American interaction. We cannot abandon that position without causing considerable damage to the prospects for



meaningful detente with the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Republic of China. Any changes in US foreign and military policies that caused a major disequilibrium in the prevailing structure of power among the four major powers in Northeast Asia would be contrary to US interests.

For example, as long as the Sino-Soviet rivalry continues, US forces in South Korea tend to inhibit gains by one power at the expense of another and the destabilization that would result therefrom. The withdrawal of US presence from South Korea would reopen the North Korean option for attacking the South. The Soviets and ^{the} PRC would compete more intensively for a dominant position with North Korea and could easily be forced to support North Korean aggression against Seoul. The state of detente would be increasingly precarious; the Soviets and Chinese would have to weigh the value of relations with the US against the potential gains they could make against each other in Northeast Asia. [

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Moreover, in view of the recent tragic turn of events in Indochina, South Korea has become more important than ever as the symbol of US posture in Asia. Any US move in South Korea that casts doubt on our will to support that country will reinforce the Soviet belief that the balance of global



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power is moving in their direction. In a recent interview, Secretary of State Kissinger indicated the importance of our defense treaty and commitment to Korea in the following words:

"If we abandon this treaty, it would have drastic consequences in Japan and over all Asia because it would be interpreted as our final withdrawal from Asia and our final withdrawal from our whole post-war foreign policy."*

Our withdrawal from South Korea could also precipitate a process which could culminate in renunciation of the US-Japanese Security Treaty and Japan's rearmament or realignment with another power. Whether or not a rearmed Japan would go nuclear, our position in the Western Pacific would be tremendously and adversely affected. Included in this "position" are the growing American business investments and trade interests throughout Asia.

B. The Internal Dilemma

South Korea's internal problems and President Park's recent reaction thereto, however, work to the detriment of South Korea with the US Congress. Although South Korea has been far more successful economically and politically far more open than North Korea, it is suffering from a number of internal contradictions. Undoubtedly, more difficult internal contradictions exist in North Korea. Critics of South Korea, however, ignore North Korean political repression just as they did that of the North Vietnamese. As a result, North Korean exploitation of South Korea's contradictions continues almost unchecked.

*According to Article VI, "this treaty will remain in force indefinitely. Either party may terminate it one year after notice has been given to the other party."

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President Kim Il Sung of the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea views "the struggle the South Korean people are waging today as a patriotic struggle to prevent a permanent split in the nation and accelerate the reunification of the country; it is a righteous struggle for the democratization of South Korean society." He states further that "in South Korea today, anyone who opposes the present South Korean rulers, whether he is a student or an intellectual or a religious man, is made a target of repression, a victim of 'anti-communism.'" Such propaganda appeals to Third World leaders and seems a far description of reality to many American critics of South Korea. But Kim's propaganda against South Korea obscures the true nature of his own regime, and camouflages his own true intentions to take over South Korea by any means appropriate.

As part of his political campaign against South Korea, Kim is attempting to project himself to the world as a nationalist Korean leader comparable in status to Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam. He has become the champion of Korean reunification. He hopes through his campaign to appear as a victim of US imperialism. In a two-page advertisement which appeared in the New York Times on Sunday, May 11, 1975, Kim Il Sung informed a Panamanian journalist delegation that: "Our people have struggled for the country's reunification for nearly 30 years since it was divided into the North and South because of the occupation of South Korea by the United States imperialists." He continued, "The United States imperialists, the Japanese militarists and the South Korean authorities, however, are dead set against our latest proposition for national reunification." The North Korean "revolutionary



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commitment for national liberation of South Korea" has not changed and the recent actions and statements by Pyongyang have become more serious still.

North Korea has openly acknowledged its support for the "Peoples' Revolutionary Party." It has increased infiltration efforts into the South both through Japan, directly by sea, and even more laboriously and dramatically through tunnels under the DMZ. Twenty-six such tunnels have already been discovered, and the North Koreans have continued to work on others even though their efforts are no longer secret. After Kim's recent visit to Peking, he asserted: "We get ourselves firmly prepared to meet the forthcoming great revolutionary event victoriously whether there will be war or revolution."

Both Pyongyang and Seoul have shifted their public postures since the North-South Accord of July 4, 1972, which recorded a mutual desire for reunification by peaceful means and cessation of hostile acts between them. Shortly thereafter, President Park declared martial law in the South and promulgated a new constitution (Yushin) which enabled him to rule indefinitely. Critics maintain that Park used the North-South talks to capitalize on the widespread desire for reunification to consolidate his own domestic power. Kim Il Sung used the talks too, as a cover for his tactics of reunification by subversion and force if the opportunity ever arises. A new constitution for North Korea appeared in 1972 which made Kim president for life and reaffirmed the intrinsic communist character of the North Korean regime. Cooperative efforts have slowed down since then, and the never-bright prospects for early reunification have been totally snuffed out.



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There has been growing internal turmoil in South Korea during the past year, particularly before the assassination of President Park's wife in August 1974. Park has instituted certain repressive political measures which have tended to exacerbate the situation in South Korea and at the same time have promoted reluctance on the part of members of the American Congress to provide economic and military assistance to South Korea.

The failure of US policy in Indochina has made most Americans and their Congressmen gun-shy with respect to US military involvement in Asia. The possibility of South Korea becoming a future target of communist military pressure led Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield to advocate a US troop withdrawal from South Korea and thus prevent US involvement in another potential conflict in Asia. The Senate and the House refused, however, to cut US deployment anywhere overseas for FY'1976. The urge to pull back from Korea, nevertheless, is reinforced by restrictions which Congress has already placed on assistance to Korea because of its alleged violation of human rights. Congressman Fraser's Subcommittee led the successful effort in 1974 to cut the Administration's request for South Korea from \$225 million to \$150 million because South Korea, although assisted by the US has not been maintaining human rights for its citizens comparable to those provided in the United States. Interestingly enough, Congress in 1974 authorized \$20 million additional assistance for South Korea provided the President would



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attest that the Republic of Korea was making reasonable progress toward guaranteeing human rights to its citizens. President Park appears to be his own worst enemy.

Some Senators and Congressmen have drawn an inaccurate parallel between the support which we gave South Vietnam and the support which we are currently giving South Korea. The two countries and their internal situations are quite different.

Students of Korean society have frequently commented that politics in both North and South Korea is dominated by personalities who seek control of all sources of power and rule by means of personal loyalties. For this reason, Korean leaders tend to overact against anything they consider a threat to their own power. It is also worth remembering that Korea is a society where division, contests, contention and disagreement which accompany normal American political processes are taken as a sign of weakness. Under these circumstances the concept of a Western-style loyal opposition which helps to bring about political liberties, human rights and policy debates is in a country like Korea almost a contradiction in terms. It should be noted, however, that the Republic of Korea does appear to encourage and insure the financial support of opposition groups in South Korea. These groups act as intellectual catalysts and enable the government to test public opinion. Moreover, their existence currently provides a democratic facade which facilitates obtaining US aid. They could, however, be the embryonic form of a more institutionally independent opposition in the future.



Furthermore, the experience South Korea has had with inserted North Korean terrorists and insurrectionary leaders has in a sense helped create an atmosphere in which political pressure upon potential opposition within South Korea becomes more possible. Indeed, it is possible that one objective of North Korean infiltration is to force Park to crack down on internal dissidents. This in turn enables Kim to wage his effort to destroy the non-communist government in South Korea on the battlefield of world public opinion; the more Park cracks down, the greater the erosion of popular support abroad for his regime.

Criticisms of Park's excesses, although undoubtedly justified, overlook the fact that the domestic politics of any country may not be the sole consideration by which we judge that country's security relations with the United States. Indeed, overly rigid insistence on internal political reforms, if pursued at the expense of international equilibrium in Northeast Asia, would be more detrimental to US interests than even overly-close identification with a "repressive" government.

The intrinsic strategic relationship of South Korea to the US forward defense positions in the Western Pacific is simply too important to jeopardize by placing imprudent pressures upon the ROKG to mend its ways. We need to recognize that ROKG repressive measures are in large part prompted by legitimate fears of North Korean stratagems designed to undermine and ultimately destroy the government of South Korea. Thus, US withdrawal of its



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support would probably make Park even more repressive because he would have even more reason to fear North Korea's intentions. On the other hand, if the United States can act wisely so as to reduce these fears, Park may also be persuaded to reduce his repressive measures.

We should bear in mind, however, that it should not be the task of the United States public, the Government or the Congress to determine the internal politics of a sovereign country, allied or not. Since, however, the strength and security of South Korea is clearly in our national interest, every effort should be made to encourage the ROK to try to reconcile internal political differences through non-repressive processes. This cannot be done through open threats or the withholding of support, since no government can retain the respect of its people if it yields management of its political process to foreign mentors. Were Park to yield to our prescriptions under such pressure he would merely confirm communist propaganda that he is a "running-dog lackey" of the US imperialists.

There is one other point worthy of our attention. The current Congressional debate over South Korean internal politics, whether reflective of sincere moral concern or merely a cover for more expedient isolationist desires, parallels closely the political and policy-making process that undermined the US commitment to South Vietnam. The President and the Secretary of State made commitments to South Vietnam and in the 1973 Paris Accords that the US Congress and the American public were not prepared to

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honor because they could not tolerate further human, material or financial sacrifices in situations (and for causes) they believed were not immediately compelling or clear. They convinced themselves that President Thieu was nothing more than a corrupt dictator unworthy of US support.

General Giap himself has noted how the obvious collapse of US will to sustain its commitments in Indochina affected North Vietnamese intentions and opportunities to ignore the 1973 Paris Accords and continue their assault on South Vietnam:

"Our party...assessed the basic change in the balance of forces...and the new opportunities in the world situation with regard to the Vietnamese revolution after the United States suffered heavy defeats and was forced to sign the Paris agreement and withdraw its forces from our country... We also assessed the potential for United States reactions."*

The failure of the American policy-making process to cope successfully with the North Vietnamese (with USSR and PRC support) assault on South Vietnam and the US security commitment thereto is the reason that today Korea is the next test for the credibility of US commitments to its allies. The security of South Korea is not the sole issue any more than was South Vietnam. A US failure to sustain its commitment to South Korea in a manner paralleling the debacle in Vietnam could easily cause both allies and adversaries to suspect that the US political and policy-making process had become totally incapable of sustaining any US security commitments in Asia. A "Korean debacle" would assuredly undermine America's nuclear and conventional posture even beyond Asia.

*"Great Victory of the Spring 1975 General Offensive and Uprising," by General Vo Nguyen Giap and General Va Trinh Dung, transcribed from the North Vietnamese Press by FBIS, 30 June 1975, p.22.



C. Toward A Creative Policy

President Ford has already reaffirmed our intention of honoring our commitments to South Korea. The problem is to obtain the necessary Congressional support for a future-oriented US presence in Korea. Such a presence must rest on something more positive than the anti-communist stance that was developed during the Korean War (1950-1953). The vast bulk of the population living in South Korea was not even born at the time that war ended. At the recent conference on Korea and the major powers, sponsored by the Institute for Sino-Soviet Studies, South Korean Ambassador Hahn asserted that the anti-communism of 25 years ago was suddenly crumbling. Furthermore, South Korea is breaking out of its "little brother" syndrome with the United States. It has to have a raison de'etre of its own in order to keep or to break out of the siege mentality which is at the root of some of South Korea's pressing internal problems. South Korea needs a restoral of self-confidence which will help invigorate its alliance with the United States.

One interesting recent proposal is that the US promote six-sided arrangements to perpetuate the military equilibrium currently existing on the Korean Peninsula by promoting cooperation among the four powers whose interests intersect there. An essential element of this proposal would be the acceptance of a long-term US military presence in South Korea. In the immediate aftermath of the communist victory in Indochina, such an approach seems unrealistic for Seoul. There is, moreover, reason to question the nature of equilibrium and whether it necessarily favors North Korea more than



the South. The economic growth in the South is such that if domestic political turmoil can be managed effectively, the South will continue to strengthen itself at a faster rate than the North. In any event, President Park still needs more positive political goals if he is to counter Kim Il Sung's pressures against the South and US Congressional disillusionment from increasing to a point where US aid is cut off.

The best way to nurture national purpose would be to help hitch South Korea's wagon to the powerful force of Korean nationalism. It would be in our interest for South Korea rather than North Korea to become the champion of Korean unification through peaceful means and through the encouragement of freedom of communication and exchange between the South and the North and vice versa. The open and peaceful road to unification is one which Kim Il Sung cannot follow. The South therefore needs to recapture the political initiative for sponsoring unification.

Point Three of the Five-Point Resolution on National Security, which was adopted unanimously at the special session of the ROK National Assembly, May 20, 1975, asserted:

"There will be no change in our will and endeavor to aspire to realization of peaceful unification. Our readiness for war is a manifestation of our strength to back up efforts to achieve unification by peaceful means. We restate that the set of policies enunciated in the June 4 South-North Joint Communique and the June 23 Declaration still offer grounds for peaceful unification."



The US should continue to urge President Park to move vigorously to carry out Resolution Three and offer our assistance in appropriate international forums. Such active US support for a program of peaceful unification sponsored by South Korea could give President Park the confidence he needs to take the criticism of legitimate opposition in stride. To be effective, however, Park must practice more liberal measures of domestic rule than he is now doing. This in turn would help assure support from Congress for the necessary military and economic assistance which might be otherwise denied by Congressional concern over human rights.

Furthermore, democratically-inclined development would help remove one likely source of possible conflict in the Korean Peninsula; namely, internal disturbances generated by South Koreans but exploited by North Korea, which could provide the basis for some form of military intervention by North Korea, which, in turn, could lead to a possible conflict involving US forces.

No matter what Park does, however, he is not likely to change Kim's intentions and subversive activities. President Park is fully aware of these internal problems and of the effects his latest measures to deal with internal dissension have on the US Congress. But he also realizes that he is in a struggle for national survival with a foe that is fully prepared to exploit both the merits and the weaknesses of open and free societies to destroy these societies. He asks his critics how many "flawless democracies"



there are in the world today and suggests that these critics "have the wisdom to combine ideals with reality." Park in a recent interview observed:

"Democracy is an ideal, and at the same time the effort toward democracy--this process itself--is a form of democracy. In the midst of adversity, Korea, too, is in the process of moving laboriously toward democracy enshrined as the ideal of the human race. It is meaningless, therefore, to criticize the American Government in its support of governments which do not practice flawless democracy."

Successful exploitation of South Korean nationalism will require that the US go beyond public reaffirmation of its commitment to South Korea's security and declare its willingness to both accelerate the military modernization program and to maintain US forces in Korea for the indefinite future. Given such assurances and assistance, President Park might be more easily induced to show greater tolerance for the development of opposition groups that carried out their activities within the law and according to democratic processes.

Meanwhile we should also keep in mind that our military presence in Korea might eventually serve a useful purpose in helping to bring about a more durable settlement in Korea that could enhance considerably the prospects for a stable four-power equilibrium in Northeast Asia, rather than the currently prevailing confrontation-oriented balance of power. For example, should an occasion arise, as it might, when South Korea resists a reasonable and productive North Korean proposal for peaceful reunification, the United States would be in a position to use the leverage it possesses



through presence of its forces to press South Korea to make a realistic response. But if the US unilaterally withdraws without real progress toward a political settlement between the two Koreas, the political leverage of its forces will have been wasted.

In sum, the presence of American forces makes it easier for the United States to deal not only with South Korea but also with North Korea and inferentially with the Soviet Union and China toward a settlement of the Korean question that might induce long range stability in the Asian area surrounding the Korean Peninsula. We should also remember that the present equilibrium in the Northwest Pacific region is as acceptable to the PRC and the USSR as it is to Japan and the United States. The current most probable threats to this equilibrium are a variety of aggressive North Korean moves against South Korea as well as several unilateral US moves; i.e., US troop withdrawal or major cutback in US assistance.



D. Policy Recommendations

1975 - '76

- Maintain US military forces at current levels
- Accelerate modernization program for South Korean military forces
- Reconsider the feasibility and desirability of continuing rather than curtailing economic and developmental assistance and whether there are quid pro quo possibilities with assistance if Park adopts less repressive techniques of government

1976 - '80

- Continue military modernization program for South Korean military forces
- Continue economic assistance program for South Korea as necessary
- Continue vigorous diplomatic support for South Korea so as to prevent its diplomatic isolation
- Develop strong joint US-ROK program for a crusade against hunger in the Third World
- Continue to encourage the ROK to retain initiative in peaceful unification issue
US

1980 - '90

- Gradually withdraw residual/forces from South Korea while retaining the treaty commitment
- Continue limited military assistance, probably via FMS in areas where Korea lacks self-sufficiency.



DECLASSIFIED

3. The Republic of Taiwan:
Whither the US? (Ann. 9)

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October 31, 1975

THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON TAIWAN: WHITHER THE U.S.??*

President Ford, appearing before the annual convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington, D.C., on April 16, said that the United States values its relationship with the Republic of China, and that the United States considers this relationship "a matter of very, very great importance to us."

Further, in his nationally-televised press conference on May 7, President Ford said:

"It is my aim to tie more closely together South Korea with the United States, to reaffirm our commitments to Taiwan, to work more closely with Indonesia, with the Philippines, and other Pacific nations.

"These are the kind of, I believe, forward movements in foreign policy that'll be beneficial in the maintenance of peace."

President Ford's intentions to visit China toward the end of 1975 make the matter of when and how to interpret and carry out the ambiguous "agreements" in the Shanghai communique concerning Taiwan a matter of considerable importance. In this communique the US declared that it "acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The US Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all US forces and military installation on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes." (Emphasis added)

*Annex 3

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The future of US-ROC relations appears to the American people as a Hamlet-type issue. Should the U.S. continue to recognize Taiwan or diplomatically derecognize it? Conversely, should Peking not be recognized now so that we can continue normal diplomatic relations with Taipei?

Put this way, there appear to be only two options: recognition now or at a somewhat later date. One Senator is supposed to have remarked: "merely switch the 'plates' on the outside of the two buildings: 'US Embassy from Taipei to Peking;' 'US Liaison Office from Peking to Taipei.'"

In fact, however, there are wider choices than this either/or dichotomy. Admittedly, a case can be made for recognizing Peking now; a better case can be made for moving with deliberate caution while seeking to both normalize our relations with the PRC and retaining our relations with the Republic of China.

There are really three basic options:

1. Normalization by recognizing Communist China now or in the immediate future, which calls for derecognition of Taiwan;
2. Follow the Shanghai Communique to the letter with gradual, small reductions in American forces on Taiwan "as tension in the area decreases" to show our good faith in the Shanghai Communique. This option would continue until the departure of Mao and Chou when we can take a new look with new leaders at the situation in East Asia as a whole and determine the timing of full recognition of Peking and "resolution" of the Taiwan problem.
3. Recognizing that there is one Chinese nation, but acting on the reality that two governments rule two geographically separate parts of this

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nation. This option parallels the successful "Willy Brandt" solution for divided Germany.

It is important in considering these options to realize that it is possible to diplomatically translate the language of the Shanghai Communique so as not to equate "normalization" as "recognition" and not to equate "ultimate" pull-out of American forces from Taiwan as "pull-out now." The issue is more than a matter of timing. The central questions (which can affect our future posture in Asia) are the conditions under the US recognizes the PRC, and the manner in which we handle the Taiwan issue.

One argument for recognizing Communist China now is that the US should adjust quickly to the realities and accommodate to the Chinese concept of sovereignty before the Mao leadership changes; it will be increasingly difficult in the post-Mao/Chou era for the PRC to rationalize relations as long as US-ROC diplomatic-security links continue. Some argue, "Since recognition will come sooner or later anyway, the sooner the issue is settled, the sooner the worry and uncertainty everywhere about the future of Asia will disappear." It is also assumed that we will have more leverage now if we act on our own initiative rather than under duress by the PRC at some later date when the price of recognition will be higher than it is now.

Moreover, once we make this move the Soviets will be the only super-power having territorial conflicts with China. Finally, since the PRC accepts Hong Kong and Macao it will accept a Taiwan that has economic utility and would be too costly to take by force. It should be noted, however, that the parallel between Taiwan disconnected from the US and



Hong Kong and Macao is not an exact one. Both Hong Kong and Macao are recognized internationally as British and Portuguese territories respectively.

The "recognize Peking school" must, nevertheless, also deal with the proper stance the US should take toward a traditional friend and defense ally. This school suggests that we can obfuscate the fact that we must abandon an ally to recognize Peking. The assumption is that since "the U.S. understands and respects the Chinese view on Taiwan" it can obtain from Peking a firm "understanding" that once the PRC obtains authority over Taiwan it will not use force to take direct control over Taiwan's political administration. In this case, it will not matter if the US mutual treaty with ROC becomes void. After these arrangements have been made the US presence on Taiwan would be limited to economic ties. To make this scheme more palatable, the US could state that it will reconsider use of force, if need be, to prevent Taiwan's aggressive physical seizure by the PLA.

This scenario can be faulted. If, for example, Thailand and the Philippines were to foresake SEATO, that would be their decision. If the US appears to "betray" a friend in order to recognize an opponent, Asian and other friends and allies would perceive that an alliance with the US "is but a scrap of paper." Moreover, coming so close on the heels of Vietnam, such a move would add to the already substantial uncertainty not only with allies but even adversaries regarding US intentions and capacity to act as a responsible power in Asia. Finally, abandonment of Taiwan will increase pressures in Korea. The perceptions and interpretations of our actions by our allies and adversaries are as important as the conditions



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and manner of our normalization of relations with the PRC.

One wonders, however, whether the recognize Peking now argument really has any more validity than its opposite: i.e., that Mao's departure will remove the major remaining personality issue from the equation? Since Chiang is already gone, Mao's demise would close one chapter and offer the possibility of a fresh start on a new chapter.

The case for the second option, thus, rests on the uncertainties confronting the PRC with the inevitable passing from the scene of Mao and Chou En-lai. The US should not act on an issue of this importance until it can deal with the new Communist Chinese leaders. Furthermore, the PRC does not seem to be demanding an immediate resolution of the problem. Perhaps the most authoritative statement made by a PRC spokesman on the Taiwan issue was Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-Ping's June 2, 1975 declaration that Communist China will never compromise in its demand for the return of Taiwan. But he said that China would wait if the United States still is not ready to break with Nationalist China. The Chinese have since reconfirmed this position in conversations with visiting American Congressmen saying that relations can continue to improve even without derecognition of Taiwan at this time.

From our point of view the time is not right for such an action. Moreover, not cutting our diplomatic ties with Taiwan could help buy more time to determine whether a "Willy Brandt" solution might become more feasible than is currently the case. This solution, in turn, is an alternative that will give the President wider options.

The third option, the "Willy Brandt" German solution adapted to the PRC and the GRC would contain three elements:



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--There is one Chinese nation.

--Two Chinese Governments respectively rule in two geographically separate parts of this nation, each according to its own system.

--It is hoped that some day the Chinese nation may be peacefully reunited.

There are both assets and liabilities in such a solution. Clearly, the late President of the GRC as well as Mao Tse-tung are on record against what has been loosely called the "two China" solution. But they are also on record registering their affirmation of one Chinese nation. Traditional Chinese law supports the idea that one Chinese people inhabit the China mainland and the Islands of Taiwan.

Traditional Chinese law notwithstanding, however, it is also true that most of the 16 million people living on Taiwan are native Taiwanese who don't want to come under PRC control--nor do the mainlanders living there. Indeed, a distinctive type of people is developing on Taiwan. They are Chinese but with a difference.* The Chinese on the mainland and those on Taiwan now live under tremendously different political, social and economic circumstances. Taiwan has a booming economy with a GNP greater than Egypt and about the same as Colombia with a relatively high per capita income. From almost every point of view it is a more significant country than eighty percent of the members of the United Nations.

*Most of the inhabitants on Taiwan are descendants of the initial Chinese immigration which came from Fukien Province in the 16-17th Centuries. Taiwan was under Japanese rule from 1895 to 1945 during which there was some intermixture of Japanese blood and culture. In 1949 a second major infusion of Chinese came to Taiwan when some 2,000,000 mainlanders fled from China.

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Further, post-World War II political life has, in fact, created and accepted, i.e., recognized the fact that one Korean nation inhabits Korea whose territory is divided at the 38th Parallel, each part, a state, in contemporary terms, ruled by separate governments, and both expressing current desire for future peaceful reunification. In short, historical and political precedents exist to support the "Willy Brandt" solution for the PRC and GRC. If this solution were to be adopted it would mean that the US and other state/governments could appropriately recognize both governments, exchange instruments of recognition and set up mutually accepted embassies both with the PRC and the GRC.

Whatever the merits of any "solution," the substantive conditions and timing of movement toward greater "normalization" of relations between Washington and Peking via actions taken concerning Taiwan should be examined first and foremost in respect to their impact on the overriding US interest in this matter: the benefits that might accrue to the US from moving faster or slower on recognition of China or derecognition of Taiwan, particularly taking account of the Sino-Soviet conflict.

Secondly, the US should assess the impact of any change in the US relation with the Republic of China on Taiwan on the present and future well-being of the people living on the island who don't want to come under PRC control.

The US should also carefully consider how derecognition of the ROC will affect the status of the U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty with that country. Obviously the US cannot continue to have a Mutual Defense Treaty with a country it does not recognize diplomatically. A key factor to bear in mind, however, is that the US-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty has a one-year



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termination clause--so that either side can renounce the treaty with a one-year notification. Obviously, any termination of the treaty without regard to the one-year clause would have a shattering impact on the credibility of other US agreements.

It is also important to realize that the manner in which the US handles its relations with the ROC during the transition phase will affect PRC perceptions of the nature of future US-PRC relations. The PRC might well decide it could not trust the US in maintaining the difficult triangular balance with the USSR if the US can cavalierly dump an old ally. Conversely, the Soviets are also likely to construe unilateral abandonment of Taiwan in order to recognize Peking as a sign of weakness and continuing withdrawal from Asia.

Derecognition could affect adversely the capacity of the Nationalist Government to defend Taiwan and thus the general security equilibrium in East Asia. In this light, the US should examine how derecognition of the ROC could affect the security of other allies and friendly powers in the Western Pacific and Asia, especially Japan and the Philippines. Taiwan it should be remembered, is still of importance to the strategic psychological and political balance in both NEA and SEA.

If Peking gains control of Taiwan it simultaneously eliminates a threatening adversary while obtaining a significant point d'appui into non-Communist controlled sea and air lanes. Normal operating areas for China's air and sea patrols would thus be adjacent to the northern Philippines and the southern Japanese islands. War conditions aside, such projected Communist Chinese power could have a significant impact on the security perimeters of both Japan and the Philippines if or when Peking

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no longer feels it needs friends among non-Communist states to help maintain a balance against the Soviets in Southeast Asia.

Another factor which requires consideration in the formulation of responsible policy or the future of Taiwan is the role of Taiwan as a major trading partner of Japan and the US.

Obviously, the United States needs to carefully delineate and weigh the gains and losses that will result from a policy of recognition of Peking and derecognition of Taipei.

Whether or not full diplomatic relations with the US is the immediate "top priority" of the PRC foreign policy, there is little doubt that Peking wants to continue the "American connection," and it wants this on its own terms: Taiwan as a province of China and the eventual but not immediate removal, as much as possible, of American power from Asia. Since the major concern of the PRC, however, is its confrontation with the Soviet Union, it seems clear that Peking desires that some US nuclear power (Seventh Fleet) remain in Asia as a counterbalance to Soviet naval initiatives in the area. Peking may not want a premature US abandonment of Taiwan if this would redound to Soviet advantage in Southeast Asia or disturb Japan's sense of security.

In this context, "after Vladivostok" and now "after Vietnam," all Asians--friends and foes alike--will closely scrutinize and analyze President Ford's visit to the PRC late in 1975 for clues to future US policy in Asia.



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CONCLUSION

In the final analysis there is no way the US can avoid subordinating its China policy to the central relationship the US has internationally with the USSR, the chief and most dangerous adversary, and with our foremost allies, Japan and the NATO allies in Western Europe. When we consider fundamental changes in US-Chinese relations, we must first look at the effect these changes may have on these central relationships.

Quite possibly, both Peking and Moscow would judge the US diplomatic abandonment of the Republic of China as an act of American weakness or a lack of will or both.

The US reversal in Southeast Asia has led other powers to question the will and staying power of the US in the basic struggle between the two communist powers (divided as they are) and that part of the non-Communist world which still accepts the US's leadership role. The PRC and the Soviet Union cooperated to the degree necessary to support the Indochinese communists in their defeat of US policy in that area. This cooperation, while based paradoxically on the conflict between the two, could be evidenced again in other areas of the world, a likely spot being the Korean peninsula.

Whatever we do with respect to Taiwan, we should inform our adversaries, the Soviet Union primarily, and the PRC secondarily, that we are not retreating in Asia, rather we intend to maintain a stable position and not adopt a pull-out strategy from present commitments and objectives. It is particularly necessary that we adopt this stance to avoid any misjudgment by the Soviet Union in the overall, global relationship existing between us.

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The Soviet Union understands, just as we do, that the fundamental relationship in today's world is the US-USSR relationship. Power, prudently managed, is the basis for this relationship. We should not yet weaken our power position in Asia by squandering the considerable commitments and resources that exist in Taiwan. Taiwan, after all, is in many respects the last high card we have to play in our effort to reduce tension in Asia.

We are under no compulsion at this time to take any actions which would reveal any weakening of our determination to remain a Pacific power, or, conversely, appear to move us too closely to the side of the PRC in Asia. A fundamental change, such as diplomatic recognition of Peking at the expense of a "fair" resolution of the Taiwan issue, would be such a move and would be so regarded by the Soviet Union. Moreover, there are other non-communist states in Asia who might prefer to have the US in a better position to balance power in Asia where China already has considerable advantage anyway.

The Japanese are a case in point. They do not necessarily wish us to emulate their example. "Abandonment" of the ROC could have an incalculable effect upon the US-Japanese alliance structure which is crucial to both US Pacific and global policy. The Japanese respect power and will remain a staunch and firm ally of the US only so long as the US emanates the kind of self-confidence which commands respect.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

We come then, to the final question:

Should the diplomatic recognition of Peking, at the expense of Taipei, take place during the President's visit to Peking later this year?



The arguments in favor of such a proposition run like this: The US began in 1971 the process of normalization of US-PRC relations. The Shanghai Communique of February 27, 1972 pledged to continue to move forward normalization which eventually means diplomatic recognition. Now is the time to consummate this act before Mao departs the scene.

The arguments for recognition of the PRC, while containing some merit, are not, however, convincing at this time. They should be rejected for security, legal, moral and political reasons.

In the light of the security uncertainties arising from increasing Soviet role in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean, we would be prematurely weakening another well-defended, independent bastion--closely aligned to us.

Legally, we have a Mutual Defense Treaty with the Republic of China. The Chief Executive has no Constitutional right to terminate a treaty without congressional consent. Since a treaty, under our Constitution, has the force of law, the Chief Executive has powers with respect to it only to execute its terms until the Congress acts.

Morally, such a transfer of recognition and sudden derecognition would be further evidence that the United States deserts its friends and rewards its adversaries. Our act would be additional evidence to our friends and allies in Asia that their suspicions of our loyalty are justified. These suspicions have already caused our allies and friends in Asia to shift their foreign policies against our interests.

Politically, there is little reason to accept as axiomatic the idea that a one-nation, two government solution is entirely out of the picture even if we do not actively push it. Admittedly, the prospects for such



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a solution are currently very dim. Political reality, however, affirmed at the 1975 European Security Conference in Helsinki, accepted the propositions established by World War II regarding divided peoples, divided countries, and varying sovereignties among peoples and territories. What has been affirmed in Europe at Helsinki may equally be applied politically in Asia. Responsibility for initiating further exploration of these possibilities must, however, be left to Taiwan and the PRC.

These political considerations aside, we must, as suggested earlier, recognize that the degree of expediency apparent in the timing and manner of normalization of our relations with the PRC and probable derecognition of Taiwan can affect our long term capacity to retain creative and cooperative political relations with other states in Asia, not to mention the Soviets and Chinese themselves.

The case against derecognition of Taiwan during President Ford's forthcoming visit to Peking centers on the preservation of US power, both moral and political, as this power relates to our chief protagonist, the USSR and our foremost ally in the Pacific, Japan.

a. Security/Political

(1) Do not derecognize the ROC and/or terminate the US-ROC Mutual Security Treaty as a sine quo non for establishing full diplomatic relations with the Peoples' Republic of China. We should maintain this position for at least another year while we,

(2) Actively encourage Peking and Taipei to begin to talk to each other about the reunification issue, including the interests of the Taiwanese people themselves. The United States should maintain its commitments to ROC until the ROC and PRC have themselves made some progress on the future



status of Taiwan or until the ROC itself decides it no longer needs a treaty relationship with the United States.

(3) Maintain the Security Treaty and continue assistance for the modernization of ROC's military forces for defensive purposes.

b. Economic

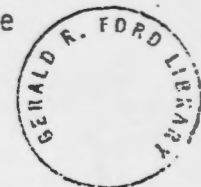
The ROC has achieved considerable economic success. Taiwan has been particularly successful in agriculture. The US and the ROC should cooperate in expanding their efforts to make this "Taiwanese" expertise and experience available to other developing countries. In the process the ROC on Taiwan might refurbish its image and status with the rest of the Third World.

c. Cultural

The Chinese cultural heritage is one of the great treasures of the human race. In certain ways the Chinese communists have turned their backs on this heritage. Taiwan has therefore become a main repository of traditional cultural and artistic achievements of China. Both Chinas claim there is one China. The US might explore with both the communists and the nationalists the possibilities and methods of preserving these treasures and ensuring access to them by all Chinese and all other peoples.

Beyond preserving a museum, however, the US should also explore with the PRC the possibilities of permitting American scholars to conduct further study and research on the Chinese cultural heritage, modern and ancient, in China itself.

Finally, the Inter-University language programs with Taipei should continue to receive US government support. But we should also try to parallel this program in a university on the mainland for both Chinese and English language study.



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VIETNAMESE POWER: TO WHAT END?*

Vietnam is now without question the strongest nation state in Southeast Asia. The nature and scope of Vietnamese power, moreover, is such that its potential influence could extend beyond the regional confines of Southeast Asia. Vietnamese power is not defined in military terms alone. In fact, Vietnamese power is in many respects secondary to Vietnamese psychological/political/ideological magnetism. The potential of this aspect of Vietnam's attraction among the Third World nations is considerable. Conceivably it could have far more effect on American political and security interests in the world over the long run than the outcome of the Vietnamese War itself, though much of the current psychological and political status of Vietnam ensues from that outcome.

A. The Nation State

1. Military Power. The North Vietnamese army is the largest, most battle-tested and best equipped force in Southeast Asia. It could be further strengthened as it absorbs and reindoctrinates the best of the soldiers of the South Vietnamese army. Moreover, in terms of a likely form of warfare which the world will face in the years ahead--communist revolutionary warfare--the Vietnamese army is probably without peer. One should not rule out the possibility that Vietnamese political-military advisors could become popular among Third World nations or revolutionary movements.

*Annex 4.

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The Vietnamese navy and air force are unequalled in Southeast Asia. The navy in particular will enable the Vietnamese to play a dominating role in much of the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. The Vietnamese can use their navy to extend and protect their claims to fishing and oil resources in the South China Sea and the central portions of the Gulf of Thailand. Cambodians and Vietnamese are already fighting over control of certain islands along their coasts, and Thai fishermen will find communist Vietnam an even greater menace to their trawlers than was Saigon before its collapse.

2. Political Stability and Power. The Lao Dong Party has no effective opposition for the long term anywhere in Vietnam or Laos. Cambodia, however, could be a problem. It is only a matter of time, probably as little as a year, before the Lao Dong Party establishes absolute control over all forms of political activity in all of Vietnam. This Party's ability to ensure political stability and discipline in Vietnam is unique in Southeast Asia.

The Vietnamese government(s) under the control of the Lao Dong Party will be able to mobilize the people politically and militarily in a comprehensive, disciplined fashion. For example, there is already evidence that in addition to re-education programs for former South Vietnamese military personnel, the new communist regime is training women and children in guerrilla warfare techniques. Whether this training is significant or not may be open to question. The fact that such activity is already underway so soon after the end of the war is, nevertheless, testimony to the organization, discipline



and perhaps, intentions of the new government. This government is also beginning to relocate some city dwellers to rural areas.

Reports of continuing pockets of resistance should not deceive anyone into believing that some South Vietnamese will be able to remain outside of Hanoi's control. The pockets of resistance are doomed. They have no outside support and eventually will be crushed militarily and politically. Nor will the PRG retain any true autonomy.

3. Economic Potential. Vietnam has a very strong resource base. With the Mekong Delta under Hanoi's control Vietnam could regain its pre-war status as a major rice exporting country--and economic competitor to Thailand in this crop. If exploitable oil reserves do exist off the Vietnamese coasts and the communist government can induce foreign investment and expertise to tap these reserves, Vietnam's economic recovery and further development would accelerate dramatically. Oil exploration in the Gulf of Thailand could also lead to dramatic confrontations between Thailand and Vietnam.

Vietnamese of both North and South have learned to handle and maintain a vast array of technologically-advanced equipment. The Vietnamese have a skilled labor force which could enable Vietnam to achieve industrial take-off if capital is available and more rapid exploitation of resources other than coal occurs. If the Vietnamese can remain on good terms with the USSR and the PRC, they should be able to draw upon substantial assistance to help ensure economic and industrial recovery.



We should recognize, however, that the current apparent strength of Vietnam's resource base does not guarantee significant, rapid economic success in Vietnam. Communist mobilization tactics work well in political and military terms. These same tactics tend to kill individual economic initiative and motivation that would normally enable the Vietnamese to exploit to the fullest their favorable resource base. If, in fact, the Vietnamese are not able to develop and exploit their resource base to its fullest potential, we would have to revise our current estimate of potential Vietnamese power both within and outside Indochina.

The Lao Dong Party dominates the Pathet Lao and appears to be intent on controlling the vast potential hydroelectric power of the Mekong River. The Pathet Lao have warned the Thai to remove their patrol boats from the Mekong because it is a "territorial river of Laos." The Pathet Lao with North Vietnamese support will eventually be in a position to try to make their warnings stick, and it seems only a matter of time before the airwaves of mainland Southeast Asia begin to echo with calls for reunification of all the Lao people--including those on the west bank of the Mekong in Northeastern Thailand. Even before Saigon fell, North Vietnam had begun a road building program to reorient Laos' traditional outlets to the sea from Thailand back to North Vietnam through the ports of Vinh and Haiphong.



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B. Vietnam and Indochina: Who is Whose Lackey?

There is considerable reluctance to discuss candidly the issue of who controls or retains major influence over whom in Indochina. Many observers believe that North Vietnam will have trouble consolidating its victory over South Vietnam and that there may remain two Vietnams for some time to come. Currently both Vietnams are seeking admission to the United Nations.

The Pathet Lao are consolidating their control over all of Laos and have apparently resolved an internal power struggle by gently moving all pro-Lao moderates out of power and replacing them with pro-Vietnamese hard liners. The basic fact remains that the Pathet Lao are in power by force of Vietnamese arms. (Chinese communists of a generation ago were wont to say "All political power grows from the barrel of a gun.") Continuing Lao dependence on Vietnamese arms restricts the freedom of action of the native Lao communists in their own country. The Pathet Lao will govern Laos as a satellite branch of the Indochinese Communist Party.

Cambodia currently confuses observers. The Khmer Rouge are not the Pathet Lao, though they have reportedly engaged in a similar internal power struggle with pro-Vietnamese elements struggling with pro-Cambodia and pro-Peking elements. The mid-summer 1975 visit to China by Khieu Samphan and Ieng Sary could indicate a desire on the part of these men to attain a balance between Chinese and Vietnamese influence in Cambodia. The PRC has promised substantive grant assistance to Cambodia,



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and Cambodia has joined with China to denounce great powers who seek hegemony in Southeast Asia (the Soviets and Vietnamese?). This trip also resulted in an agreement that Prince Norodom Sihanouk could return to Cambodia as a figurehead leader. Sihanouk made the trip but reportedly left Cambodia after ten days, thoroughly disillusioned with the iron control the Khmer Rouge now exercise over the Cambodian people.

Cambodians hate Vietnamese. There has already been some fighting with Vietnamese over control of islands near their coasts and also in border areas in Eastern Cambodia. The Cambodian War was far too short for the Vietnamese to develop the kind of pro-Vietnamese cadre system they did with the Pathet Lao. True, they have their staunch adherents recruited and trained by them since the first 1954 Indochina "settlement." But the wartime expansion of the Khmer Rouge ranks brought in genuinely nationalist elements. If the Vietnamese eventually do make the Cambodia Communists toe the Vietnamese line it will likely only be through force of arms or divide and rule tactics. Without outside support it is unlikely that even the Khmer Rouge could resist Vietnamese domination for long and would eventually settle for junior partnership in a Vietnamese-led "Federation of Indochinese States."

Finally, many wonder about the nature and scope of Soviet and Chinese influence over Hanoi. Propaganda from each of these two communist giants accuses the other of seeking a guiding hand over Hanoi. Both the PRC and the USSR supported Hanoi during the long war. The Chinese supplied

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basic small arms and reconstruction assistance (for transportation facilities destroyed during American bombing) and the Soviets supplied MIGs, tanks, long-range artillery and more advanced anti-aircraft missiles.

No one has thus far presented hard and conclusive evidence proving that Hanoi is a Soviet or Chinese "lackey." On the contrary, the logic of the situation suggests that Hanoi is nobody's "lackey." Ho Chi Minh's credentials as a revolutionary communist and those of many of his surviving colleagues in North Vietnam are as good as Mao Tse Tung's and probably better than those of "Aparatchik" Leonid Brezhnev. The Indochinese Communist Party, from which sprang the Lao Dong Party of Vietnam, is the oldest Asian communist party.

The Vietnamese have a traditional fear and hatred of the Chinese and view the Russians as tricky and opportunistic. Vietnam needs outside assistance, to be sure, but it does not need to sell its soul to either the Soviets or the Chinese. Moreover, now that Vietnam is united under communist rule the Lao Dong Party has more independence and opportunities than ever through its increased prestige among Third World countries to strengthen its position. Hanoi is not likely to sacrifice its new potential prestige in the Third World or threaten its own national security by antagonizing the Chinese through a close alliance with or dependence on the Russians. Thus, the prospects are that Hanoi will be its own boss--and try to dominate Indochina at least as effectively as the Soviet Union dominates Eastern Europe. On the other hand, if the Soviets can convince Hanoi of the likely success of their ambitious strategy designed to neutralize the PRC, Hanoi may tend to side with the Soviets on many operational and doctrinal issues without entering a formal alliance.



C. Vietnamese Political/Psychological Power Beyond Indochina

The North Vietnamese and the Lao Dong Party won more than a military and political victory in Vietnam. They vindicated the military and political/psychological tactics and strategies of communist revolutionary war against a Vietnamese "comprador government" backed by the strongest capitalist nation in the world. The North Vietnamese had considerable help from China and the USSR to be sure, and in the end the Vietnamese communists' success also redounds to the credit of their allies.

Vietnamese success against incredible odds combined with an obvious collapse of American will and capacity to sustain an ally cannot help but enhance the political and psychological prestige of world communism in general and Vietnamese communists in particular. North Vietnamese General Vo Nguyen Giap has himself stated that as a result of the Vietnamese communists' victory:

"The U.S. imperialists were weakened seriously in all military, political and economic fields and will continue to sustain incalculable consequences for many years to come. Clearly, this was a defeat of historic significance, the most serious defeat in the United States' entire 200-year history and a U.S. Waterloo, as Taylor himself had admitted.

This victory made a large contribution to frustrating the U.S. global strategy and opened a new period which is boundlessly favorable for the world revolutionary movement.

Our victory has contributed actively to strengthening the socialist forces in the world and has strongly encouraged and stimulated the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the worker class revolutionary struggle movements in the capitalist countries."*

*Vo Nguyen Giap, Van Tien Dung "Great Victory of the Spring 1975 General Offensive Uprising" Nhan Dan 30 June 1975 FBIS Vol IV No. 134 Supp. 9, 11 July 1975 P. 19.



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The Vietnamese might soon begin to play a major role in Third World gatherings. Small states could find the Vietnamese example especially inspiring and believe it relevant to their own cause. "Revolutionary leaders" both in and outside of governments in developing countries may soon establish links with Vietnam, and some will find the iron discipline and absolute control of the Lao Dong Party and its leadership particularly appealing--perhaps for personal as much as national reasons.

In any event, entry of the communist Vietnamese and the Lao Dong Party as a ruling revolutionary party into the ranks of the Third World does not bode well for the United States or other democratic developed nations. United States' problems with the Third World are likely to increase over the next several years if the Vietnamese communists decide to grasp the opportunities their successes have created for them to further enhance their status in the world, and perhaps even aspire to a "leadership position" in the Third World.

Thailand is the nation most exposed to the Vietnamese threat. Currently, the most logical approach for the Lao Dong Party from a purely doctrinal point of view is to support the activities of its Lao members to reunite the Lao people on both sides of the Mekong. But, even if the Vietnamese and Pathet Lao don't succeed in detaching parts of Northeastern Thailand, their support for a "bleeding insurgency" there will ensure that Thailand remains an anemic state and that the current Thai effort to build an economically and politically viable, democratically inclined



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system will falter. Success of the Thai experiment could threaten Vietnamese psychological and political prestige throughout Southeast Asia, particularly with the ASEAN states. Moreover, the Vietnamese might perceive the close relationship Thailand could be expected to have with the West, if it prospered, as a direct threat to the Vietnamese revolution.

Finally, a weak Thailand affects the strength of ASEAN and any potential that organization might have to develop as a non-communist counterweight to communist Indochina.

Hanoi's Intentions. At this writing it is impossible to predict whether Hanoi intends to use its current political and psychological power for external purposes. Much conventional wisdom suggests that Hanoi will tend to its own house first. There is, however, no current evidence to suggest that the logic of tending to their own house first outweighs the logic and appeal of using their revolutionary fervor for continuing to spread the lessons of Vietnam abroad--particularly if sought after by other Third World nations. In point of fact, using their recent successes against the world's greatest power to build up their international prestige and identity would seem to be in the Vietnamese long term interests. There is no better way to help expand Vietnamese capacities for playing an independent role vis-a-vis both the USSR and the PRC than through support and acceptance in the Third World. Any subsequent efforts by the PRC or USSR to force Hanoi to follow their lead would work against these communist giants in the Third World.



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D. Implications for the United States

1. Within Southeast Asia. Vietnam was a disaster for the South Vietnamese, but it was also a debacle for the United States. Certainly there is a potential long-range Vietnamese capacity to exacerbate our already deteriorating posture with the Third World. One expert anticipates,

"...we are going to see a very different kind of world from what we have become accustomed to since 1945.

"It will be characterized by a diffusion of power, intractable sources of disorder and violent change, a widespread lack of legitimacy of governments. Nations will look increasingly to their own security and welfare. In short, a 'second-best' world."*

It is unlikely that any of our communist adversaries will go out of their way to make this picture any more attractive. The United States cannot meet Vietnamese-inspired psychological and political warfare among Third World nations against the United States with a negative, defensive-oriented posture of its own. This is no time to assume an attitude that nothing has really changed because "Vietnam was an isolated incident, and besides, we are big enough to accept defeat with dignity and restraint."

We are going to be on the receiving end of many provocative accusations based on deliberately distorted facts and misinterpretations of American intentions in the world. We should not suffer such deliberate distortion of realities in silence. Daniel Moynihan for example, has

*Earl C. Ravenal, New York Times, September 4, 1975



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The basic inherent advantages of free representative political systems, however, must be borne out through direct contrast with communist systems in circumstances relevant to the conditions in Third World countries. The Thai effort to develop a new political system and government "of the people, by the people and for the people" provides such a direct contrast to the political system the North Vietnamese are now imposing on most, if not all, of Indochina.

Thailand, therefore, represents a unique opportunity for the United States to exercise creative diplomacy and begin to build a creative sense of purpose into US foreign policy that will compete effectively with communist intentions and the chic rhetoric of the Third World today. This purpose centers around the issues of individual well-being and human rights and the kinds of governments that can best assure them. It requires that the United States undertake low-key efforts to readjust but add new dimensions to its relations with Thailand. If the Thai so desire, the US should provide substantial economic, political and moral support to their effort to develop a constitutionally-based, representative political process in which human rights will be protected. Thailand's success is important to the psychological/political balance of power between communist and non-communist in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in the world.

Critics of US involvement in Southeast Asia will suggest that such thinking is a "relic" of the Cold War--which these critics assume is over and done with in all forms. It is possible that the US is potentially



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incapable of such a policy initiative at this time. Recommendations on how the United States might, nevertheless, try to adjust creatively rather than just defensively to communist success in Vietnam are found in the Thailand Annex.

2. The Problem of Recognition. At some point the United States should recognize the government in Hanoi as sovereign over all of Vietnam. It should not, however, stand idly by and let the myth of two Vietnams to on unchallenged. The Lao Dong Party will eventually rule all of Vietnam and try to rule or supervise its brother parties in Laos and Cambodia. The North Vietnamese have struggled for years to reunite the Vietnamese people from the Red River Delta to the Cape of Camau. They have succeeded as they stridently claimed when their troops marched into Saigon and temporarily renamed it Ho Chi Minh City. The "civil war" is over. AMEN.

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2. ASEAN: Political/Economic/
Security Potential (Ann. 5)

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October 31, 1975

ASEAN: POLITICAL/ECONOMIC/SECURITY POTENTIAL*

A. Introduction

Many regional organizations have emerged in Southeast Asia since the early 1960s, most of them involving economic cooperation. In the post-Indochina War period, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) stands out as the only one of such organizations possessing the potential for an effective economic and political force in the region. Its importance is the result of three major factors: (1) its membership is composed of all the non-communist nations remaining in Southeast Asia (with the exception of Burma, which currently has little political/economic significance in the region); (2) ASEAN is not tied to any functional ministries nor does it have any one purpose; and (3) it has the support of the officials in the member nations charged with the implementation of foreign policy.

In the potentially precarious position these nations find themselves as Hanoi extends and consolidates its control over Indochina, the need for ASEAN to become a viable political force is increasingly apparent to them. Illustrative of this awareness are statements made at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting convened at Kuala Lumpur May 13-15, 1975: Malaysia's Information and Special Functions (Foreign Affairs) Minister Tengku Rithauddeen called for serious examination of ASEAN's structure and efficiency in order to create a strong and viable organization to "forge socio-economic cooperation and solidarity" in the region and to be the "prime motivator of peace and harmony."

*Annex 5.

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Indonesian Foreign Minister Malik told the delegates not to be content with reviewing ASEAN's achievements of the past year, but to reassess and reaffirm ASEAN's purposes and potentials in light of fast-moving events and developments within the region.

Singapore Foreign Minister Rajaratnam stated that ASEAN nations must indicate what the US role should be, for if the US withdraws, the region would be in a "difficult position" dealing with only two major powers, the USSR and China. On Indochina, Rajaratnam said ASEAN nations should not be unilaterally "wooing the new regimes...they should be wooing us, too."

During a state visit to the Philippines, Thailand's Prime Minister Khukrit Pramot and President Marcos reiterated the now common theme of ASEAN's increasing importance, as did Khukrit with Prime Minister Lee Kuan-yew on a state visit to Singapore.

B. Nationalistic Impediments

Despite the agreed-upon need to expand and strengthen ASEAN, many factors impede this goal. In addition to historic jealousies and antagonisms, the member nations understandably view ASEAN according to their respective economic and security needs. Thailand, for example, which faces Hanoi/Soviet-dominated Indochina on one side and the PRC on the other, would take comfort in a strengthened ASEAN, but will move cautiously for fear of communist reprisals. Thailand can be expected to pay strong lip service to ASEAN, but for the time being may be inclined to play a passive or "safe" role only.



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Internal political and economic instability require a considerable amount of attention as well by the Royal Thai Government. (See Thailand, Annex 7.)

Malaysia remains an enthusiastic supporter of ASEAN and will probably push increasingly the concept of neutralization of the region, espoused through the medium of ASEAN, as a counter to possible external aggression. Malaysia, however, currently is embroiled in a potentially explosive racial conflict which, added to insurgency troubles, is most likely to sideline its effective participation in ASEAN.

Singapore also is unlikely to be an overly active member of ASEAN. Not only do its leaders consider unlikely a threat from communist aggression in the near future, they make no secret of the fact that, faced with external aggression, they would turn to one of the great powers (the US) over their ASEAN neighbors for assistance. Additionally, Singapore is somewhat apprehensive about Indonesian dominance and tends to view a strengthened ASEAN as a weakened Singapore.

The Philippines too faces tremendous internal social and political unrest. While President Marcos maintains rigid control of power, his attention must necessarily be directed toward the domestic scene, particularly the insurgency situation in the South. Marcos is unlikely to take any significant steps toward regional cooperation in the near future, especially if Indonesia emerges as the leader. The Philippines continues to regard the US as a major security factor. (See Philippines, Annex 6.)



Indonesia pragmatically views any development in Southeast Asia as having a direct bearing on its own development, and thus actively encourages strengthening ASEAN's potential as well as the "national resilience" of each member. Because of this attitude, in addition to its natural leadership potential in relation to its population, size, resources and strategic location, Indonesia is the most likely of the five countries to take the initiative in pushing for significant regional cooperation. Once again, however, economic and social problems plague its government and require considerable attention. (Indonesia's leadership potential is discussed in more detail in Annex 8.)

Of particular significance in assessing the future effectiveness of ASEAN will be the results of the summit meeting which, at this writing, will be held on a date not yet determined but most likely around the first of the year (1976). There already has been disagreement among the member nations not only as to timing, but even whether or not such a summit should be held, as there was debate between those who perceive the need for tighter regional cooperation and those who fear the wrath of Hanoi should it appear that they were "ganging" up on it. There are many issues of disagreement among the members, and the summit meeting may serve to highlight the disparities rather than emphasize the unity.

Additionally, any assessment of ASEAN's potential would have to take into consideration the history of relations between the members, which have been marred by antagonisms, jealousies, border incidents, etc. Their



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tendency, as threats increase, is to act individually in their self-interests, ignoring relationships with outsiders. The ASEAN nations have yet to demonstrate their capacity to work together toward solutions to their common problems.

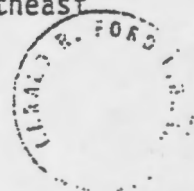
C. The Hanoi Factor

As further evidence of the uncertainty with which the members view ASEAN's post-Indochina War role, first President Marcos and then Prime Minister Khukrit launched trial balloons to the effect that they eventually would welcome an invitation to some or all of the Indochina nations to join ASEAN, thus hedging their bets on future communist intentions. While these statements may have been tongue-in-cheek efforts to extend the hands of friendship to Hanoi whose political and military strength cannot be overlooked, the effect on ASEAN of Vietnamese membership could well be terminal. Discussing this subject, Dr. Donald Weatherbee, currently on the faculty of the US Army War College, stated:

"Efforts to accommodate the DRV in terms of ASEAN would be destructive of the minimum level of community already achieved."*

As a member of ASEAN, Hanoi would probably attempt to dominate it and in the process vitiate the very purpose for which it was created. Indeed, Hanoi's strength and its indiscernable intentions are major causes of the uncertainty prevalent among the ASEAN nations, and a direct result of these understandable concerns is their repeated statements on the need to solidify the organization.

*Donald E. Weatherbee, in an article entitled "Collective Defense, Neutralization and the Balance of Power: Contending Security Policies in Southeast Asia," February 1975.



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In an effort to counter a potentially aggressive Hanoi, both Thailand and the Philippines rushed to recognize the PRC following the Vietnam debacle, a move which was characterized as "too hasty" by other ASEAN members. However, it is not illogical to conclude that China might deal somewhat sympathetically with friendly Southeast Asian nations in light of increasing USSR presence in the region. While the PRC will continue its support of insurgent activities in Southeast Asia, its overt friendship can have the effect of balancing off Vietnamese and Soviet activities. (Further discussion of "balance of power" politics is contained in Appendix 1 of this study.)

D. The Prospects for Neutralization

In view of the new situation in Southeast Asia, the concept of neutralization is likely to regain preeminence in foreign policy discussions. This concept was first enunciated in 1971 in a declaration signed by the original (and present) members of ASEAN. The declaration advocated the neutralization of Southeast Asia and announced the ASEAN members' goal "to secure the recognition of, and respect for Southeast Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside powers." Little but lip service has been paid to this ideal since its inception, perhaps because of the severe difficulties involved in implementing such a program given the number of diverse countries and situations in the equation. Briefly, neutralization would be brought about by the following actions on the part of ASEAN members: non-alignment, exclusion of great power politics and declaration of Southeast Asia as a nuclear-free zone. The latter activity



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presents few problems, but non-alignment and exclusion of great power politics are no small orders in the current situation. Under the neutralization theory the area would be protected, or "guaranteed" by the three major powers: the US, the USSR and the PRC, an agreement almost as difficult to obtain as significant cooperation among the ASEAN nations. Even if agreement were reached among the powers it seems hardly feasible to "exclude great power politics" in the region if they are to act as the guarantors of stability.

Thus, formal neutralization doesn't appear to be feasible, but a grouping of non-aligned nations (ASEAN) is valid, and the concept is likely to grow. A major obstacle to non-alignment, however, is the US/Philippine bilateral security treaty. The Philippine Government is unlikely to be willing to forego its US bases and bilateral security arrangements in the absence of a suitable replacement.

E. The Positive Elements

Although the ASEAN nations face a great deal of uncertainty and difficulties, there are factors in their favor as well, not the least of which is the quality of their current leaders. These men are under no illusions as to the potential precariousness of their positions, and will assess all aspects of the problems before charting their courses. While they face individual domestic difficulties of some magnitude, they perceive a common threat and are fully aware of the need for regional solidarity.

Another major factor in their favor is the Sino-Soviet split, particularly its manifestation in the form of increasing Soviet presence in Southeast Asia, for it is because of this presence that China perceives an advantage in working more with than against the ASEAN states.



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ASEAN policymakers are beginning to show signs of renewed interest in a maintained US presence in the region: economic, political and possibly, on a far smaller scale than in the past, military. Such US presence would serve to fortify the great power balance, thus limiting the chances for the ascendancy of any one power in the area.

Some would argue that ASEAN has the potential to become a military alliance. However, it would seem unrealistic to perceive the limited military capabilities of these nations, even combined, as approaching the type of protection desirable. While such a defense arrangement would not appear to be feasible, ASEAN could play a security role by providing a vehicle for military cooperation utilizing the psychological advantages accruing from regional political and economic cooperation. Combined with the other factors mentioned above, ASEAN nations needn't face the future from a position of great weakness and uncertainty.

The psychological climate necessary to ease regional fears can only be attained if the ASEAN nations overcome their historic tendencies toward individual assessments and actions. If all the praise and hopes for ASEAN are to have any significance, effective political and economic cooperation in the region must soon become a reality.

F. Policy Recommendations

Given the earlier stated assumption that the primary US interest in Southeast Asia is to prevent the domination in the region of a single power or combination of powers hostile to the United States, it follows that the



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success of ASEAN solidarity is also in the US interest. Policy recommendations therefore include:

1. Encourage the strengthening of ASEAN in an unobtrusive manner so as not to harm its indigenous Asian character.
2. Provide all possible US assistance to ASEAN nations, as requested, in their efforts to alleviate their internal problems.
3. Encourage Australia and New Zealand to assist ASEAN in ways they (and ASEAN members) deem appropriate.
4. Encourage continued and increased Japanese economic assistance to ASEAN nations.
5. Respond affirmatively to ASEAN requests to discuss economic and other cooperation.
6. Monitor ASEAN efforts to assume a security role and cooperate with such efforts as appropriate.

Despite the seemingly insurmountable problems involved in ASEAN's struggle for regional cohesion, it is a goal worth attaining. The ability of ASEAN nations to speak with one voice would go far toward ensuring regional stability and independence. The United States should make every effort to support this endeavor.



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