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EMERGENCE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA: AN INDO-  
PERSPECTIVE, by H. E. Soedjatmoko. A reprint  
Solidarity, December 1969, p. 31-45.

FRANCISCO SIONIL JOSE

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## The Re-Emergence of Southeast Asia: An Indonesian Perspective

**Soedjatmoko**

The region I am going to discuss is a constituent element of the Pacific community. At the same time it is also part of another group of countries bordering the Indian Ocean. The history of this area has been very much determined by this geographic location, and by its function as a link between these two great ocean basins. By the same token, this region has felt the contradictory pulls that these two basins have exerted upon it, one towards the Pacific, one towards the Indian Ocean. This is still very much the situation today.

It has been one of the ironic corollaries of independence that in breaking through to a new future the nations of Southeast Asia have been much more deeply and much more forcefully made aware of their history and its continuing impact into the present. During the struggle for freedom

almost all of us only looked *forward* towards a future of freedom, towards the creation of new societies. There was in the nationalist movements of that period generally a radical rejection of the past, of traditions and the institutions that went with it. There was an openness for new ideas, a feverish and bold experimentation; many of us struck out in new directions. It was from that period that in many countries of the region a new literature began, new pictorial styles developed, new genres in music and dance, new attitudes towards religion, and new political beliefs.

Independence, however, also brought the need for self-identification, for defining the national self in relation to the outside world. The requirement to build political organizations of mass support and participation, the need to make people share in the new freedom and modern



political concepts in terms that made sense to them, likewise compelled a renewed emphasis on the particular and the traditional in our cultures. After the attainment of independence, moreover, all the new nations found themselves saddled with a number of intractable problems that could only be overcome on the basis of a clear understanding of their historical roots. It is the awareness of their history that is to many of these nations the source of their strength and their weakness. It is in their history that their pride and their sense of identity is rooted. To understand present day Southeast Asia, therefore, its problems as well as the motivational forces that determine the thrust of its movement, one inevitably has to start by turning, however briefly, to the history of the area.

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Southeast Asia's early history, from roughly the fourth to the 13th or 14th century, was shaped by the confluence of the cultural and commercial currents emanating from the two great centers of culture and power of the time, India and China. Each of them left, rather unevenly, its mark in different areas and in different ways. In these areas, indigenous popular systems of beliefs, closely tied to a developing system of wet rice cultivation, were re-formulated and integrated into the higher religions that came from these centers. It should be noted, however, that these higher religions changed as well in the process. It was this syncretic adaptation of the higher religions which in many important ways influenced social organization. In those areas where more elaborate power structures developed into inland kingdoms like Khmer and Mataram, they shaped the concepts of power, of kingship and of the state.

The shift of communications on the Asian mainland from land routes to the sea subsequently promoted the growth of a number of trading principalities and even empires, side by side, and very soon, in competition with the older inland kingdoms. Of these, one of the greatest in its days was the Kingdom of Ciriwidjaja

near Palembang on the southern east coast of Sumatra. Up to the eighth century it exercised predominant control over the trade between China and Indonesia and between Indonesia and India. The struggle for hegemony over the important waterway of the Straits of Malacca has dominated much of Indonesian history. And when in the early part of the 16th century the Portuguese, the Spaniards, and a little later the Dutch, arrived to participate in the spice trade, they too became involved in the struggle for control of this vital artery.

It was through this trade route that both Islam and Christianity were introduced, spreading quickly throughout the insular part of Southeast Asia. From that time onwards, much of the history of Southeast Asia has been a history of multicornered rivalries, sometimes under the banner of different religions, skillfully exploited by the Europeans to increase their own power. The sequence of trade-religion-political control became in this way the standard pattern in the development of colonial rule. It was only after the industrial revolution in Europe, however, and the building of iron ships, that the definitive change in the balance of forces occurred. Until then, Europe had only been one of the many forces in the area, operating more or less on an equal footing.

If we now make a cross-cut through Southeast Asian history, the picture that emerges is one that resembles a layer cake with layer upon layer of cultural-religious sediment, some of them thick in some places while thin or entirely absent in others. Depending on the area under observation, one commonly finds an indigenous animist layer, a subsequent layer of Hindu or Buddhist sedimentation, or Hindu with an overlay of Buddhism in its Indian or Chinese variety. On top of this comes Islam or Christianity, either Catholic or Protestant, or both. In the political field, primitive belief in magical powers, covered by a layer of more sophisticated concepts of statehood and kingly power, related to concepts of the cosmic



order. On top of that, more or less modern notions about state, society and politics.

Like all similes, the analogy of the layer cake does not, of course, convey the full picture. Elements of the earlier layers continue to be present in the superseding ones, up to the very top, even to this day. And more important than the origin of the various influences on the region is the fact that none of these influences retained their original identity. Whether they came from India, China, Arabia or from modern western Europe, all of these influences were changed in the process of their absorption and integration, however incomplete sometimes, into the previous cultures of the region.

It would seem to me that the capacity of the peoples of Southeast Asia to digest and adapt these influences according to their own genius does represent the most striking element in this acculturation process. As a result, the cultures of Southeast Asia emerge with an autochthony quite distinct from the sources which have helped shape them. Viewed in this light, there are sufficient grounds to assume that in developing their answers to the problems of the post-independence era, and to those which accompany their transition into the twentieth century, the nations of Southeast Asia will eventually come up with responses, structures and institutions that are once again very much their own, differing from those prevailing in either the liberal-capitalistic or communist models.

Another set of factors should be borne in mind when we look at present-day Southeast Asia from this perspective of history. The first is the cultural and political heterogeneity in the Southeast Asian region as a whole; the wide variety of historical experience and response; and thirdly, the existence in many nations of deep religious, ethnic or racial cleavages, here and there reinforced by the remnants of traditional conflicts of a dynastical nature.

The consolidation of colonial rule in Southeast Asia, as of the middle of the nineteenth century, further complicated the situation. Many of the boundaries

along which Southeast Asia was balkanized by the colonizing powers were drawn quite arbitrarily, sometimes by the whim of the local colonial administrator, sometimes on the basis of erroneous assumptions, sometimes formulated in Europe as part of the effort to establish a new balance of power in the post-Napoleonic period. Colonial boundaries often cut across populations of the same ethnic origin. In several instances the colonial ruler used one ethnic group preferentially above others for purposes of administration or to facilitate and protect colonial rule in certain areas.

It was not surprising, therefore, that when the decolonization process set in, the old tensions, rivalries and conflicts, and many of the problems that had remained frozen in the general social stagnation that is characteristic of colonial rule, came to the fore again. What was more, they became heavily intertwined with the new problems of independent statehood: serious political discontent in one form or another because of neglect, sluggish economic growth, uneven distribution of wealth, population pressures or sometimes plain managerial inability on the part of the new government.

One further observation should be made. While on the one hand colonialism has led to social stagnation, stunting the natural growth of our societies, it also upset the traditional social fabric of these societies, starting from within the modern economic enclaves. In doing so, it released new creative forces from which the modern nationalist movements for independence eventually sprang.

With the attainment of independence, then, the new nations were faced with three different sets of problems. The first revolves around the very obvious question of how to run their country as a free nation: how to build the political and social institutions that would serve to inculcate among the population at large a sense of nationhood and shared responsibility; how to integrate the often disparate groups, at various levels of political development, and of various ethnic or ra-



cial origin, into a single political system that would enable the country effectively to deal with the need for rapid economic development; how to break out of the lopsided colonial economy they have inherited. The *second* set of problems arises out of the arbitrariness of colonial boundaries, the inequalities and injustices resulting from colonial favor and privilege. The *third* concerns the deepest motivational forces for social action that are rooted in the religious substratum of the traditional societies of Southeast Asia.

As all-encompassing systems of integration, the great religions have in the past determined the manner in which man sees reality and relates to it. They have helped shape social organization and have defined the terms in which man perceives the meaning of his life as an individual, his relations to his fellow man as well as his relations to the Divine. Colonial rule as well as modernity in general has wrought radical changes in this state of affairs, by setting in motion a largely autonomous process of rapid social development in a new direction.

Once the religiously determined system of values and attitudes, which was attuned to relatively simple, static agricultural societies, had broken down, the traditional religions in all these nations faced the problem of perceiving the new social realities and of developing a relevant relationship to them. Many of the intractable political problems that the new nations have to cope with are rooted in the crisis in which these traditional religions are now finding themselves. The depth of the religious and cultural crisis that these nations face, therefore, shows how deep the roots of political instability go and how superficial the categories of communism, anti-communism or socialism are, either as a means to understand the social and political processes that are going on, the dynamics of political choice, or the shape and structure of society toward which these nations are moving.

It should also be clear by now that the real dynamics of economic development are only partially reflected and can

only be partially measured by external, quantifiable indices such as growth rates, per capita incomes, export rates and the like. When we speak of development, we speak of movement, of goals, of values, of motivation. We are essentially concerned with developing a new sense of direction for society, and with the deepest, often moral, motivations for social action. When we speak of development, we are really speaking about the modernization of the soul.

It is only when the goals of economic development and the need for social and cultural change can be shown to make sense in terms of traditionally accepted, religiously determined values and purposes, or can be shown to make sense in terms of newly acceptable structures of meaning, that the full mobilization of the motivational forces especially within the traditional sectors of these societies become possible. Addressing themselves to this problem is for the new nations almost as important as questions of savings and investments.

No wonder then that before new value systems have crystallized we are beset by such deep emotions, of fear, insecurity but also of hope. The emotional upheavals, the political convulsions and the instability of these countries in general should, therefore, be seen as a reflection of these deeply rooted problems that are inescapably part of the process of modernization.

Against the magnitude of these problems the importance of nationalism as an integrative and constructive force becomes obvious. Nationalism is essentially the expression of a nation's will to reassert its own authenticity. In turn, it has the capacity to release other creative forces, for freedom is the essential condition for creativity and the blossoming of all human faculties. Nationalism is in the early stages the only force of sufficient cohesive strength to consummate the process of nation building and to set into motion the process of economic, social and political development. It is inevitably accompanied by the drive for social justice as well.



It should also be stressed that the many problems I have mentioned above will remain insoluble as long as the present level of poverty in the area persists. The absence of hope for a better future reinforces the inclination to cling in desperation to traditional and familiar institutions, attitudes and concepts. Or, to the tactics of violence and destruction. It is only at a higher level of economic life, when the most pressing problems of material want have been reduced in intensity that these tremendous problems will lend themselves to solution.

The first prerequisite facing all these governments, therefore, is rapid economic development. It goes without saying that economic development in the final analysis rests on the peoples of Southeast Asian region themselves. It will very much depend on their will and their determination to pursue this path, on their capacity to create a political system that will make possible the fullest mobilization of all internal resources. It requires in short, the reorganization of these nations for development purposes and the capacity to harness the desire for a better life that exists among the people in general.

The role of foreign assistance is crucial in the development effort, however small it may be in relation to the magnitude of the national effort that is required. It is important for the transfer of capital or skills that are non-existent or in short supply, thereby speeding up the development process, and as a vehicle for the transfer of developmental values and the ethos of work, efficiency and progress that is necessary to make economic growth a self-sustaining process. Even more important, it can alleviate the burden to be carried by the indigenous population, thereby reducing the need for coercion in the mobilization for development. Foreign assistance in the economic development of the new nations, therefore, will help determine in a crucial fashion what kind of societies will eventually emerge in the Southeast Asian area. Will they be open or closed societies, increasingly free or increasingly repressive, friendly or hostile

to the West? It will be an important factor in determining whether nationalism in Southeast Asia will turn towards the world its aggressive, xenophobic face or its constructive and cooperative aspect.

For we should not forget that post-colonial nationalism also has its pathological sides. By now we are all familiar with the deep suspicion, the potential xenophobia, the irrationality, the egocentricity and intolerance of which it is capable.

The question, therefore, of what kind of societies will emerge in Southeast Asia, open or closed, is a question that is important not only in terms of the immediate future. It is of even greater importance when we think in terms of 30 or 50 years from now, at which time we will have moved into the 21st century. One thing seems certain to me, and that is that Southeast Asia *will* progress economically, *will* industrialize and *will* develop the degree of national power that will enable it to hold its own in the future. If we look at the changes that have taken place in the last ten years, however slow they may seem in our day-to-day observations, the strides that have been made in developing modern technologically oriented economies have been truly impressive.

In looking at Southeast Asia, therefore, we should not merely be obsessed by its difficulties and its instability. Against the background of the history and the motivational forces that I have tried to present to you, the dominant feature that emerges is that the whole region of Southeast Asia is still in the process of philosophical and ideological re-orientation, and of political formation and consolidation. Of very few countries in the area can it be said that their political systems have yet found their final expression. In almost all, the search for a viable and adequate system is still going on. In almost all, some degree of political reform is bound to take place before their systems will be able to accommodate the cultural and political pluralism of their societies; absorb the social tensions that inevitably accompany rapid social and cultural change; integrate racial or religious minorities; and absorb



into their political elites ever wider groups demanding political participation and responsibility.

As I have stressed before, the political systems should, above all, make possible the pursuit of rapid economic development, the harnessing of the creative energies of the people, and the mobilization of the financial resources needed to this end. At the same time, they should be able to withstand the stresses that arise out of demands for greater social justice, out of the discrepancy between the heightened expectations which political consciousness brings and the limited growth capacity of developing economies.

The depth and magnitude of the cultural re-orientation process that is part and parcel of modernization, should also make us aware of the depth of the emotions that are involved. Hope, uncertainty, fear, despair and even hatred will be the constant companions of the change, revolutionary growth and development through which the people of Southeast Asia are going at present. In a few other new nations outside Southeast Asia too we have seen some terrible expressions of the pathology of fear and despair. In a way, the attraction which Mao's type of communism still holds in some areas is very much a function of this despair, with an admixture of age-old chiliastic expectations.

Be that as it may, there is no doubt that it will be some time before the countries of Southeast Asia will have worked out their own, viable political systems. Nor should we be frightened by the likelihood that in this process the viability of some of these countries as nation-states will be severely tested. What we will need is time and the opportunity to work out these problems ourselves. Already a number of developments are taking place that have made it possible for us to look at the future with a greater degree of confidence.

*First*, there is the so-called Green Revolution. The development and increasing utilization of the new miracle strains of rice and wheat have already dramatically changed the outlook on the future. For

the problem of hunger now seems, in principle at least, to be soluble. But it is also beginning to dawn on us how vast and revolutionary the consequences will be that arise out of the systematic utilization of these new strains and the new technology that they require. For it is bound to lead to fundamental social changes in the villages, the emergence of new types of economic and technologically-oriented local leadership, an increased demand for storage, transportation, and marketing facilities, for irrigation works large and small, all serving as an incentive to the development of agriculture-supporting industries. And the end may yet not be in sight.

*Secondly*, there is the fact that besides the already industrially developed countries of Japan and Australia, some of the new nations in the Western Pacific recently moved into their industrial phase. South Korea, Taiwan and of course China fall within this category. This has opened the perspective of new intra-regional trade patterns, which will further accelerate the development of the Southeast Asian region as a whole, and possibly the emergence of a new regional identity. In fact, this process has already set in. To the west of the region, India's entry as an exporter of manufactured goods will, in time, likewise affect the trade patterns across the Indian Ocean basin. An increased exchange here will no doubt provide a powerful pull in this direction again.

*Thirdly*, I should point to what may very well be the most important event in Southeast Asia, namely the emergence of the first post-independence, post-revolutionary generation in positions of power. This generation grew up, or was born in a free Southeast Asia. Their souls have not been scarred or twisted by the pain and humiliation of the colonial experience. More self-confident, less bothered by the sense of inferiority with which their elders were afflicted, they are also, perhaps helped by changing world conditions, less afraid of the specter of imperialism. Though no less patriotic than their parents, they are therefore less ideol-



ogically inclined, more pragmatic, less suspicious and more open to the outside world. They are no longer inclined to blame colonial rule or outside forces for their present difficulties and are quite willing and ready to face up to these problems themselves. But even more important than these attitudes is their acceptance of and their familiarity with science and technology. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the crucial importance of these new attitudes. In general, this generation realizes that the rate of economic development is not determined by the ideological orientation of the country, but rather by the size of investment, the application of technology and science, managerial effectiveness and efficiency and sustained commitment to the priority of development. It would be a mistake, however, to look at them only as a generation of technocrats. They themselves are too deeply aware of the structural changes in society that are required before modern techniques, skills and technology can be effectively applied. They themselves are too deeply conscious of the need to relate developmental goals, i.e., goals that pertain to the improvement of material life, to other purposes that give meaning to man's life in this world. Social justice for instance is one of these. This generation does not speak of crisis, but of challenge, and they are determined to succeed.

It is essential, therefore, that the advanced countries respond positively to the emergence of these new creative forces by helping to provide them with the means to succeed. In doing so, the forms and the manner in which assistance and cooperation is given will be of decisive importance.

For all its differences in orientation, this generation is no less nationalistic than its predecessors. History since World War II has shown that if fears of neo-colonialism and capitalist exploitation are to be avoided, economic assistance and cooperation will have to be based on new concepts and instrumentalities. This requires a search for new forms of cooperative endeavor, which will break with the

unequal relationships of the past and effect the closer integration of foreign investment into the purposes and patterns of national development. It also means that in developing trade and investment, deliberate efforts should be made to accelerate the growth of an indigenous commercial and entrepreneurial middle class. Here the traditional American inventiveness and ingenuity could make an important contribution. On the whole, without denying their essential nature as profitmaking organizations, the creative role that private foreign business could play not only in speeding up the process of economic and social development, but also in fostering regional economic cooperation, should not be underestimated.

Beyond this, it should be realized that without foreign aid at adequate levels, private foreign investment could not play the creative role envisaged here. In a number of Southeast Asian countries, private foreign investment could only operate profitably and socially effectively after the infra-structure has been sufficiently developed. For this the continuation of government-to-government aid at adequate levels is essential. American business, therefore, also has a stake in the continuation of United States aid to these countries. To think that private foreign investment could take over the function of foreign aid is an illusion.

In the political field, an understanding of the developing nations on which economic cooperation could be based would require an awareness of the necessity as well as the inevitability of social and political change and a degree of instability resulting therefrom. Hence, a measure of political instability, should not be seen as a condition to be removed before economic development can be started. Rather stability should be seen as the end result of economic development begun under conditions of relative political instability. To be sure, certain elementary preconditions are necessary, as for instance a commitment to economic development on the part of the political elite, within as well as outside the govern-



ment of the day. Also required is an openness towards private economic enterprise. But beyond this, the insistence on political stability as prior condition for economic development and for international support of economic development is both unrealistic and self-defeating. And it is even more important to understand the basic creative drives that underlie the complex situations in the new nations and to relate to them.

Within this framework we will then be able to understand that the problems these countries face and the developments they go through are inherent in their condition of underdevelopedness, and that their efforts at building political and social institutions that can effectively cope with the problems of poverty and backwardness are rooted in the underlying search for a new meaning of life.

In this first lecture I have deliberately avoided speaking about the concrete political problems that the Southeast Asian nations face, the threats to their security, or the impact of external forces on them. These aspects I intend to discuss with you in my second lecture. My purpose in doing so has been to first bring out as clearly as is possible within this brief compass some of the basic problems with which we are wrestling, some of the motivating forces inherent in the region that, over and beyond the short term vagaries of international politics, constitute the region's essential dynamic thrust.

Hopefully this has also made clear the importance of the continuation of the United States' role in Southeast Asia in supporting the developmental impulses that exist in the region. It may have a crucial bearing on the way in which we will solve our problems and the manner in which consolidation will take place. In the further development of the relationship between the United States and Southeast Asia it is not only the statesmen and politicians but the intellectuals and businessmen as well who will have to play an active role.

Inevitably this problem is bound up with the process of re-examination of

basic values and purposes of American society and the re-ordering of its national priorities through which the United States is going at this juncture of its history. The developing nations of Southeast Asia can only hope that the American people, throughout their own process of transition and re-definition of their identity as a nation, will remain true to their traditional universalistic vision of mankind that has been the source of their strength, their generosity and their world leadership.

#### SOUTHEAST ASIA IN WORLD POLITICS

From the outset, it is important for the clarity of our vision to free ourselves from the obsession that all of us inevitably have with the Vietnam war and the manner of its resolution. After all, the future of the Southeast Asian region will not be determined solely by the outcome of that war. Firstly, the population of Vietnam, or even of the whole of erstwhile Indochina together, constitutes less than one-third of the total population of Southeast Asia. On the other hand, Indonesia's population alone accounts for almost half of that total. In keeping the Vietnam war in its proper proportions, it is important to realize that if Indonesia had become a communist country, any military gains in the Vietnam war would have been nullified.

The other point that should be made here concerns the so-called 'domino theory'. One pertinent aspect which I have tried to bring out in my previous lecture is the largely autochthonous origin of the problems that underlie the political instability in the area. I tried not only to show the magnitude of these problems, but also to convey the long period of time that will be needed to develop the stable political structure capable of coping effectively with the requirements of national integration and economic development simultaneously. What I have tried to say was largely a plea to see and to accept that many of the problems of Southeast Asia are problems in their own right. Whether a country starts off from a



liberal-democratic, a traditional, a militaristic, or a communist base, the pressure of its historical problems is bound in due course to give the political structures that emerge a complexion very much their own. This holds especially true, inasmuch as the communist tide that at one time threatened to engulf the third world seems to have largely dissipated its expansive force. It is, therefore, not the political color of a regime that counts in the end, but its capacity for nation-building and development. More important than the question whether a country will turn towards communism — however important that may be to the country concerned — is the question whether in doing so it will become a satellite of outside forces or not. For underlying my whole argument is the conviction that in the present world situation no outside power can for long force any Southeast Asian country to do its bidding. The Southeast Asian nations do not constitute lifeless entities that automatically fall one way or the other, depending on which way their neighbor falls. History does not operate that way. What matters is the will, the political will, the determination of a nation to preserve its own identity. Out of our national experience, we in Indonesia more than ever believe that this is the crucial element in the equation. Without such a will and determination, the infusion of external power will fail to make much difference. The domino theory, therefore, is to us rather a gross oversimplification of the nature of the historical processes that go on in the area. It obscures and distorts rather than illuminates our understanding and offers no guide-lines for realistic policy.

Having thus cleared the obstructions from our angle of vision on the future, one observation inescapably emerges: the *multipolarity* of the new constellation of forces in the post-Vietnam era. The actual configuration of forces is inevitably still unclear at this point, for very much will depend on some fundamental decisions which, before too long, have to be

made in Moscow, in Tokyo, in Peking, as well as in Washington, D.C.

One new element in this constellation of forces is going to be the continued presence of Soviet power in Southeast Asia. One of the ironic features of the Vietnam war is that, more than anything else, it has helped to solidify the Soviet Union's direct interest in the region. It seems quite unlikely that the end of the Vietnam war will see a reduction of this presence.

The level as well as the direction of Soviet interest in the area will in the first place be determined by the question whether the world is going to move towards an East-West *detente* or towards an intensification of the cold war. Much will depend also on the balance the Soviet Union will manage to strike between her responsibilities as the other superpower and her need to retain the ideological leadership of the communist movement in the world in the face of Chinese competition. Thirdly, it will be influenced by the development of Soviet interests in the Indian Ocean basin, and finally, by the manner in which both China and the United States will react to her presence in the Southeast Asian region.

The second element in our equation is Japan. Because of her tremendous industrial growth, her need for raw materials from the Southeast Asian area, her investments in resource development, and her support of Southeast Asia's developmental programs, Japan at present is already deeply involved in the affairs of the region.

Having reached the stage of now being the third industrial power of the world, she is becoming increasingly conscious of her accomplishments and potentialities and of the need accordingly to redefine her national purposes and the place and role she ought to assume in the present international order.

Specifically with regard to Southeast Asia, or more broadly, the Western Pacific region Japan is approaching the point where she has to make a fundamental choice, affecting her own future



security policies as well as the security of the area as a whole. The options available to her in this respect appear to run between two basic courses: either continue to emphasize and enlarge the predominantly economic role she is playing now, or assume a direct political and military role.

The first course offers her the convenience of not having to carry the full load of expanded defense expenditures. At the same time it provides her with the opportunity to enlarge her contribution to the development efforts of the Southeast Asian region, thus speeding up the region's own security capability. But its weakness is that it will place her in a position of continued dependence in security matters on the United States. How long this course could be maintained, in the face of the growing assertiveness of Japan's newly-found national pride and self-respect, however, remains to be seen.

On the other hand, if Japan decides to assume a military role, the mere existence of China's nuclear capability will make it impossible for her not to go nuclear as well. This in turn will compel her to move out from under the American defense system and to assume a political and defense posture of her own. Japan's implicit desire not to tangle with Communist China and simple calculations of warranted risks as against national interest, will in all likelihood propel her in this direction.

One sometimes has the impression that those in the United States who are eager to see Japan shoulder part of the military burden in the Pacific do not all fully realize the far-reaching implications of such a proposition. While it is possible to argue that Japan's assumption of an enlarged military role may conceivably add to the security of the region as a whole, this may very well mean a reduction of United States control. The manner in which this dilemma between security and control will be resolved in the coming years will have an important bearing on the constellation of forces that will con-

stitute the environment in which Southeast Asia will have to find its place.

It should be said, that in Japan itself at the moment there is still strong psychological resistance against such a military role. Still, when the time comes to make the decision, it may very well be psychological factors, more than anything else, that will tip the scale.

To an important degree, these factors relate to some specific aspects of Japanese-American relations. Of these, the Okinawa question and the impending review of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in general, appear to present themselves as the first crucial tests of the direction in which things will move.

Moreover, as Japan's life depends on her trade and her access to markets in developed countries, a development towards protectionism in the United States would inevitably affect the manner in which Japan will position herself in relation to the countries of the Western Pacific, including the Asian part of the Soviet Union, mainland China as well as Southeast Asia. An abandonment on the part of the United States of its vision of the world as a single economic unit by withdrawing into a protectionist isolationism, will clearly open the door towards the development all over the world of closed systems of economic spheres of influence. I think it would be folly to minimize the fear that within these spheres, the price for progress that the underdeveloped nations would have to pay might well be the acceptance of a neo-colonial relationship.

The configuration of forces of which I am speaking will further be influenced by China's stance and where she moves once the Vietnam war is over. The crucial question that will soon come up before her is whether she should persist in a hostile isolation or break out of it. The prospect of a global understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union and the consolidation of a new balance of power in the Southeast Asian and Western Pacific region may make it advisable for China to break out of her isolation. As to whether, within the con-



text of her own domestic balance of forces, China will have the capacity to do so, is of course a different matter. Here again, the manner in which the United States conducts its search into the possibilities of a Chinese rapprochement will to a large extent condition China's initiatives and reactions in the years to come.

Two more elements, I think, should be briefly mentioned to complete the picture at this stage. First, Australia's decisions regarding her defense strategy and her relationship to Southeast Asia; the choice she has to make between concepts of forward defense or a "fortress Australia" posture, and her defense relations with the United States. Secondly, the development of strategic significance in and around the Indian Ocean, to which I have referred earlier.

It appears possible then at this juncture to draw a few tentative conclusions.

First and foremost, one is struck by the tremendous extent of interaction and the far-reaching implications of the decisions that will have to be taken by the countries I have just mentioned. It is obvious also how greatly the manner of this interaction is going to affect the scope within which the nations of Southeast Asia themselves will have to work out their own destiny. Thus, for example, political decisions taken by the United States in the context of her global policies vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, Japan and others, as well as her economic decisions related to her balance of payments difficulties will inescapably affect the Southeast Asian environment.

The second conclusion that logically presents itself is that as long as Southeast Asia is unable to fill the power vacuum left in the wake of decolonization by its own indigenous strength, or in other words, without a Southeast Asian indigenous component, the constellation of forces in the Western Pacific will remain unstable.

Lastly, it appears valid to assume that it is against the interest of Southeast Asia to see any single force within this constellation emerge in a position of paramount power. If my reading of Ameri-

can history is correct, this conforms also to the traditional position the United States has taken in the past with regard to her interests in the Pacific.

This brings us to the question of the relationship between Southeast Asian security and the re-definition of the American defense posture after Vietnam. The importance of the power umbrella provided by the nuclear guarantee and naval presence of the United States is beyond question and needs no elaboration. It seems to me, that in further defining the American military role in Southeast Asia, the new logistical deployment capabilities which have been developed could be an important element in giving greater flexibility to the United States defense strategy. But beyond this, I would imagine that it will also very much depend on the way in which the Southeast Asian nations themselves see their security problem, and on their readiness to assume responsibility in meeting that problem.

Let us, therefore, first have a look at the nature of the threat to the security of the Southeast Asian area. Provided that the present stability of mutual nuclear deterrence remains, I think it is realistic to assume that the danger of massive open military aggression against this region is very small. China's capacity to project its military strength outside its boundaries is for a long time going to be quite limited. While her growing nuclear capability undoubtedly will give her some diplomatic and political leverage, the rationale for a nuclear threat or for nuclear blackmail against any of the Southeast Asian countries seems rather distant, if not absent. The threat to the security of Southeast Asia, therefore, lies not in China's military capacity, but rather in the fact that China constitutes political and ideological high-pressure area, that is bound to exert an influence on the shape and direction of political discontent within the Southeast Asian countries. The primary threat, therefore, is one of internal subversion and insurgency.

It is not primarily a nation's military capability that will determine its capacity



to overcome these threats to internal security, but rather the cohesion of its political system, the viability and the effectiveness of its government in dealing with the problems of poverty, social inequalities and injustices, in bringing about economic development and in continually expanding its base for popular participation. Here again it is not only factors of economic growth, but beyond that the elements of will and determination that are decisive, as well as the people's loyalty to the government and faith in its purposes. As Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik once remarked: "In dealing with the defense against insurgency it does not suffice for the people to make verbal expressions of loyalty. It requires a government for whom they are willing to die."

In this light, therefore, military alliances will add little if anything to a nation's capacity to cope with the problems of insurgency. One might even say that at this stage of political formation and consolidation through which Southeast Asian nations are going, the infusion of external military power runs the risk of becoming a destabilizing factor, leading to a false polarization of forces in the country or giving its leaders a false sense of security and a corresponding unwillingness to engage in necessary political and social reform.

Recently, President Soeharto of Indonesia reiterated this viewpoint in unambiguous terms. When asked by the press how he viewed probable developments in Southeast Asia after an end to the Vietnam war, he said: "I do realize that the general situation in the area after Vietnam will give the communists a bigger scope for infiltration and subversion in the countries of the region. The main threat, however, will not derive from communist military strength but rather finds its source in ideological fanaticism. This threat should not be met by military pacts or military power, but by strengthening these countries' national will and capacity to resist through international and regional cooperation in the fields of economic development, culture and ideology. The

strengthened will and capacity to resist in the countries of the region will form the strongest defense against this infiltration and subversion."

It is important, therefore, to see ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, not as a prelude to a military alliance, but very definitely as an attempt to speed up the economic development and political viability of the region as a whole, as well as that of the individual member countries. ASEAN is an expression of the will and determination that exist among its member nations to shape their own future and to work out their problems of stability and economic development in freedom.

We of course realize that to transform potential into reality, much more is needed than pious intentions. Even at this moment, unresolved tension and conflict among ourselves, such as manifested by the dispute over Sabah, threaten to disrupt the fragile structure of our preliminary efforts. But if we understand the nature and basic causes of instability in the region, then we will understand that problems like these will continue to crop up as the unavoidable agonies in a process of growth.

It does, however, point to the need for Southeast Asia's leaders to bring up the kind of statesmanship capable of preventing the deterioration of this conflict into a state of self-destructive armed hostilities. It also reveals the necessity for ASEAN to develop as quickly as possible the organizational machinery for peaceful conflict-solution in the area. As for Indonesia, we remain confident that within the context and in the true spirit of ASEAN the current tensions over Sabah can and will be overcome in due course.

It should be noted that ASEAN, in its present composition of Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, was from its inception only seen as a beginning. I do not think that its members have relinquished the hope that eventually ASEAN will include all other nations in Southeast Asia. The possibility of a neutralized Indochina emerging from a



peaceful settlement of the Vietnam war would open new possibilities along these lines.

Let me now recapitulate very briefly the major internal requirements that will have to be met if Southeast Asian regional cooperation is to become a reality. *First*, there should be a continuing top-priority commitment to economic development on the part of the political leadership in each of these countries. *Secondly*, these countries should be able to develop a mechanism for regional conflict resolution which would obviate the need or compulsion to arm against each other and to seek solutions by force of arms. *Thirdly*, plan harmonization; though, given the strength of narrow nationalist feelings, this will take some time, they must gradually develop the willingness to agree on the most suitable location of certain industries in terms of their overall regional impact. This means a willingness to sacrifice short term national interests. *Fourthly*, increased intraregional trade, common endeavors in the field of price stabilization of primary commodities, joint marketing operations and eventually, after all the countries of the area have developed a sufficient manufacturing capability, a regional common market. This may still take a very long time, but it is the direction in which we have to move. *Fifthly*, effective population control.

The nations of Southeast Asia must be able to develop these capabilities if regional cooperation is to mean anything in the immediate foreseeable future. Above all, there is an urgent need for clarity of vision as to the community of destiny in which their future is bound up; the realization that there is no future for each of them, unless they jointly work together to secure their common future.

The awareness of the historic opportunity that has opened, and the will to move in that direction, should inspire not only the statesmen of Southeast Asia, but its intellectuals, scientists and businessmen as well. These are the internal requirements.

There are, of course, certain external requirements, the most important of which

is the continued willingness of countries like the United States, Japan, Australia, Europe, and hopefully the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries in continuing foreign assistance at adequate levels to the countries in this region.

The recent announcement by the Japanese Government of its intention to allocate aid at substantially higher levels was therefore welcome news indeed. In a way it further emphasizes the crucial importance for us in Southeast Asia of the decision that the United States will have to make regarding the level of her aid program in coming years as well as the new concepts underlying it. More than anything else the United States could do in relation to Southeast Asia, the continuance at adequate levels of her aid program would significantly bolster political morale, accelerate the indigenous capacity for development, and commensurately the indigenous capacity of these nations to deal with their own security problems. Without it the U.S. military role in the security of the Southeast Asian area would become politically meaningless.

One other aspect should be mentioned here. One of the side effects of the Vietnam war has been an annual outflow in recent years of close to two billion dollars from the United States to East Asia for expenditures that were related to the war. Many of the countries in this area have benefitted considerably from this transfer of resources. I think that Indonesia may be the only country which did not derive any benefits from this. It would be a sad commentary indeed on the quality of the present international order if peace in Vietnam, for which we are still hoping, would also come to mean the cessation of a transfer of resources of this order of magnitude, which would give rise to a serious depression in this general area. It would seem to me that economic cooperation of a stable and mutually beneficial nature would require the development of a capacity for the continuation of the transfer of such resources *without* war.



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The search for new and more effective concepts of aid is, of course, a legitimate and needed endeavor. The increasing attention that is being paid to multilateral aid, whether through international organizations like the United Nations, the World Bank, IDA, ADB, or through formal or informal arrangements between a number of countries, is an important development in this connection. It makes possible better coordination, more objective assessments of requirements, a more integrated development strategy by the receiving country, at a lower political cost. The multilateral emphasis tends to reduce the fear of undue influence or political domination by a single donor nation. It also reduces the possibility of bilateral aid programs being too closely tied to specific private investment projects from the donor nation concerned, which would give rise to fears of the development of economic neo-colonialist enclaves in the receiving country.

As an interesting side effect of this new emphasis it should be noted that it has at the same time made it possible for bilateral aid to operate more effectively and at a lower political cost as well, for both the donor and the receiver nation.

A review of aid strategies for development in Southeast Asia could not ignore the importance of price stabilization for primary commodities. This, as well as putting a stop to the worsening terms of trade for these primary products, would significantly reduce the need for much higher levels of aid input. It would have additional beneficial effects as well. Very little has been achieved in the way of increasing trade rather than aid, and the failures of both the UNCTAD I and UNCTAD II conferences is a matter of great concern to most of the countries in Southeast Asia.

The failure of these conferences, like the failure of the UN Development Decade to reach its targets, has made it obvious that unless there are fundamental changes in the state of the world, in its present divisions, its preoccupations, and its levels of tension and conflict, there is



little hope for a major redirection of world resources to effectively cope with the problem of international poverty. Still, international stability and security at the sub-nuclear level will largely depend on this. At the same time it is only one of the problems that mankind is facing today.

For too long already has the fear engendered by the cold war, and the corresponding flight for security into a blind reliance on military hardware, made it impossible for many nations, rich as well as poor, adequately to respond to new and pressing needs resulting from major social and cultural changes, in their own societies as well as in the world at large. For too long has man been locked into frozen postures, attitudes and concepts that made sense in the fifties, but are inadequate to our understanding of the problems that have emerged in the meantime.

It has been the unrest of youth that has now made us realize that for the continuation of civilized life on this globe the mere avoidance of nuclear extinction is not enough, and that it will be necessary to come to grips with problems like the depersonalizing effects of modern life and its institutions, the destruction of human ecology, the problem of race, the problems of the cities, the population ex-

plosion, and domestic and international poverty. These are the problems that will really determine the shape and the quality of life in the decades ushering in the twenty-first century — if we ever make it.

The reorientation of our thinking, the development of new and more appropriate concepts, and especially concepts of security that allow for social change, imply a reordering of our priorities and a redirection of our resources; to do these things however, is only possible at a lower level of international tension.

The attainment of strategic parity between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. provides a new, unique — and maybe the last — opportunity mankind has to make the effort at developing a new world order that is more responsive to the new and crying needs of man, poor as well as rich; a world order, more morally satisfying, based not only on power and the calculus of power, but also on trust and compassion, motivated by a clearer and stronger universal vision of man, of human solidarity and a sense of international justice.

Southeast Asia's future is certainly bound up with the success of this endeavor.



"A revolution has no chance of success if any of these factors is missing: An uprising by a part of the military, the nation must be at war with another country, money and arms should be available, aid from a foreign country should be accessible."

**Ferdinand Blumentritt in a letter to Jose Rizal**

"He disliked revolution; but if it had to be, it had to be."

**Austin Coates on Rizal**

"In all revolutions, there is always need of a victim who will bear all the sins of the rest."

**Jose Rizal**