THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN
SOUTH EAST ASIA SINCE 1975

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I certify that this sub-thesis is my own original work and that all sources used have been acknowledged.

[Signature]

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1 : THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA SINCE 1975

CHAPTER 2 : INDIVIDUAL ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES PERCEPTION
   i) Philippines
   ii) Thailand
   iii) Indonesia
   iv) Malaysia
   v) Singapore

CHAPTER 3 : ASEAN PERCEPTIONS AND CONCLUSION

APPENDIX 1 : MUTUAL DEFENCE TREATY
   2 : MANILA PACT
   3 : THANAT KHOMAN - DEAN RUSK JOINT STATEMENT
   4 : ZOPFAN DECLARATION
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ABBREVIATIONS USED

AMDA  -  Anglo Malaysian Defence Agreement
ASA   -  Association of Southeast Asia
ASEAN -  Association of Southeast Asian Nations
FPDA  -  Five Power Defence Agreement
MDT   -  Mutual Defence Treaty
MNLF  -  Moro National Liberation Front
KPNLF -  Khmer Peoples National Liberation Front
NPA   -  New Peoples Army
NATO  -  North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
SEATO -  Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation
RDF   -  Rapid Deployment Force
C3    -  Command control Communication
SLOC  -  Sea Lanes of Communication
US    -  United States
USA   -  United States of America
INTRODUCTION

One of the constant features of the United States foreign policy is the maintenance of an international environment in which the United States can survive and prosper. This is based on an economic-strategic nexus. This has been emphasised since the time of the Truman administration after the second World War. For instance Truman stated during the height of the Korean War and other communist rebellions in the Southeast Asian region that the loss of any one of those countries would mean the loss of freedom for millions of people, the loss of vital raw materials, and the loss of points of critical strategic importance to the free world.\(^1\) This perception was crystallised into the containment policy to halt the spread of communism. This policy was also emphasised in the Southeast Asian region. However with the achievement of detente with China and the Soviet Union in 1972, the containment policy transformed to maintenance of a balance of power policy in the region.

The swift takeover of the Indochina states by communist forces in April 1975 alarmed both United States and ASEAN policy makers. The fall of the Indochina states created what was to be termed the 'Vietnam syndrome or trauma' among United States policy makers. The syndrome revolves around the fact that America would not commit troops to aid its allies, especially in the Southeast Asian region, after the failure of its intervention in Vietnam.

This study traces the strategic role of the United States of America in the Southeast Asian region from 1975 to 1985. It also examines whether there has been any substantial change in the United States strategic role in the region since the debacle in Vietnam. Chapter 1 covers briefly the USA strategic role since World War II and discusses in detail its role during three administrations after the Vietnam War until 1985.

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) which was formed in August 1967 to solve regional disputes in a multilateral

\(^1\)Cited in John L.S. Girling, America and the Third World, Routledge and Keegan Paul Ltd; London 1980, p.132. See also Chapter 6 of the same, for the relations between strategic and economic nexus on US foreign policy.
framework and to strengthen socio-economic and cultural relations among its members had looked to the United States and Britain as external guarantors of their security. However with the British decision to withdraw from East of Suez in 1971 and in the aftermath of the fall of Indochina, ASEAN began to re-examine its foreign policy posture and also its perception of the United States guarantees to the region. Chapter 2 examines ASEAN countries, namely the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore's perception of what the United States strategic role has been, and should be, in the region. Even though Brunei became a member of ASEAN in January 1984, it concurs generally in the other ASEAN member countries' perceptions, or what is termed as the formula '5+1'. The study does not deal separately with Brunei's perception.

Chapter 3 examines whether there is an official ASEAN perception as an organisation of the United States strategic role in the region. It also examines whether there is a difference between ASEAN's individual member countries' perception and as an organisation. The conclusion of this study is also dealt with in Chapter 3.
CHAPTER ONE

THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES

IN SOUTHEAST ASIA SINCE 1975

The strategic role of the United States of America (USA) in Southeast Asia could be traced back to the cold war era immediately after the second World War. The National Security Council Memorandum No. 48 (NSC-48) of 1949 stated that the United States' ability to exert counter-influence vis-a-vis Moscow in Asia rests on the United States providing economic assistance and maintenance of a strong strategic posture in the Pacific.¹ The 'loss' of China to Mao Zedong's forces, the increased communist insurgency in the Southeast Asian region and the Korean War created the impetus for the enunciation of the containment policy by United States policy makers against the spread of communism beyond certain boundaries in the East and West.² The war also prompted United States policy makers to establish security treaties such as the Japanese Peace Treaty of 8 September 1951 and the Mutual Defence Treaty (MTD) with the Philippines on 30 August 1951. (See Appendix I). In September 1954 the Manila Pact was signed (see Appendix II) which created the Southeast Asian Treaty organisation (SEATO). SEATO was clearly formed to contain communism, as its treaty provisions referred to an armed attack only by communist aggression. Only Thailand and the Philippines were Southeast Asian signatories to the pact.³

³The other signatories are the United States, Britain, France, Pakistan, Australia and New Zealand. For a brief study on SEATO see B. Leszek Buszynski, SEATO: the failure of an alliance strategy, Singapore University Press, 1978.
The first United States strategic involvement occurred when President Eisenhower ordered the bombing of communist sanctuaries around Dien Bien Phu from United States bases in the Philippines to relieve the pressure on the French. Speaking at a news conference, Eisenhower, sensing the impending defeat of the French, speculated that the fall of Vietnam would 'like a row of dominoes' pave way for a communist conquest of all of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and the rest of Southeast Asia.\(^4\) This 'domino theory' thesis was the main basis for the United States' involvement in the Southeast Asian region for the next 20 years. In this context the administration refused to recognise the decisions of the Geneva Conference (after the fall of the French) which called for elections in North and South Vietnam and peaceful reunification. Washington perceived that elections would definitely bring a communist regime to power in Vietnam. This prompted the United States to support the Saigon regime in particular, and to involvement in the region in general. This involvement escalated from small scale military assistance to a large scale commitment of United States men and material in the Vietnam War.

However, this large scale involvement strained the relationship between the public and the executive in the United States. The Tet offensive of 1968 clearly reflected the futility of United States involvement in Vietnam and also the gross miscalculation of enemy capabilities. The rejection for the first time of General Westmoreland's request for additional men was an indication of United States disinterest towards the war in particular and the region in general.

Following the election of President Nixon who campaigned to end the war, the Nixon or Guam Doctrine was enunciated in July 1969. The central thesis of the Guam doctrine was that the United States would honour all its treaty commitments and provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens its allies. However, 'America cannot and will not conceive all the plans, design all the programs, execute all the

decisions and undertake all the defence of the free nations of the world'.

The Doctrine explicitly states that the United States does not have the capability to defend the whole free world and in relation to Vietnam it reflects its failure in the conflict. Nevertheless speaking to reporters in Guam, Nixon stressed that the United States was committed to the Southeast region in particular and Asia in general regardless of what happened in Vietnam.

President Nixon also established detente with China and the Soviet Union with his visit to their capitals in February and May 1972 respectively. Even though these trips did not end the Vietnam War immediately, they did improve US strategic position in Asia. By courting and exploiting the Sino-Soviet conflict the United States had succeeded in overcoming any possible changes towards rapprochement between the two communist giants, which would be the greatest threat to the United States' strategic and economic interest. Nevertheless the most important reason for Washington's decision to establish detente with the two communist giants was to withdraw with honour from Vietnam. Even though this new balance of power did not end the hostilities in Vietnam immediately, it did give the impetus to the negotiations and the ceasefire agreement signed in Paris in January 1973. Moreover after the Sino-United States rapprochement, other ASEAN states such as Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines established diplomatic relations with China, which removed the basis of United States' main security concern in the region. In the post-ceasefire period the United States Congress passed the 'War powers resolution' in November 1973 which curtailed the President's power to commit United States troops in a conflict anywhere in the world. This resolution hampered United States assistance in the last days of the Vietnam War. The peace treaty signalled further reduction of United States troops in the region.

The fall of the US-backed Thieu regime in Saigon on 30 April 1975 marked the end of nearly twenty years of US involvement in mainland

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Southeast Asia. With this debacle, and in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal, there was general disenchantment towards the Presidential direction of foreign policy in the US. This situation raised the questions of what strategic role the US would play in the Southeast Asian region.

Moreover, staunch allies of the US in the region such as Thailand and the Philippines, which supported the US action in Vietnam by providing logistics and bases, were beginning to question America's treaty commitments towards them. This situation was further exacerbated when former President Thieu accused the US of contributing to the downfall of the South Vietnamese Government by failing to honour its commitments towards the South Vietnamese regime. According to President Thieu, a secret agreement was made between Washington and Saigon whereby in return for Thieu's approval of the Paris Peace Accord of 1973 the US promised: immediate reaction with force and determination to help South Vietnam to fight any renewed communist aggression, to recognise only the Republic of Vietnam, continued military and economic aid against communist aggression.

The Ford Administration had emphasised that the US would stand by its commitments to its allies regardless of the situation in Vietnam. This statement was matched by the conspicuous display of US military strength from bases in Thailand during the Mayaguez crisis. This reaction was meant as "an assertion of military muscle in reaction to America's loss of military credibility at the end of the Vietnam war".

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7 Manila Pact, Thanat-Rusk Communiqué of 1962 and a Mutual Security Treaty promise American support in case of armed aggression against Thailand and Philippines respectively.
9 The Mayaguez crisis occurred when an unarmed American container vessel was seized by Kampuchean patrol boats 30 miles off the Kampuchean coast. President Ford interpreted the action as one of piracy and ordered US marines based in Thailand to rescue the ship's crew, without prior consultation with Thai authorities. Subsequently Washington apologised for the incident.
10 K.K.Nair, op. cit., p38.
The incident did not shore up American prestige and credibility in the eyes of its allies, and further exacerbated the situation. In launching the operation from the bases in Thailand Washington did not consider Thailand's anxiety about its future relations with Kampuchea and Vietnam.

President Ford undertook a trip to Indonesia and the Philippines in December 1975 to allay any fears or misgivings on the part of his non-communist allies in the region. He expressed a continued US commitment to the region when he stated in Indonesia

"I have come here because of America's continuing interest in your country's security and well-being."11

On his return President Ford enunciated the Pacific Doctrine which emphasised that US strength is basic to any balance of power in the Pacific. He said,

"The preservation of the sovereignty and independence of our Asian friends and allies remains a paramount objective of American policy ... We owe to ourselves and to those whose independence depends upon our continued support, to preserve a flexible and balanced position of strength throughout the Pacific."12

There were six premises upon which this doctrine was based. One of these premises was a "continuing [US] stake in stability and security

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11 Indonesian Times, 6 December 1975, p.1
However subsequent remarks made by administration officials reflected a shift of emphasis from Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia. For example, Arthur W Hummel, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, testified before a Congressional hearing that the formulation of the Pacific Doctrine is based on the "very close and important relationship with Japan and our relations with mainland China and Korea."  

In the midst of these developments and new alignments in the region, the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO), which was formed under the aegis of the Manila Pact in 1954 to provide an alliance response to communist invasion of Indochina, was also phased out.  

Thus another symbol of US regional presence was dismantled. Nevertheless the parent treaty, the Manila Pact, was retained at the request of Thailand and Philippines as it provided a US security shield to these countries. However US reaction to any adverse developments in these two countries in particular and in the region as a whole was unclear. As the former US Navy Chief of Staff Admiral Thomas Moorer commented,

13 The other five premises were:

- American strength is basic to any stable balance of power in the Pacific.
- Partnership with Japan is a pillar of our strategy.
- Normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China.
- That peace in Asia depends upon a resolution of outstanding political conflicts.
- That peace in Asia requires a structure of economic cooperation reflecting the aspiration of all the peoples in the region.

"A Pacific Doctrine of Peace with All and Hostility Towards None" in Department of State Bulletin, 29 December 1975, pp. 913-916.


"Our allies are becoming increasingly aware that they must depend on their own resources and/or policy readjustment to ensure their own security. No longer is the US protection umbrella seen as adequately credible by local powers. Nor are the existing alliance structures...expected to be viable in the years ahead."^16

The Carter Administration

The US Presidential Campaign of 1976 failed to reflect what would be Washington's policy towards the Southeast Asian region over the next four years, thereby indicating that Southeast Asia was low on the list of American priorities. President Carter's victory in the 1977 Presidential election did not change the basic strategic policies laid down by his predecessor.^17

However there was no continued assurance of a strong US military presence in the region under the Carter Administration, as had been previously laid down by the Ford Administration. This ambivalence created doubt among the leaders in the region. There were several US signals which caused confusion and apprehension. For instance, early in the Carter Administration plans were formulated to reduce the number of aircraft carriers in the Western Pacific from two to one. However, that plan was later modified to retain US naval strength at pre-1977 levels, and subsequently in 1978 it was decided to increase the overall force structure.

The credibility of the Carter Administration's commitments to the Southeast Asian region was further questioned by the leaders in the region with the publication of a Department of Defence staff study in 1977.^18 According to the study, for the past 25 years the US strategic

^17 A new policy was tagged onto these. This was the human rights policy. For a brief study of President Carter's foreign policy see Coral Bell, President Carter and Foreign Policy: The Costs of Virtue, Canberra Studies on World Affairs No.1, Department of International Relations, ANU, 1980.
plan for fighting a general East-West conflict required the US to shift a substantial portion of its forces from the Pacific to the Atlantic (i.e., the European theatre) leaving the entire Asia-Pacific region vulnerable. This "swing strategy" would have been accepted by the region in the 1950's or the 1960's when the US maintained an overwhelming naval superiority vis-a-vis the Soviet Union in the Pacific. But the viability of this strategy has been tainted with the dramatic increase of Soviet air and naval power in the Pacific.

In accordance with his campaign promise Carter also decided to completely phase out US ground forces based in South Korea by 1982. According to Presidential Memorandum No.10,

"Once the ground forces are out of South Korea the US...[will have] transformed its presence in Asia from a land based posture to an offshore posture. This...provides the US with flexibility to determine at the time whether it should or should not, get involved in a local war."

In other words, as Girling has suggested, the US adopted a fallback strategy relying on air and naval mobility from bases along the "Pacific Rim", extending from Japan and Okinawa to Guam, the Philippines and Australia.

The Carter Administration also formulated a conventional arms transfer restraint policy which was implemented under Presidential Directive No. 13 in May 1977. With the exception of NATO, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Israel, arms transfers to other countries (including ASEAN) came under review. The key elements of this policy were,

- The US will not be the first supplier to introduce into a region newly developed advanced weapons systems that would create a new or significantly higher combat capability.

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21 Ibid., p.201.
The US will continue to promote respect for human rights in potential recipient countries. It will also assess the economic impact of arms to developing countries. 22

Thus from 1977 US military assistance to ASEAN decreased gradually from US$170 million to US$120 million in 1979. 23 This situation clearly indicated the low priority shown by officials during the first years of the Carter Administration towards the region.

Nevertheless Carter Administration officials attempted to mitigate the apprehensions of ASEAN by emphasising that the region was still a top priority in Washington. Speaking at the Asian Society in New York in July 1977, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance stated that the US would remain an Asian Power and would commit the necessary US forces to maintain the balance of power. 24 Vice-President Walter Mondale also travelled to Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia in May 1978, where he stressed the Carter Administration's commitment to regional security. He also emphasised that the US would maintain multilateral and bilateral security commitments and preserve a balanced and flexible military posture in the Pacific. 25

Events in 1978 and 1979 to a certain extent changed US strategic perception of the region. The Soviet-Vietnam Friendship Treaty and the subsequent Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in January 1979 created a new strategic dimension in the region. For the first time, as a result of the Friendship Treaty the Russians were granted port access to Cam

25 "The Vice-President: America's Role in Southeast Asia and the Pacific", in Department of State Bulletin, July 1978, p.23.
Ranh Bay, Da Nang (the former US-built naval and air bases in South Vietnam), Bien Ho, Hai Phong and probably Kompong Som in Kampuchea. With the access to these ports the Soviets achieved a major military breakthrough with a forward presence much closer than before to the Malacca Straits and other important Sea Lines Of Communication (SLOC's) such as the Straits of Lombok, Sunda, Ombai, Makassar and Torres.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the revolution in Iran further enhanced Southeast Asia's strategic importance. The Carter Administration accelerated the Philippine base negotiations. The conclusion of these negotiations reflected a "concrete strategic interest which extended through Southeast Asia to the Indian Ocean and onto the Persian Gulf."26 In this context the Carter Administration stated that the US would take steps to ensure the continued supply of oil from the Persian Gulf to its Western allies including Japan. To maintain this capability the administration enhanced US access to area wide naval, air and communication facilities and improved the naval and air operation capabilities in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. For this purpose, it also created the Rapid Deployment Force (now known as the Central Command).

As the US does not maintain a designated Indian Ocean fleet the strategic straits in Southeast Asia provide the primary means of moving ships and supplies from Subic Bay and other Northeast Asian US bases to the Indian Ocean. All these straits can be subjected to mining, submarine attacks and artillery fire from shore batteries. Moreover if these straits were successfully interdicted, it would take an additional 12 days for a US carrier task force to move from bases in the Western Pacific to the Indian Ocean. Since ASEAN states are situated astride these SLOC's they form an integral part of this strategy.

The reaffirmation of US strategic interest in the region was further

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reflected during Thai General Krinangsak Chamanand's visit to Washington in February 1979. President Carter reiterated US commitments when he stated that the US was "intensely interested and deeply committed to the integrity and freedom and security of Thailand." Carter also suspended negotiations on establishing diplomatic relations with Vietnam. In July 1979 Secretary of State Cyrus Vance attended the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Conference. Although the discussion which ensued did not dwell on security matters, it reflected the increased US commitment to the region.

The Carter Administration also abandoned the "swing strategy" in 1980 with a renewed emphasis on the Pacific region by ranking "the defence of American allies in the region equally with the defence of European allies in the event of a general war." As the Navy Commander in Chief Pacific, Admiral Maurice Weisner told Congress,

"Our fundamental geopolitical, economic and military situation has changed in the Pacific Asia region...Our primary adversary in Asia is now the Soviet Union and the balance of naval forces in the Pacific command has changed markedly."

In this context the administration substantially upgraded the US air and naval forces in the Pacific. The US Seventh Fleet was further expanded with several Spruance Class destroyers, Perry Class guided missile frigates, Los Angeles attack submarines and F14 fighters. President Carter also halted the withdrawal of US troops from South Korea. The Carter Administration also toned down its controversial human rights policy as it conceded that this policy when implemented stringently was counterproductive to US security interest.

29 Ibid., p.38.
31 Coral Bell, op. cit., p.91.
Part of Carter's US strategy in Southeast Asia was to play what was termed "the China card" to maintain the balance of power in the region. According to Harold Brown in the Department of Defence Report, one of the major objectives of Washington's relations with Beijing was to, "...encourage Chinese cooperation in promoting stability in the area including Southeast Asia." Secretary of State Cyrus Vance maintained in his speech to the Asian Society in 1977 that friendly relations with China were a central element in US foreign policy in Asia. Subsequently the US established full diplomatic relations with China in January 1979.

Prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the Carter Administration maintained an evenhanded approach to both communist powers. However this policy changed after the invasion when there seemed to emerge a Japan-US-China entente vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. During his official visit to China, Harold Brown urged the Chinese to join the US in complementary action to block the putative Soviet drive for hegemony. The Carter Administration also agreed to sell certain military items to China though this was limited to trucks, transport aircraft and radars.

The first test of this administration's increased emphasis on the Southeast Asian region came during the brief incursion of Vietnamese troops into Thailand in July 1980. President Carter immediately ordered an airlift of small arms, artillery, ammunition and an improved version of the old Patton tanks. Although the administration reacted immediately, the whole exercise was merely symbolic in nature, designed to impress US allies in Asia with the administration's resolve to respond quickly to Soviet-backed aggression. This seemed evident as

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32 Harold Brown, op.cit., p.39.
33 Department of State Bulletin, op.cit., p.141.
34 Japan and China had signed a Friendship Treaty in 1978.
35 Cited in Berry, op. cit., p.431.
the military significance of the airlift was minimal. Moreover Thailand had to pay for the arms.  

In the aftermath of the Vietnamese incursion, Edmund Muskie, the new Secretary of State, announced that the US would speed up arms deliveries to Thailand. The pledge did not mean that the US intended to increase the US$40 million military aid allocated to Thailand for the fiscal year 1980, but rather that the priority of arms delivery to Thailand had been raised. Even this aid allocated to Thailand was modest especially when compared to the US$400 million offered to Pakistan in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

A study by the US defence policy makers in the aftermath of the Vietnamese incursion shows that, beyond the supply of arms, the US response in the event of a border warfare or an outright invasion of Vietnam would be initially limited to air strikes from US bases in Okinawa in Japan and Clark air base in the Philippines. If it were a prolonged conflict, then such strikes would be carried out from US carriers. In other words the US would not commit troops in the event of a conflict. There was also no Southeast Asian equivalent to the Carter Doctrine enunciated with respect to Southwest Asia in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Thus any renewed reference by the Carter Administration to the region still remained vague, as it had been during the Ford Administration.

**The Reagan Administration**

The Reagan Administration came into office with a foreign policy oriented towards greater reliance on force. The administration emphasised that it sought peace but believed that this could only be achieved through a strong US military capability. It not only intended

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36 Sheldon W Simon, *The ASEAN States and Regional Security*, op. cit., p.120.
to build up American military capability but also that of its allies.\(^38\) The administration's strong anti-Kremlin stance placed detente in the back-burner. The administration also did not suffer from any guilt complex over the Vietnam War. Speaking at the Chicago War Veterans' Association, during the Presidential election campaign, President Reagan stated, "The Vietnam War was a war fought for a just course. The mistake of the US was not that it started the war but that it did not win the war."\(^39\) The Reagan Administration had changed the US foreign policy stance from "no more Vietnams" to "Vietnam is over" thus clearly advocating a strong and resolute foreign policy.

The US objectives in Southeast Asia under the Reagan Administration were spelled out by Richard Holdridge in a testimony to Congress,

"We firmly support the progress and stability of our friends and allies in ASEAN as the heart of our policy towards the entire region. In cooperation with ASEAN we seek to restrain [the] aggressive ambitions of Vietnam."\(^40\)

Secretary of State George Schultz echoed this sentiment in his speech before the ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Jakarta in July 1984, when he stated that,

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\(^{38}\) This sentiment can be identified as "Globalist" viv-a-vis the regionalist perception of the Soviet challenge. The Globalist...focus on Soviet power, the importance of regional balances and allies...The other, more relaxed about military power, seeks to avoid open-ended involvement while pursuing long run world order interests. The geo-politician seeks to cultivate and reward allies, stressing American dependability and credibility, the regionalist examines whether allies are compatible with the values of the US...The former fears an eroding balance, divided allies and setbacks that reverberate to the global disadvantage of the US, the latter fears entanglement, irrelevance and reflexive linkage. The Carter Administration symbolises the latter. See Shahram Chubin, "US Security Interest in the Third World", in Christoph Bertram (ed.), Third World Conflict and International Security, IISS, London, 1981.


\(^{40}\) Hearings before the subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Committee on the Foreign Relations United States Senate, 97th Congress, 1st Session on the US Policy Objectives in Southeast Asia and the Factors which shape these policies,15, 21 and 22,July 1981, p.4
"Our relations with ASEAN countries are the cornerstone of our policy in Southeast Asia." 41

The Reagan Administration formulated a new conventional arms transfer policy, and on July 3 1981 President Reagan signed a directive which superseded Presidential Directive (PD) 13 of May 1977. The main thrust of this directive is to place less restriction on conventional arms transfer to allies compared to PD 13 of the Carter Administration. Under the new directive ASEAN countries would be allowed to purchase US advanced fighter jets such as the F16A/B and the F16A. Lewis A Dunn, Assistant Director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, while justifying the sale of these aircraft to ASEAN member countries before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs stated that,

"...the security of the ASEAN countries is threatened by Vietnam. Thailand, in particular has been the victim of periodic incursions and raids by Vietnamese forces. Moreover the Vietnamese aircraft inventory is far larger than the inventory of each of the ASEAN states. Vietnam's fleet of Mig 19's and Mig 21's is five times the size of Thailand's jet fighter fleet, four times as large as Indonesia's and more than ten times the size of Malaysia's" 42

In supporting increased military and economic assistance to Thailand and the Philippines before Congress former Secretary of State Alexander Haig asserted that there was a need to shore up allies located along strategic SLOC's. He further emphasised that,

"The issue is not whether a local state can single handedly resist an attack but whether it can make that attack more costly, more complicated and therefore potentially less likely to occur." 43

Together with increased military assistance, the Reagan Administration also carried out military exercises with Thailand and the Philippines.

In April 1983, Philippine and US troops participated in a large scale joint military exercise. US troops from the Western Command's Twenty-fifth division based in Hawaii and the entire Third Marine division from Okinawa also took part in the exercise. The US also carried out a major logistics exercise in June 1984 in the wake of a prolonged battle between Thai and Vietnamese forces. After the Vietnamese incursion into Thailand in June 1982, the US immediately dispatched 155mm Howitzers to Thailand to enable Thai forces guarding the frontier with Kampuchea to match Soviet supplied 130mm field guns. In July 1985 the Green Berets, the elite of the US armed forces, took part in the second Cobra Gold (the previous one was held in 1982) military exercise. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger also signed a memorandum on logistics which enabled Thailand to have access to the Special Defence Acquisition Fund (SDAF). Under this fund, while Thailand would not necessarily have access to a specific type of equipment until 1990, the material would be readied and despatched immediately if an emergency occurred.

Weinberger spelled out US defence policy towards East Asia during a trip to Tokyo, Seoul and Manila in March 1982. He stressed that there were six pillars to US policy in East Asia,

- US determination to remain a Pacific Power
- US security relationship with Japan
- US commitment to the stability of the Korean Peninsula
- US efforts to build an enduring relationship with China
- US support for the political and economic vitality of ASEAN and self-defence efforts of its members
- The ANZUS alliance with Australia and New Zealand

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44 The Australian, 28 April 1983, p.5.
46 The Age, 10 June 1982, p.7.
47 Far Eastern Economic Review, 1 August 1985, p.11.
The key component of Washington's determination to remain a Pacific power and the centre-piece for US force deployments in Southeast Asia are the base facilities at Clark Air Base and Subic Bay in the Philippines. The strategic significance of the base facilities has been further enhanced by the Soviet Pacific Fleet's (SOVPACFLT) access to Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang air base. With these base facilities the SOVPACFLT has now the capability to interdict vital SLOC's in the region, monitor ASW missions against US Seventh Fleet operations, and carry out surveillance activities on US bases in the Philippines and as far as Natuna Islands between East and West Malaysia. The Soviet South China Sea Squadron (SSS) was specially formed for potential interdiction contingencies in the region. The potential access to base facilities by the Soviets in the newly built Indian Naval Base at Port Blair in the Andaman Islands would certainly further enhance SOVPACFLT capabilities in the Southeast Asian region; but there are no indications that India intends to provide such access.

In this context Clark and Subic bases provide the best counterweight to Soviet force deployment in the region. According to Admiral L.J. Long, the former Commander in Chief of Pacific, the Clark and Subic bases are vital to US strategic interest in the region as they provide:

- continuous naval presence in the Western Pacific with a capacity to extend the presence into the Indian Ocean.
- air and naval capability to meet contingencies outside the Western Pacific, such as in the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, East African waters and the Middle East.


- the ability to maintain a high state of readiness of US operational forces in the Pacific.

- the ability to deploy and support US forces rapidly anywhere in the Western Pacific

- comprehensive support for all operating forces in the area including communications, logistics maintenance, training, and personnel requirements.

- major war reserve material storage for a variety of contingencies. 52

For these reasons the Reagan administration completed a new agreement in June 1983 for the continued American use of the installations in the Philippines, for another five years. In return the US would provide US$900 million in grants and loans for the next five years.

The importance of these bases was further stressed by Reagan Administration officials who started maintaining communication channels with opposition parties in the Philippines especially after the assassination of former Senator Benigno Aquino. Such concern was understandable, given that contingency plans for alternative sites when the lease expires in 1991 do not seem to be promising. 53 The alternative sites are the islands of Tinian, Saipan and Guam. Moreover the US would have to spend US$5 billion for upgrading the facilities which are also poor substitutes, as they are located more than 1500 miles further East from the SLOC’s in Southeast Asia. The importance of these bases for a US credible strategic role in the region was clearly emphasised by the present CINCPAC Admiral S.R. Foley,

"If these bases were not available to us, even if we had substitutes elsewhere our ability to support our strategy in the Southwestern Pacific and Southeast Asia and to preclude the Soviets from operating their huge installations at Cam Ranh Bay would be sorely limited. Consequently if political events in the Philippines obstruct our use of those bases our strategy, our war fighting posture, our combat sustainability ...will be

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52 Statement by Admiral LJ Long USN CINCPAC, before the House of Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs on the Philippines, 16 June 1983

The US Seventh Fleet with its six battle groups has been considerably strengthened by the Reagan administration. The Fleet has been enhanced with an additional nuclear powered carrier, the Carl Vinson; Perry class frigates; nuclear capable Spruance class destroyers; and a battleship, the New Jersey. Four Ohio class ballistic missile equipped submarines have been added to the Pacific based deterrent forces. The US airpower in the Pacific has also been increased from 250 to 300 combat aircraft. Nearly 70 percent of these aircraft consist of advanced fighters, compared to only 20 percent under the Carter administration. In June 1984, the Administration introduced the nuclear and conventional warhead Tomahawk Sea Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCM) in the Pacific Fleet. According to Defence Secretary Weinberger, the introduction of the Tomahawk SLCM "is the cornerstone of our efforts to increase and diversify the striking power of the fleet".

With regard to Indochina, the Reagan administration has unequivocally stated that normalisation of relations with Hanoi will only occur when all Vietnamese troops withdraw from Kampuchea; Vietnam displays a willingness to live in peace with its neighbours which in "superpower parlance requires a significant reduction of Soviet influence in Vietnam"; and the third condition, considered the highest priority by the Reagan administration, is the full accounting for some 2,500 US service men missing in action (MIA) during the Vietnam war. On the situation in Kampuchea, Secretary of State George Shultz stated at the

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56 Ibid.
57 William M Arkin and David Campbell "Forward Offensive Strategy: Raising the Stake in the Pacific" in World Policy Journal Vol.2 No.3, Summer, 1985, p.88
ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Bangkok in 1983, (a position reiterated at ASEAN Foreign Ministers' meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 1985), that Washington would support ASEAN's stand on the issue. Thus US Indochina policy at present is reflected by the administration's sustained acquiescence to the ASEAN strategy and support at the United Nations each year to seat the anti-Vietnamese coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. For the first time Congress has approved US$5 million in "humanitarian" aid to the non-communist Cambodian rebels; but it rejected the Solarz proposal to provide US$5 million to purchase arms.  

The Reagan Administration has toned down dramatically the previous administration's rhetoric of playing the "China Card" and promoting a "strategic partnership" between the US and China. The administration approach to China seems more realistic, given the limitations imposed by its relations with Taiwan. Nevertheless the administration still perceives that its global effort to contain the Soviet Union, China would play an important role, especially in keeping the 39 Soviet army divisions and supporting air and naval units tied down in the Far East. The Reagan administration also decided to sell lethal and non-lethal military equipment to China. To allay ASEAN concern on this matter, Washington has offered assurances that it would undertake appropriate consultations with Congress and its allies and friends before selling arms to China. In this context the administration has

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59 Principal opposition to the idea of US military assistance to the coalition comes from the CIA which considers Kampuchea virtually lost. See Nayan Chanda, "Hanoi's MIA Bait" in Far Eastern Economic Report 23 February 1984.


61 It is noteworthy that immediately after Reagan's visit to China in April 1984, Beijing was welcoming Soviet First Deputy Premier Ivan Arkhipov, the highest ranking Soviet official to visit China since the 1960's. This visit clearly illustrates the way China tries to play off Moscow and Washington.

62 Mukerjee, Dilip, Kampuchea: ASEAN Response to Great Power Rivalry, PSIS, Occasional Paper, No.3, Switzerland, p.25

also urged Japan to share the defence burden in the region, especially in protecting vital SLOC's. The Japanese Government has pledged to defend 1000 nautical miles of the sea lanes from Tokyo Bay.

Although the Reagan administration has taken a strong stance on strategic issues in the region compared to the two previous administrations, the change is more in the degree of emphasis than substance. During a visit by the Thai Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila to the USA in May 1981, former Secretary of State Mr Alexander Haig had stated that,

"Thai security is US security" 64

But the administration does not have any contingency plan on how the US would respond in the event of an attack. Echoing past administration's policies, Michael Armacost, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, stated,

"In the event of an attack on countries in the [Manila Pact] treaty area we are obliged to act in accord with our constitutional procedure." 65

Nevertheless the administration's perception of its strategic role for Southeast Asia could be identified with the Guam Doctrine of July 1969. The Republican Doctrine has been further developed by the Administration in the direction of a regional defence partnership. 66 This has been done by backing regional allies with more arms and military hardware. However this does not mean that the Reagan Administration is planning to revitalise the now defunct SEATO or to build up an Eastern 'NATO' with its allies in the region. Under this new strategy the US will not only provide a strong, demonstrated

64 Far Eastern Economic Review, 8 May 1981
65 Far Eastern Economic Review, 3 April 1981
regional capability but also encourage regional allies to share more of the collective security burden by providing security assistance and cooperation.
CHAPTER TWO

THE PHILIPPINES

The Special Relationship

The focus of Philippine foreign policy since its independence from the US in June 1946 has been its alignment with the policies of its former colonial master. The US has regarded the Philippines as its outpost in the Pacific. Filipino leaders link their country's prosperity with its relations with the US. During the tenure of the first President, Manuel Roxas, the Philippines signed the Military Base Agreement in 1947 which granted the US the right to retain the use of the bases in the Philippines until the year 2046. In justifying the agreement Roxas stressed that the US needed the bases to maintain a strong strategic posture in the Pacific. Moreover the stability of the Philippines was threatened by the Huk rebellion, and Roxas perceived that through this agreement the US would provide not only military but also development assistance to the war-torn economy.

The Quirino Administration, which came to power following the death of Roxas in 1948, further strengthened Philippine-US relations. Quirino advocated the formation of a Pacific Pact among Asian countries on the same lines as NATO. However this was not received warmly by other Asian nations. The administration then saw the possibilities of neutralism as a foreign policy posture but abandoned it at the outbreak of the

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Korean War. The Philippines also committed troops to the war alongside other US allies. In 1951 President Quirino signed the Mutual Defence Treaty with the US. (See Appendix 1). Even though the treaty does not have "the automatic response" clause as does NATO, Filipino leaders justified it on the basis that the US would not abandon Manila.

The 1950's saw Philippines-US relations moving closer than ever before. President Magsaysay who has been described as "America's fair-haired boy par excellence" was extremely anti-communist. His administration allowed Clark air base to be used as a staging post for US bomber missions as a possible way to relieve the pressure on the French in Dien Bien Phu. The Manila Pact which formed SEATO, was signed during his tenure of Presidency. He defended his pro-American policies, emphasising that Philippine prosperity was based on close cooperation with the US. In defending US rights over the bases he stressed that it was a contribution of the Philippines to the defence of the free world.

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²In rejecting neutralism and an independent foreign policy the then Foreign Minister, Carlos Romulo, argued that cooperation with the US was a bulwark against any threat to the security and sovereignty of the Philippines. He further stated,

"We as pygmies cannot step aside while giants fight ... The US giant does not menace us, the Soviet Union and China do, and the American giant is the only protection we have from communist giants... We are on the communist time table, we want our place to be with dignity and courage among the legions of the free. The instinct to be free cannot be quenched by the anxiety to be safe."


³cited in Alejandro M Fernandez, op.cit. p.245.

⁴In an article in the Foreign Affairs Quarterly President Magsaysay stressed that "the close relations with the US is not a mere artificial creation of government policy makers and it is not dictated exclusively by the accidents of common creation. It is a product of experience in serving national interest... and still more than that it is in the will and the hearts of the people." See Ramon Magsaysay, "Roots of Philippine Policy" in Foreign Affairs Vol 35, No 1. October 1956, p.29.

⁵Ibid., p.32.
There was a slight shift in the foreign policies of the last two administrations prior to the ascendancy of the Marcos Administration. The administrations of both President Garcia (1957-1961) and Macapagal (1961-1965) criticised the USA for exploiting the Philippines, and emphasised closer relations with their Asian neighbours. These statements were mere rhetoric, as they did not change the basic foreign policy outlook of alignment with the US. Nevertheless, during the Garcia Administration the Bohlen Serrano Agreement was signed which reduced the lease of the bases from 99 years to 25 years. At US request President Macapagal tried to commit Filipino combat troops to South Vietnam, but was opposed by a Congressional group led by the then Philippine Senate President, Ferdinand Marcos.

President Marcos - The First Phase [1966 - 1975]

Although Marcos objected to the sending of Filipino troops to Vietnam during the Macapagal Administration, he sent a Philippine Civic Action Group (PHILCAG) team comprising medical personnel to Vietnam.

6During Garcia's Administration the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) was formed with Malaya, Thailand and Philippines as members of the regional organisation, and during the Macapagal Administration Maphilindo (acronym for Malaya, Philippines and Indonesia) was formed. However both regional organisations failed due to mutual suspicions and conflict among their members.

7The other amendments in this agreement were,

- The relinquishment by the US of approximately 180,000 hectares of base land and the transfer of the Olongapo community to the Philippines.

- Prior consultations with the Philippines government on the military operational use of the bases for purposes other than mutual defence of both countries.

- Prior consultation with the Philippine government before the US could put up missile launching sites in the Philippines.

- The creation of a Mutual Defence Board and the placement of a Filipino liaison officer in American bases in the Philippines.

See Fernandez, op. cit., p.248.
During his first trip to Washington, in September 1966, Marcos emphasised that it was important for the US to maintain a strategic presence in the region. The 1968 decision to halt the bombing of North Vietnam came as a surprise to Manila. Sensing the frustration of the Americans towards the war, Marcos pulled out the PHILCAG team from Vietnam and enunciated the New Developmental Diplomacy.

The new diplomacy was intended as a response to the change in US policies toward the region, and Manila wanted to be prepared for any eventualities. Former Foreign Minister Carlos Romulo stated clearly that the Philippines did not want to be a pawn or outpost of any foreign power and added that the military bases symbolised 'lingering enslavement'. However when Nixon visited Manila in July 1969, Marcos strongly advocated the continued presence of the US in the region for the well-being of the non-communist states. Nevertheless the government launched the new diplomacy, especially after the Guam Doctrine, by announcing a Philippine desire to establish diplomatic relations with all countries irrespective of ideology. Even after the imposition of martial law the Marcos administration continued the policy of "mutual accommodation" with all countries irrespective of ideology.

The Passing of the Special Relationship

In the aftermath of the fall of the Indochina states to communist forces, Philippine-US relations shifted to a new dimension. Manila realised that the strategic value of the US bases in the Philippines...
had increased, due to US withdrawal from the rest of Southeast Asia. However President Marcos noted the apparent lack of US interest towards the region and the refusal of Congress to extend aid to the Indochina states (during the last years of the war), and stated that these actions...suggest strongly that in its new assessment of Indochina and, by extension, Southeast Asia which includes the Philippines is no longer an area of vital interest to the US."

He further stressed that although the Philippines was tied with security arrangements and economic assistance to the US it could not afford to rely on the US, especially after US Congressional decisions seemed not to favour this region. As such all treaties with the US had to be revised.¹²

In these new circumstances on 25 May 1975 President Marcos outlined the new guidelines of Philippine foreign policy: ASEAN and regional cooperation were given top priority, followed by the promotion of ties with socialist countries, identification with Third World countries, support for Middle East countries and finally to "find a new basis compatible with the emerging realities in Asia for a continuing healthy friendship with the US."¹³ The priority given last in these new foreign policy guidelines reflects the new realities in Philippine-US relations.

The Philippines moved to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in June 1976. In Beijing President Marcos, in line with the new foreign policy, criticised the major powers, especially the USA and the Soviet Union, for attempting to create spheres of influence in Asia. The joint communique between Manila and Beijing stressed that there would not be interference in each other's internal affairs, but Beijing maintained that party-to-party relations were distinct from government-to-government relations. In this case

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¹² Ibid., p.260.
¹³ For a complete text on the new foreign policy see Jose D Ingles Philippines Foreign Policy, Lyceum Press, Manila, 1982, p.37.
Beijing provides moral support to the New People's Army (NPA) in the Philippines. In the following year Manila established diplomatic relations with Moscow. In neither case did the US bases pose a problem in establishing diplomatic relations with the two communist giants. In fact Chinese officials understood Manila's situation and reportedly stated that there were "practical reasons for maintaining these bases." However, when Manila established diplomatic relations with Hanoi both governments agreed,

"...not to allow any foreign country to use one's territory as a base for direct or indirect aggression and intention against the other country or other countries in the region."

With the establishment of diplomatic relations and the acceptance of the bases by Hanoi, Manila had now more room to manoeuvre in negotiating with Washington over the bases.

As the US detachment from the region became more explicit, the Marcos Administration began to question the raison d'être of the Mutual Defence Treaty (MDT - See Appendix 1) and the various pledges made by US Presidents and Secretaries of State. Manila wondered whether these pledges by US chief executive would be binding, considering the fact that the ultimate decisions were made by the US Congress. In a speech to the Philippine Assembly, Marcos stated that,

"It is difficult, if not impossible to stake the nation's survival on whimsical interpretations of the mutual defence agreements which are apparently dependent not on legal commitments but on the mood of the nation in any given historical period."

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The President stressed that the new alignment in the region was not conducive to housing American bases in the Philippines. He wanted the bases to be known as Filipino Bases. Moreover the US military presence would not help Marcos combat insurgency in the country, because of the unpredictability of the US Congress. Furthermore the presence of the bases would be questionable in terms of improving relations with communist countries, especially with China and the Soviet Union. The presence of the bases might also invite an attack from outside.\(^1\)

Moreover Manila wanted the US to pay rent for the bases as it did to Turkey and Spain.\(^1\) In this context the President pressed for a review of the bases agreement and the MDT. He declared that,

"It is clear that the balance of power that we depend upon for the stability and peace of Asia has been disturbed. Therefore we are compelled to discard our old assumption since we are facing conditions different from those which existed when we signed the security treaty with the US.\(^2\)

However Manila emphasised that it did not demand or want US withdrawal from the region as it would upset the major power equilibrium there. Marcos added that the US strategic presence was needed to offset the growing naval power of the Soviets and the Chinese, as well as the expanded defence capabilities of the Japanese.\(^2\) He gave this assurance to the US Ambassador in the Philippines, William Sullivan, and also to Assistant Secretary of State Philip Habib when he visited Manila in July 1975. The President added that Manila wanted to put an end to the practice of extraterritoriality in the Philippines in keeping with developments in the region. However he stressed that,

\(^1\) This is the main argument put forward by the Anti-Base Movement in the Philippines. They argue that the bases would invite a nuclear attack on the Philippines in the event of a nuclear war. See Walden Bello, "Instruments for Nuclear War", in Southeast Asian Chronicle, Issue No 89, April 1983.


\(^2\) Ibid., p.284.
"...we are willing to enter into new arrangements that would help the US maintain an effective presence over the air and sea lanes of the Western Pacific."  

When President Ford visited Manila in December 1975, the two leaders reiterated the validity of the Philippine-US Mutual Security Treaty and the significance of the American bases for "maintaining an effective US presence in the Western Pacific." The US agreed that "negotiations on the subject of US use of Philippine military bases should be conducted in the clear recognition of Philippine security." The negotiations began in April 1976 but in December they broke down. The then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger offered US$1 billion over a five year period as the Ford Administration's final offer. The offer was rejected by Marcos, who warned that he would dismantle the bases and order the US troops to leave. However in September 1977 the talks resumed, not only on the bases but also on the Mutual Assistance Pact and the Mutual Security Treaty.

During the Carter Administration relations between Manila and Washington plummeted again. This time it was due to the importance given to human rights in the Carter Administration's foreign policy. The State Department listed the Philippines as among six countries violating human rights. The Marcos regime criticised the Carter Administration for interfering in the internal affairs of the country, but in response to the criticisms Marcos appointed a committee.

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22Ibid., p.286.
25In May 1976, President Marcos undertook a trip to Moscow, when the negotiation began. Manila could have used the trip as a leverage in negotiations with the US. Moreover the importance of the bases had increased substantially due to the closure of US bases in Thailand.
26This was mere rhetoric and was intended mainly for Third World countries with whom the Philippines wants to identify. It was also intended for the Libyans with whom Manila was negotiating to solve the Muslim rebellion carried out by the MNLF which was supported by the Libyans.
27Amnesty International released a report about human rights violations in the Philippines and alleged that military abuses such as extrajudicial killings ("Salvagings"), kidnappings ("disappearances") and torture ("tactical interrogation") were common. Marcos defended the regime's human rights record and disputed the Amnesty report.
to "determine whether the military pact with the US effectively provided protection for the nation or... increased the danger to our country because of the provocation to others." Marcos also noted Washington's decision to withdraw US troops from South Korea which he perceived conformed to new realities as he said,

"we foresee other adjustments being made in other parts of the world."

He added,

"Whatever direction American policy takes in the area of regional security and defence, we are anxious that it does not find us to be ill prepared to assume our own burdens."

Carlos Romulo also criticised the US for abrogating its defence treaty with Taiwan following the establishment of diplomatic relations with China on 1 January 1979. He added that this action had eroded the credibility of US commitments and that the Philippines should rely on itself for its security needs. These statements clearly indicated that the Filipino elite, no matter what criticisms they made of the USA, would still want it to maintain its presence and play a role in regional security, until such time as the Philippines could rely on its own defence capability.

The base negotiations were concluded in January 1979 with six major amendments. The most important amendment was the reaffirmation of Philippine sovereignty over the bases, symbolised by the appointment of a Filipino base commander and the flying of a Filipino flag in the bases. It was also agreed that it would also be reviewed every five years. The Carter Administration also promised in a letter to Marcos

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29 FBIS- Asia Pacific, 13 June 1979, p.Pl.
30 FBIS- Asia Pacific, 2 January 1979, p.Pl.
31 The other amendments are the reduction of areas for the US within the bases and the assurance of unhampered US military operations in the bases. For the full text of the agreement see Pacifico Castro(ed.), Philippine Diplomacy Chronology and Documents 1972 - 1981, Foreign Service Institute, Manila, 1981, p.368.
that it would use "its best efforts" to obtain Congressional approval for a compensation package of US$500 million over a period of five years, comprising US$50 million for military assistance, US$250 million for foreign military sales and US$200 million for security supporting assistance. It was interesting that Marcos accepted the US$500 million where he had previously rejected the Ford Administration's offer of US$1 billion. It could be argued that Marcos needed American support for his regime, and the bases represented "tangible evidence of US support which in the Philippines was still a legitimising force." Moreover as the Marcos regime's human rights record was not impressive to the Carter Administration, the bases could be used as a leverage to tone down criticism of the regime.

The Carter Administration reaffirmed US commitments under the Mutual Defence Treaty of 1951. The treaty has been a thorny issue between the US and the Philippines. The Philippine government has sought an automatic response from the US in the event of an attack on the islands. Previous US administrations had refused to commit themselves on this matter. However the Carter Administration pledged that the US would respond in the event of an attack. The treaty stated that,

"Each party recognises that an armed attack in the Pacific Area on either of the parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional process."

Even though the US had reaffirmed its commitments there were certain ambiguities as to how it would respond. According to Alejandro the US could interpret the clause as an obligation only "if the American bases were directly attacked, i.e. there is no obligation on the part of the

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32 For the full text of the letter see Pacifico Castro, Ibid., p.363.
US to repel an attack if such attack does not endanger the US bases".  

However the signing of the agreement overshadowed the ambiguities involved. The agreement enhanced the regime's prestige. Moreover it assured Third World leaders of Philippine sovereignty over the bases and earned the Marcos Administration observer status at the Non-Aligned Meeting in Havana. At the same time the bases agreement "can reassure the Chinese, ASEAN and anyone else who needs a strong and continuing US presence that nothing has changed."  

**Philippine Perceptions of the Reagan Administration**  

President Marcos welcomed the election of Reagan to the White House. The Marcos regime did not make any secret of its preference during the Presidential election. Moreover the Reagan Administration's determined intention to strengthen US strategic posture vis-a-vis the Soviet Union would definitely substantiate Marcos' demand for more economic and military aid. Furthermore the Reagan Administration's emphasis that the human rights policy would be implemented through  

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34 Fernandez, "The Philippines and the United States Today" op. cit., pp.284-285. It is noteworthy that the US declared its neutrality over the Sabah issue in 1963 when the Philippines officially put forward the claim.  

35 Pringle, op.cit.,p.65.
"quiet diplomacy", was welcomed by the Marcos regime.36

Sensing the improvement in relations with the USA President Marcos undertook a trip to Washington in September 1982, his first trip for 17 years. During his visit he stressed that the US should maintain a strong strategic presence in the region, stated that it would be dangerous to have the presence of one major power unmatched by the presence of another power, and further emphasised that the US was the only power which could match any other power in the region. In this context he noted that even though ASEAN envisaged a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia, "realistically we cannot but regard this as a long range objective that must be pursued step by step as its feasibility becomes more attainable."37 Marcos also emphasised that the MDT should be modified to extend a quick US response if Philippine security was threatened. He also accepted the fact that the US would not commit troops to fight another war in Southeast Asia, but added that, "we would probably have to depend on the US for a war in the sea and in the air as well as [for] a nuclear umbrella."38 The Philippines and the US also signed a new bases agreement in May 1983 covering the period 1984-1989. The amount of aid was increased from US$500 million to US$900 million. However the Marcos regime was unable to obtain an outright rent for the bases, and the compensation agreed upon by the Reagan Administration will come under

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36 The Reagan Administration also backed Philippine loans in the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, a strategy utilised by the Carter Administration to press for human rights reform. The close relationship between the Reagan Administration and the Marcos regime was made obvious when Vice-President Bush who represented the administration at the inaugural of Mr Marcos stated that "We love your adherence to democratic principles and to democratic processes." In November 1981 the Reagan Administration signed an Extradition Treaty with Manila, an agreement which would enable Marcos with the help of the State Department to extradite his political opponents on the pretext that they had committed common crimes. However the treaty was not ratified by the US Senate. See Jovita Salonga, "US-Philippine Relations in the Context of the Aquino Assassination", in Asian Profile, Vol 12, No 1, February 1984, pp.1-8.


Congressional scrutiny.\(^{39}\) In defending the agreement Marcos stated that,

"...until we ourselves in Asia can defend that neutrality that we speak of, that freedom and that peace, it would be necessary to depend on the time honoured principle of maintaining a balance of power in the region."\(^{40}\)

In other words Manila maintained that the US strategic presence through its bases was a contribution to the regional balance of power.

The Marcos Administration also criticised Washington's desire for Japan to increase its defence spending and play a more prominent role in regional defence. Marcos advised the Reagan Administration that US arms sales to Japan should be monitored, so as to ensure that the weapons were used only for self-defence purposes. Even though the 1000 nautical mile defence perimeter that the US wanted Japan to defend stopped short of the Philippines, Manila had stated clearly that it was not happy with the US strategy.\(^{41}\) In this context Manila also criticised Washington's decision to sell lethal weapons to Beijing. Marcos expressed Manila's apprehension during his trip to Washington stating that in the long run China would be a threat to the rest of Southeast Asia.\(^{42}\)

The assassination of former Senator Benigno Aquino in August 1983

\(^{39}\)Under this new agreement the US was required to consult with the Philippine government before installing long range missiles or using the bases for military operations other than those carried on with the Philippine armed forces. See Asiaweek, 10 June 1983, p.7.

\(^{40}\)Ibid., p.7.

\(^{41}\)Far Eastern Economic Review, 22 October 1982, p.25. During the Second World War the Philippines lost more than a million people. One could understand Manila's apprehension.

\(^{42}\)Mukerjee, op. cit., p.2.
shifted Philippine-US relations to a new dimension. The Reagan Administration decided to reevaluate its relations with the Marcos regime and discreetly began to negotiate with opposition groups. President Reagan also postponed his scheduled trip to Manila in October 1983 so as not to be identified closely with the regime in the wake of the assassination. The deepening economic crisis in the Philippines prompted the US Congress to modify the Philippines aid package by decreasing military aid from US$60 million to US$25 million and increasing economic aid from US$95 million to US$155 million. This decision was criticised by Manila, and Defence Minister Juan Ponce Enrile warned that any changes in the aid package would, "immediately require changes in the military defence structure, not only in the Philippines but perhaps in the entire Pacific", hinting that the Marcos Administration might review the Bases Agreement. This reaction was due to the regime's perception that the modification in aid was to bring pressure to liberalise the authoritarian rule. However Congress finally approved US$40 million in military aid and US$140 million in economic assistance.

The call for "abrogation and renegotiation" of the Bases Agreement was made by the Cabinet members of Kelusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL), Marcos's New Society Movement at the Batasang Pembansa (National Assembly) when the US Congress reduced the military allocation and

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43 Benigno Aquino (a former Senator) would, it was widely believed, have defeated Marcos in the 1973 Presidential election which Marcos avoided by declaring martial law. Under martial law Aquino was arrested and sentenced to death for plotting with the communists to overthrow the government. However the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on humanitarian grounds. He was freed to undergo medical treatment in the US in May 1980. The Reagan Administration was particularly annoyed by Aquino's assassination because he was regarded as a moderate and advocated non-violence to topple Marcos. Moreover he wanted to continue ties with the US. See The Age, 29 August 1983, p.7.

44 According to State Department officials should Marcos have stayed in power without making any effort to carry out reforms in the country, moderate opposition leaders could be given US support to prevent any radical group from taking over. See The Australian, 25 August 1983, p.5.

45 The Age, 2 March 1984, p.7.

46 Ibid., p.7.

increased the economic allocation for the fiscal year 1985/86. The US Congress also warned the Marcos regime that future aid would depend on 'progress' in the regime's human and civil rights records. Marcos accused Washington of interfering in the internal affairs of the Philippines and reneging on the original aid package. He further added that,

"If for any reasons, any member of the American Congress feels there should be an alteration in the compensation package, it will be necessary to review all over again the whole Mutual Defence Agreement and the nature of the responsibilities of the two nations for security." However he stopped short of advocating an outright abrogation of all treaties and defence arrangements with the US.

To attain some leverage against US pressure for reforms Manila stepped up its relations with the Soviet Union. During her visit to Moscow in March 1985, Mrs Marcos held discussions with Gorbachev and invited him to visit the Philippines. She went to Moscow again in October 1985 when the Reagan Administration was pressuring Marcos to

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48 The US Congress approved US$75 million for military and US$95 million for economic assistance. The original allocation was US$100 million for military assistance and US$95 million for economic assistance. See Ibid., p.16.

carry out constitutional reforms and hold elections. Manila stressed that the trip was a religious mission to Moscow; however it was apparent that it was a signal to Washington not to pressure Manila. Soviet President Andrei Gromyko pledged that the Soviet Union would not interfere, nor would it support any insurgency movements in the country. Moscow also pledged economic aid to Manila if requested. However within the regime only a few believed that playing the "Soviet card" against the US would work, as Marcos was a staunch anti-communist. Moreover the military was reluctant to go along with the government's policy of playing the Soviets against the Americans.

No matter what actions President Marcos and his administration undertook to gain leverage against the US presence, they were not in a position to abrogate the security treaty with the US. The Marcos regime needed economic and security aid to arrest the rapidly declining

50 According to a State Department report the administration wanted the Marcos regime to carry out the following reforms:

- A full accounting of Aquino's murder and a fair trial of General Ver and the other soldiers.

- Fair elections and reform of the electoral commission, and legalisation of the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL).

- Economic reform, specifically the end of agricultural monopolies abused by friends of Marcos.

- Reform of the military command to end widespread abuses of citizen's rights.


51 Mrs Marcos apparently presented an image of the Lady of Fatima to the Cathedral of St Louis in Moscow. However the entourage met Soviet officials and exchanged notes on parliamentary systems of government and negotiated for expanded cultural exchange programmes. See Bulletin Today(Philippines), 9 August 1985.


54 Canberra Times, 26 August 1985,p.2.
economy and also the increased insurgency problem, which Marcos himself admitted the Philippines might not be able to contain without US support. Even the opposition parties accepted the fact that the US was needed to prop up the country. Salvador Laurel, President of the United National Democratic Organisation (UNIDO) refused to sign a petition calling for the withdrawal of the bases. He contended that the issue should be dealt with in a national plebiscite. However, the other opposition leaders rejected this notion, stating that a referendum on the bases would be a vote on America and there is still a lot of pro-American feelings in the country. As such, the Philippines wanted the US to maintain a strong strategic presence, not only on the basis of maintaining the balance of power in the region but also for economic and internal security reasons.

**EPILOGUE**

On 26th February 1986, 20 years of Marcos’ rule in the Philippines climaxed when Marcos and his family fled to Guam on an US Air Force jet. Five months before his departure the Reagan administration, sensing the continuing unrest and increased activities of the NPA in the Philippines, sent Senator Paul Laxalt to Manila with a personal letter from Reagan urging Marcos to carry out much needed reforms. Washington also wanted General Ver, the Army Chief of Staff, to be replaced for his alleged involvement in the Aquino assassination in August, 1983. However, Marcos retained Ver when the court cleared him of any complicity in the assassination. This prompted Corazon Aquino to declare her candidacy for the Presidential elections called by Marcos after intense US pressure, 16 months before his term expired.

There were widespread fraud and intimidation against the supporters of Aquino and her running mate Salvador Laurel. This

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55 The country has a total of more than US$20 billion in foreign debts with no sign of economic recovery in the near future. For a brief picture of the economy see Far Eastern Economic Asia 1986 Yearbook. The NPA is reportedly active in 63 of the 73 provinces in the Philippines, and the MNLF is still active in the Southern islands.

56 International Herald Tribune, 1 November 1985.

prompted Senator Richard Lugar, the Chief of the US delegation sent by Reagan to observe the elections to comment that Marcos was creating a strategy to shape the election results.

The initial reaction of the Reagan administration to the elections created an uproar in the Philippines. Reagan stated there would have been fraud on both sides. However, the administration later admitted that the widespread fraud and violence was caused by Marcos supporters. He despatched Philip Habib to work out a compromise between Marcos and Aquino. Aquino refused to compromise on any basis which would enable Marcos to retain his Presidency. Shortly after Habib left Defence Minister Enrile and Acting Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Fidel Ramos rebelled and called for Marcos to step down. With the influential Church, a substantial part of the army and the majority of people behind Aquino, and with no support from the US to retain his Presidency, Marcos fled the country which he had ruled with iron authority for 20 years.
THAILAND

THE FORGING OF AN ALLIANCE

Thailand is the only country in Southeast Asia which has escaped European colonisation. This can be attributed to its foreign policy of "bending with the wind". Its foreign policy tactic has been to seek basic objectives of territorial integrity and national sovereignty, thereby minimizing external interference with the domestic system.¹ This was obvious when Thailand remained detached from both the British and the French, and played them off against each other prior to the Second World War. Then during the Second World War it aligned itself with the Japanese, and even declared war on the allies.² However after the war Thailand, illustrative of its pragmatic foreign policy skills, managed to gain US support against British and French demands for reparations.³

After the war Thailand's patron-client style foreign policy⁴ led it to an alignment with the US, which had then become the most powerful

²This was done as a last resort when Thailand realised that it would not be aided by any of the allies if Japan were to attack. When the Japanese landed in Southern Indochina, Thailand proclaimed its neutrality and sought assurances from the Japanese and the allies that its neutrality would be respected. When the Japanese were advancing towards Thailand, Bangkok solicited the support of Britain and the US and succeeded in obtaining a joint British-American declaration (the Eden-Hull Declaration) warning Japan against any actions which threatened Thailand's sovereignty. However the US eventually withdrew from this declaration, stating it they would only act if the Japanese were to advance beyond Thailand. The British were too weak to take any independent action. See George Modelski, SEATO: Six Studies, Australian National University, Australia, 1962, pp.89-90.
nation. Moreover parallel features between Thai and US foreign policies, of containing both communism and China after the communist revolution in 1949, aided Thai-US alignment. This foreign policy outlook forged a strong Thai-American alliance in the 1950's which lasted till the fall of Saigon in 1975. Prior to this alliance a new Thai Prime Minister, Phibun Songkaram, had come to power following the ouster of the previous Pridi Administration, who lacked international legitimacy due to his wartime record of collaborating with the Japanese. Phibun perceived that alignment with the US could not only legitimise his government internally but would also bring international recognition.

One of the first steps taken by the Thai government to legitimise its position as an ally of the US was to recognise the Bao Dai regime in Vietnam in 1950 and close down the Viet Minh office in Bangkok. Bangkok also supported the US-sponsored resolution on the Korean crisis in the United Nations, and even committed troops to fight in Korea. It also signed a mutual defence and technical assistance programme with the USA in October 1950. All these actions firmly placed Thailand on the side of the USA in the Cold War politics of the 1950's.

As part of its containment policy the USA formed SEATO in 1954 and Thailand immediately joined the organisation in order to avoid "being

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6 The coup group which ousted Pridi Phanomyong was composed of two factions, one headed by General Phao Sriyanon, the head of the Thai police, and the other led by General Sarit, head of the Royal Thai Army. By aligning with the US Phibun saw that Thailand would get US military and economic aid which was not forthcoming for the previous administration. This notion was welcomed by both contending groups. As such when the "coup group" consolidated its power they retained Pridi as they saw him as a source of continued US support. See Charles Morrison and Astri Suhrke, Strategies for Survival, The Foreign Policy Dilemma of Smaller Asian States, University of Queensland Press, 1978, p.112.

7 Ibid., p.112.

8 This mutual defence and technical assistance agreement is not a military alliance but one which provides authorisation for the US to give, and Thailand to receive, military assistance under public Law 329 of the US 81st Congress. See Hans Indorf, Thai American Relations in Contemporary Affairs, Executive Publications, Singapore, 1982.
left once more at the mercy of an overpowering enemy, defenceless and without allies" (as it had been during the Second World War). US enthusiasm and faith in Thailand were evidenced by the decision to make Bangkok the Headquarters of SEATO. However Thailand was not happy about certain clauses in the constitution of the organisation. Unlike NATO, SEATO did not contain the clause whereby if one member country is attacked it would be deemed as an attack on all member countries. There was also no permanent SEATO force; only periodic exercises were carried out in the treaty area.

Thailand's doubts over SEATO were confirmed when the alliance refused to intervene in the Laotian crisis. The Manila Treaty of September 1954 also provided for SEATO's security umbrella to extend to Cambodia, South Vietnam and Laos, if any of these countries were to seek assistance. However even when the Laotian Ambassador to Thailand approached SEATO, the organisation refused to extend any assistance. This prompted Thailand to question the raison d'etre of its membership in SEATO. Thai leaders were also sceptical about the

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9 Modelski, op. cit., p. 90.

10 Thailand has always considered Laos a buffer zone against Vietnam and China. For security reasons Thailand did not want Laos to fall under the Chinese or the North Vietnamese spheres of influence. During the Laotian civil war of 1960-62 Thailand was not in favour of a coalition government which included the Pathet Lao. The Sarit government was also distrustful of the neutralist forces headed by Souvanaphouma and Captain Kong Le. It was in favour of the rightist government headed by Prince Boon Oum and the forces of General Phoumi Nosavan, who incidently was a nephew of Sarit.

11 During this period of disenchantment in Thailand over SEATO, there were moves within the country to improve relations with the Soviet Union. There was also speculation over Thailand withdrawing from the organisation and embracing a neutral foreign policy posture. President Kennedy sensing Thailand's apprehension despatched Vice-President Johnson to Bangkok to restore Thailand's confidence in US commitments. This resulted in the Sarit-Johnson communique which stated that the US had the

"determination to honour its treaty commitments to support Thailand, its ally and historic friend in defence against subversion and commistn aggression."

Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement, which had led to the establishment of a neutralist coalition government in Laos. This agreement further strained Thai-US relations, and prompted Thailand to question its relations with the USA. Thailand felt that it could not rely on SEATO to safeguard its security interests, so it pressed the USA for a separate security agreement. This was secured by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman during a visit to Washington in March 1962, when the Rusk-Thanat joint statement was released. This stressed that Thailand was vital to US security interests and that US obligations did not require the prior approval of other SEATO treaty members. The joint statement was also a quid pro quo for Thai assurances not to obstruct the Laos agreement.

The deteriorating situation in Vietnam further reinforced Thai-US relations. After the Gulf of Tonkin resolution in August 1964 Thailand became the main staging area for US operations in Vietnam. At the height of the war the US built several bases in Thailand for its operations in Vietnam and stationed more than 50,000 troops there. Thailand welcomed US military involvement in Vietnam, as it reflected US commitment to the region, and also sent its own troops to fight in Vietnam. During this period Thailand in effect allowed the US to dictate its foreign policy. According to Sarasin Viraphol, this was found to be an expedient measure as "the government did not need to initiate anything of its own which might result in ambiguity and uncertainty". Moreover association with a superpower such as the USA

12Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman in reflecting Thai apprehension towards the US stated,

"That country (the US) which claims to be our great friend likes its foes better than its friends."


13Thanat Khoman commented after the joint statement that it "gave a new lease of life" to the "shaky structure of Southeast Asian collective defence system", Bangkok Post, 18 April 1962, cited in Ibid., p.127.
gave added prestige and security to the military regime.\textsuperscript{14}

The first cleavage in the alliance became apparent when President Johnson announced in March 1968 that he would halt US bombing of North Vietnam and begin negotiations with the Vietnamese. Thai leaders were shocked and apprehensive over the announcement. They felt that any negotiated settlement would eventually bring communist forces to their doorstep and further aggravate the situation, as Thailand had openly supported US war efforts in Vietnam. The Guam Doctrine of July 1969 worried the Thais, but they managed to obtain more military assistance not only for South Vietnam but also for Thailand and other non-communist Southeast Asian states. Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman considered that "sustained American support of this nature combined with growing regional cooperation among Southeast Asian countries could form the basis of a modus vivendi with the Asian communist world."\textsuperscript{15}

In this context Thanat suggested that Thailand should pursue a conciliatory policy with China and other Eastern Bloc countries. However the military bureaucracy was not happy with Thanat's gestures,

\textsuperscript{14}Viraphol also suggests that Thailand was enjoying economic prosperity due to the military spending by Washington in Indochina and the direct aid and assistance Bangkok was receiving as compensation for the bases. Furthermore under US protection the military leaders did not need to ponder on how to deal with the communist threat. See Sarasin Viraphol, Directions in Thai Foreign Policy, Occasional Paper No 40, Institute of South East Asian Studies, May 1976, p.12.

\textsuperscript{15}Morrison and Suhrke, op. cit., p.125. It is noteworthy that as far back as 1964 Thanat advocated this stand in an article titled "Which Road to Southeast Asia" in Foreign Affairs Quarterly, Vol 42, July 1964 where he stated,

\emph{"The problem is to arouse the conscience of as many Southeast Asian nations as possible to the necessity of combining the strength of working closely together and presenting a solid front to anyone daring to entertain evil designs against them. If they succeed not only will each and everyone of them be spared from destruction but the region as a whole will emerge as a strong and free community, capable of serving its own interests as well as those of the world at large."}

In this context Thanat Khoman played a very important role in the formation of ASEAN.
which they thought might jeopardize Thai-US relations. This attitude was made clear when he was removed from his portfolio after a military coup in 1971. With the military further consolidating its power under General Thanom and Praphat no serious cleavages were seen in the Thai-American alliance. However with the overthrow of the Thanom-Praphat regime in October 1973, a new chapter opened in Thai-US relations, and this shift was accentuated after the fall of the Indochina States to communist forces. As a result of this new power alignment Thailand went through a period of self-examination and readjustment in its relations with the US.

THE ALLIANCE IN THE POST-VIETNAM ERA

The Kukrit and Sëni Pramoj Administrations

Thai-US relations reached their lowest ebb after the Vietnam war. Even though changes were already taking place in Thailand's foreign policy immediately after the overthrow of the Thanom-Praphat regime in October 1973, the readjustments became more prominent after the fall of the Saigon regime. Thai leaders began to perceive that their alliance with the US was more of a liability than an asset. This was obvious when Foreign Minister Chatichai Chunawan responded sarcastically to US Defence Secretary James Schlesinger’s comment on the US moral responsibility to defend Thailand, saying,

"Moral? The US does not have any morals at this point. They have already pulled out from Cambodia and South Vietnam, so we are going to depend on ourselves."\(^{16}\)

Thailand's foreign policy was clearly enunciated by Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj in a speech to the House of Representatives, where he stressed that Thai foreign policy would not be linked to any one superpower but rather that it would maintain a balanced relationship with all the superpowers [sic]. In this respect he emphasised that,

"...this government will endeavour to recognise and normalise ties with the People's Republic of China, to effect a withdrawal of foreign troops from Thailand within a year, through friendly negotiations and taking into account prevailing conditions in the region."¹⁷

However whatever the official announcements made regarding US troop withdrawals, privately Thai leaders wanted at least a residual US presence as a counterweight to communist Indochina; but two incidents aggravated public outrage and accelerated US withdrawal from Thailand.

The first incident was the problem of South Vietnamese planes and warships taken out by South Vietnamese military personnel, especially 125 planes flown out just prior to the fall of Saigon. The Provisional Government of South Vietnam asked Bangkok to return them all as a show of goodwill.¹⁸ Within the Kukrit government, there were divisions on how to handle this delicate situation. The military, led by Defence Minister Praman Adireksarn, felt that the planes should be returned to the USA. However the Americans pre-empted any decision by flying out all the aircraft they wanted to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. This fuelled further anti-American feelings among the public, which perceived the incident as an attempt by the US to prevent Thai-Vietnamese rapprochement.¹⁹ The second incident was the Mayaguez crisis, which led to further deterioration of Thai-US relations. The crisis occurred when an American ship, the Mayaguez, was seized by Kampuchean patrol boats off the coast of Kampuchea. Washington retaliated by sending US marines based in Thailand to rescue the ship's crew, without consulting Thai authorities. The Thai government


¹⁸According to Nhan Dan, the official North Vietnamese daily, Hanoi and the new government in Saigon were "ready to forget past misdeeds committed principally by the former dictatorial militarist regime in Bangkok". What is clear is that Hanoi was willing to make a distinction between the former military regime and the present civilian government. See K K Nair, "ASEAN Indochina Relations since 1975", op.cit., p.37.

¹⁹According to US authorities the Thai military had been informed well in advance of the airlift. In fact the Thai military were accused of by-passing the Foreign Ministry in negotiating the withdrawal. This can be seen as the beginning of the conflict between the military and the civilian government which finally led to the overthrow of the civilian government in October 1976.
immediately demanded an apology and also asked the Americans to accelerate US troop withdrawal from Thai bases. The Mayaguez crisis enhanced the Thai government's desire to pursue an independent foreign policy.

The US wanted to retain a residual military presence mainly at U Tapao Air Base on the Gulf of Thailand, a strategically placed staging and refuelling point between the Philippines, Diego Garcia, Australia and the Middle East. Washington also wanted to maintain an intelligence listening post at Ramasun and a seismic centre near Chiangmai to detect Chinese underground nuclear tests. However neither government could agree on how to maintain the US presence and so all US troops were withdrawn in July 1976 except for a maximum of 270 advisers who remained under the 1950 US – Thai Military Agreement. Nevertheless Thailand wanted to retain the Manila Pact, which provided it with a security link with the USA. Moreover the army was critical of Kukrit's detente policies with Thailand's communist neighbours, which created a situation in which the Americans had to withdraw from Thailand without any quid pro quo from Hanoi to reduce its 40,000 troops in Laos and the Soviet presence in Vietnam and Laos.

In this context the Seni Pramoj government, which came to power following an election victory in June 1976, was anxious that the US should maintain a strategic presence in the region to counter the other major powers, especially the Soviet Union which was making major inroads in Southeast Asia. Foreign Minister Bichai Rattakul emphasised in an interview that since there was no threat of major power contention in the region the US should assist Southeast Asian nations, especially those pursuing democratic ideals, in terms of development aid.

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20 See *Far Eastern Economic Review* *Asia* 1978 *Yearbook* p.324

21 Interview given by Bichai Rattakul, Minister of Foreign affairs to Norman Peagam, *Far Eastern Economic Correspondent* in *Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok Vol XVI No 3, July/September 1976, p.3.
relations with Hanoi. However the military leaders were not happy with Seni’s conciliatory policies towards Thailand’s communist neighbours. They argued that Thailand was conceding too much to the communists without any advantage. There were also increased leftist activities in the country which prompted the military leaders to launch a coup.

The Thanin Government

There was a shift to Cold War politics during the tenure of Prime Minister Thanin Kravichien, who was appointed by the military following the coup in October 1976. Even though Thanin promised that his government would maintain its predecessor's foreign policy posture of equidistance between the major powers and friendly relations with all other countries, its actions proved otherwise. During his premiership there was an undercurrent favourable to the revival of the Thai-US alliance. In a meeting with US military students Thanin stressed that even though the domino theory was a myth as far as Thailand was concerned, yet he believed that the US should play an important role to maintain the myth by providing economic and military assistance to Thailand.22

The Thanin government also criticised the Carter Administration’s decision to withdraw US troops from South Korea. Thanin contended that the removal of US troops would undermine any credible deterrent against aggression in that part of the world. Moreover he emphasised that merely propping up existing South Korean defence capabilities would not create an adequate deterrent factor.23 The government welcomed the visit by the US Seventh Fleet aircraft carrier “Constellation” in May 1977, the first such visit since the Americans withdrew from Thailand. Foreign Minister Uppadit Pachariyangkun commented that such visits were welcomed, as they strengthened Thai-US relations.24

The Thanin government's foreign policy of maintaining exceptionally good relations with the US and not even achieving a modus vivendi with its communist neighbours was criticised as narrow and

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22 FBIS-Asia Pacific, 13 May 1977, p. J1
short sighted. Thailand's relations with the Indochina states deteriorated steadily, and military leaders feared that there would be an open confrontation with the communist regimes. At the ASEAN summit meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Thanin clearly showed his sentiment towards the Indochina States when he stated in his opening speech that,

"It is now evident that ASEAN is being challenged. This challenge is not one to be faced in some vague and distant future, but is indeed a new reality that must be taken into account... The aims and attitudes of the other side are indicated by its attempts to cause divisiveness in the ranks of ASEAN members by advocating and practising a policy of selective preference in its relations with ASEAN countries. This constitutes not only a discrimination but also an effort to undermine ASEAN unity and solidarity... ."

Even relations with China were very cool. The National Administrative Reform Council which had appointed Thanin as Prime Minister attempted to moderate his dogmatic influence on foreign policy. The attempt failed, so the Council launched a coup in October 1977, and appointed General Kriangsak Chomanand as the new Prime Minister.

**General Kriangsak's Government**

General Kriangsak immediately moved to normalise relations with Thailand's neighbours. Relations between Thailand and Laos improved substantially and Thailand and Vietnam exchanged ambassadors. In recognising the continued US strategic detachment Kriangsak stressed that there should be a balance of power in the region among the major powers. In an interview, he emphasised that peace and stability in the region could not be established without the participation of the major powers and he added,

"...we welcome these major powers to play a useful, and constructive role which would help make peace and stability in Southeast Asia a reality."  

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26 See 'Ten Years of ASEAN', ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, 1977, p.168.
With this in mind Kriangsak undertook a trip to China in March 1978 and accepted China's distinction between party-to-party and government-to-government relations. This major concession could be attributed to the Chinese pledge to provide support against Vietnam without necessarily provoking the Vietnamese into retaliatory action. This could be understood in the context of Thai leaders emphasising their pursuit of a balanced foreign policy, while yet acquiescing in Chinese aims. With regard to Thai-Soviet relations the government was concerned with the increase in Soviet espionage activities. They were also concerned over Soviet activities in Vietnam and Laos. Thai leaders interpreted Vietnam's actions as promoting Soviet intentions in the region and relations with the Soviet Union were linked with Vietnamese activities. At the same time Bangkok also welcomed Vice President Walter Mondale's visit in May 1978, which helped to offset real Thai perceptions that the US was disinterested in this part of the region.

The Soviet-backed Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in 1979 brought Thailand closer to China, as China was perceived to be the only countervailing force against the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance. Nevertheless Kriangsak did not overtly court China but instead sought assurances from the USA (under Thanat-Rusk joint statement of 1962) and the Soviet Union. He undertook a trip to Washington in May 1979 and the Carter Administration assured him that the US would invoke the Manila Pact if Thailand's security was threatened. Thailand also received increased military credits from (US$4 million to US$40 million), and equipment which comprised F 5E fighters, tanks, armoured personnel carriers and small weapons. Kriangsak also reportedly suggested to Carter Administration officials that Thailand would be willing to house US bases on Thai soil to further strengthen US strategic presence in the region.

Kriangsak then undertook a trip to Moscow, the first Thai Prime


Minister to do so, in an effort to demonstrate Thailand's perceived neutrality in foreign policy. It can be argued that this trip was a signal to Beijing to take note of Bangkok's viewpoint in China's relations with the Khmer Rouge. In the joint communique with the Soviet Union Thailand emphasised,

"...the determination of the Thai Government to conduct independent foreign policy based on the principle of peaceful coexistence and aimed at strengthening friendly relations with all countries irrespective of the political, economic and social systems for the benefit of peace, progress and prosperity."  

Kriangsak was also assured by the Soviets that Vietnam would not attack Thailand. To maintain this appearance of neutrality Kriangsak did not undertake a trip to Beijing, so as to avoid being identified with a power that had launched a punitive invasion of Vietnam in February 1979.

General Prem Tinsulanond's Government

Thailand's "omnidirectional" foreign policy posture with regard to the major powers lost all its force after the Vietnamese incursion into the Thai territory of Non Mark Moon in June 1980. Thailand realised that it could not rely on the Soviets to restrain their ally and felt that the Soviets wanted Thailand to accept the occupation of Kampuchea as a fait accompli. Prime Minister General Prem Tinsulanond's government, which came to power in March 1980, following an economic crisis which toppled his predecessor, implicitly aligned itself with China's policy towards Indochina.

Officially the government maintained that Thailand's foreign policy had not changed. Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila emphasised this point when he stated at a conference at the Institute of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok that Thailand's foreign policy was based on

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32 Buszynski, op. cit. p.1045
33 Ibid. p.1046
34 The incursion occurred when Thai security forces were repatriating Khmer refugees back into Kampuchea. Vietnam criticised Thailand's action as a deliberate attempt by Bangkok to reinforce the Khmer Rouge.
"...the following objectives: First, to promote solidarity, unity and cooperation of ASEAN, and to extend that cooperation to development of good relations with our Indochina neighbours. Second to pursue mutually beneficial relations with all countries irrespective of differences in political, social and economic systems and ideologies. Third, to contribute, in her own capacity to regional and global stability and development and, finally adherence to the principles of international law and the UN Charter."

Even though the Foreign Minister did not mention Thailand's relations with USA, it did not mean Bangkok was undervaluing the relationship. Thai leaders perceived that by not emphasising openly its security treaty with the US, they would mollify regional sensitivities towards the treaty. Nevertheless as Hans Indorf observed,

"Somehow the Thai-American link has become part of the public and private subconscious which may bring greater psychological rewards than an ostentatious display of affection would ever accomplish."

Moreover the security relationship has been enhanced in the face of what Thailand perceived as a Soviet-backed Vietnamese threat lingering along its borders.

The government welcomed Reagan's election to the White House. Carter Administration policies were generally regarded by Thai leaders as a state of "animated suspension" (sic), as they did not indicate much interest in the region. The Prem government advocated that the US should maintain a strong presence in the region to offset the growing Soviet-Vietnamese strategic partnership. Siddhi Savetsila stressed that the Soviet presence in Cam Ranh Bay had provided the Soviet forces with the capability to patrol the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. He further added that,

"This Soviet presence has clear consequences for the vital sea lanes and all naval movements in the region. It has [also]

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a strong effect on the power equation in the region".  

As such Thailand perceived that only a strong US presence would provide a countervailing force against Soviet encroachment in the region.  

The government also strengthened its stand towards the Kampuchean conflict by supporting the anti-Vietnamese coalition in its effort to oust the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin regime. Bangkok wanted Washington to support the coalition, not only with humanitarian assistance but also with military aid. Speaking at the Asia Society in New York, Siddhi Savetsila stressed that,

"...the US should no longer hesitate to make her support for the Kampuchean fighters a matter of policy. This would send a strong and powerful signal to Vietnam and her backers that a fait accompli in Kampuchea, which affects the security of America's Southeast Asian friends will not be tolerated."  

Thailand also welcomed the Reagan Administration's decision to provide US$5 million in "humanitarian" assistance to the anti-communist partners of the coalition.  

Thailand has accepted the fact that the US will not commit troops in the event of an attack on Thai territory. This was emphasised by Jeanne Kirkpatrick, the former US Ambassador to the United Nations, in Bangkok when she stated unequivocally that the use of US combat troops was virtually ruled out. She stated that "It is cheaper and more effective for the local people to defend their land with material support from the US". However the government hopes that the US would provide aid in combat and transport support if its security were threatened.  

Thailand also welcomed joint military exercises, such as the Cobra Gold and joint logistics exercises which were carried out in June 1985. It can, therefore be argued that the military elite still

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39 Indorf, op. cit., p.199.  
perceives the USA as indispensable for Thailand's security. Bangkok has also stated that it has no qualms about Japan's defence buildup. In an interview the Thai Foreign Minister stated that Prime Minister Nakasone of Japan had assured Bangkok that Japan's defence buildup was solely for self-defence. Siddhi further stated that being an economic giant Japan's decision to defend 1,000 nautical miles of sea lanes was understandable, and that this defence strategy would definitely contribute to the security of the region.

Accepting that there are limits to US actions in responding to Thailand's security needs, Bangkok now sees China as the counterweight to the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance in the region, and has steadily identified itself with the Chinese perception of the Indochina crisis. Thai leaders have even decided to achieve a modus vivendi with China, and China has virtually ended its support of communist insurgency movements in Thailand. Siddhi stated in unequivocal terms that the close and cordial relationship with China had been an asset to Thailand. Thai-Chinese relations were further strengthened during the visit of Chinese President Li Xianian to Bangkok in March 1985. China has also established a radio link between its Kunming Military Region Headquarters and the Thai Military Command in Bangkok, to assure Thailand of its firm commitment to Thai security. As a result one might expect that Bangkok would not have any apprehensions over the Reagan Administration's decision to sell lethal weapons to China. Nevertheless Bangkok has indicated that it does not share Washington's and Beijing's idea of 'bleeding' Vietnam into submission. Speaking at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand Siddhi stressed that Bangkok does not seek to bleed Hanoi, but believes that the Kampuchean

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42 Speech at the Asia Society, op. cit. p. 15.
43 See Asiaweek, 22 March 1985 p. 7 and Asia Wall Street Journal, 13 March 1985
44 This link will allow China to respond in kind on Vietnam's northern border if there was any shelling by Vietnamese forces on to Thai territory. See Far Eastern Economic Review, 2 January 1986, p. 8.
conflict can be negotiated peacefully.45

Thailand shares the Reagan Administration's perception of the threat of a Soviet presence in the region. Since it supported and backed Vietnam's adventurism into Kampuchea and later incursions into Thai territory, the Soviet Union is perceived as a threat by Thailand. Bangkok accused Hanoi of transforming the region into an arena of superpower rivalry by providing naval and air facilities to Soviet forces. Speaking at the Asia Society in New York Siddhi stated that,

"By opening its doors to allow the entry of the Soviet Union into the region, Vietnam has superimposed the Soviet conflict on local quarrels with destructive impact on the hopes of the ASEAN countries to transform Southeast Asia into ZOPFAN."46

Bangkok also accused the Soviet Union of underwriting Vietnamese territorial ambitions not only in Kampuchea but also in Thailand.47

Thus, Thailand overtly favours a strong US strategic presence in the region. Its military leaders have always perceived security relations with the US to be the cornerstone of Thai security. Even though in the aftermath of the Vietnam war there was scepticism in Thailand over relations with the US, it never once considered abrogating its 1954 Mutual Defence Treaty (under the Manila Pact) or repealing the Thanat-Rusk joint communique of 1962. The parallels in the foreign policy outlook of both countries have further strengthened the security relationship. The fear of China in the 1950's has been replaced by the perception of a Soviet-backed Vietnamese threat. This

46Speech at Asia Society, op.cit., p.14
47After Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanond's visit to China, five Soviet warships, including the carrier Minsk, sailed into the Gulf of Siam within 100 miles of the Thai naval base of Satthip. This was an unprecedented display of Soviet naval power in the region and could be a signal to Thailand not to move too close to Beijing. See Far Eastern Economic Review, 14 November 1980] Thailand's perception of Soviet threat was compounded further when Thai authorities arrested a Soviet diplomat with documents pertaining to Thai military installations along the Kampuchean border. Bangkok has also refused Moscow's request to station a military attache in the Thai capital.
created a security syndrome in Thai foreign policy which has advocated a strong US presence to counter this threat. Within this context also Thailand accepts its de facto alliance with China implicitly underwritten by the USA to keep Vietnam in check.
INDONESIA

Indonesia's perception of the US strategic role in the region cannot be viewed without tracing its foreign policy principles since it won independence in December 1949 from the Dutch. Having obtained this through a revolution its foreign policy posture has been moulded on the basis of indigenous nationalism which is based on five principles or Pancasila.\(^1\) The lack of support from the USA in particular and the West in general during the struggle for independence taught it not to rely on any one power or bloc. The suspected Soviet involvement in the communist-led Madiun rebellion of 1948 and British and US pressure to accept Dutch proposals on independence further compounded this perception. The early leaders therefore considered that the best course of action was to adopt an "independent and active foreign policy."\(^2\)

In describing Indonesia's foreign policy posture the then Prime Minister Mohammed Hatta outlined the concepts. He stated that independence means to refrain from joining any ideological blocs or their attendant military alliances; and active means to seek to contribute positively towards the attainment of lasting peace and

\(^1\) The Pancasila comprises belief in God; humanitarianism; national unity; consensual democracy; and social justice.

stability in the world. Any Indonesian government which deviated from these principles was removed. This was obvious from the experiences of the governments under Amir Sjariffuddin in 1948 who accepted terms during the negotiations with the Dutch which were detrimental to Indonesian interests; and also of Sukiman in 1952 when he was found to have signed an agreement with the USA under the terms of the US Mutual Security Act of 1951 which aligned Indonesia with the USA. In maintaining an independent foreign policy, Indonesian leaders resisted pressures to support the US in the Korean war. The Indonesian government also refused to ratify the American drafted Japanese Peace Treaty, on the grounds that the action might be construed as an alignment with the US. Its foreign policy also clashed with Dulles' strategy of forming regional defence pacts to solidify the anticommmunist forces around the world. Jakarta criticised the formation of SEATO and coincidently was instrumental in organising an international conference of Asian and African heads of state at Bandung in April 1955, which created the impetus to form the Non Aligned

3Cited in Adam Malik, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy" in Indonesian Quarterly, Vol 1, No 1, October 1972, p.27. In enunciating this foreign policy posture, Hatta questioned,

"...must we Indonesians, who are fighting for our independence as a nation and as a state make our choice only between being pro-Russia or pro-America? Is there no other position we can take in the pursuit of our ideals?"

"The Government", he added, "is of the opinion that the stand we must adopt is one of ensuring that we do not become an object in the arena of international politics, but rather we must continue to be a subject with the right to determine on our own position, with the right to fight our own goal - the goal of fully independent Indonesia." cited in H Roeslan Abdulgani, "The Origin of the Concept 'Free and Active' in Indonesian Foreign Policy" in Indonesian Quarterly, Vol. IV, No. 1, October 1975, pp.9 - 10.

4On the fall of the Sukiman Cabinet, see Lalita Prasad Singh, Power Politics and 'Southeast Asia, op cit., p.52


Indonesian suspicion of the West, especially of Washington, was further compounded when Washington supported secessionist rebellions during the late 1950s in Sumatra and Sulawesi. Washington hoped that supporting the rebel forces, if successful, would serve as a counterweight to Sukarno and the communists. The Eisenhower administration had sensed with concern both the increased dependence of Jakarta on Soviet aid and its tolerance of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Indonesia's suspicions were made obvious by Prime Minister Djuanda to the US Ambassador when he stated,

"It now looked to the Indonesian government as if the policy and purpose of the US was to split Indonesia in two in order to ensure that at least one part of the country would remain noncommunist."

The display of US naval power during the height of the rebellion further fanned anti-Western feelings and convinced Jakarta that Washington was attempting "to undermine the integrity of the Republic". However, the rebellion failed, and Jakarta's relations with the US deteriorated.

However the Kennedy Administration, in the hope of improving its relations with Indonesia, was instrumental in mediating the West Irian dispute which eventually led to that country's territorial assimilation into Indonesia. In spite of this, bilateral relations deteriorated and became more pronounced when Sukarno launched the 'konfrontasi' against the British sponsored Federation of Malaysia. The Johnson administration unequivocally provided military aid to the Malaysian government and suspended aid to Indonesia. Sukarno reportedly responded that the USA can "go to hell" with its aid. So, during the last years of the Sukarno regime relations with Washington deteriorated steadily.

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7 This was in line with its active foreign policy, one "marked by vigorous steps to oppose the remnants of colonialism." See Weinstein, log cit., p.163.
8 Cited in Leifer, op cit., p.50.
9 ibid., p.50.
10 Scully, op. cit., p.5
As with past Indonesian leaders, the downfall of Sukarno was also due to deviation from an independent foreign policy. He openly courted Beijing and in a radio address on 17 August, 1963 he spoke of a 'Jakarta - Phnom Penh - Hanoi - Peking - Pyongyang axis.' This statement clearly indicated that Jakarta had shifted from its non-aligned stand. The attempted coup in October 1965 by the PKI, which was thwarted by the army, brought down Sukarno and ushered in the 'New Order' under Suharto's leadership.

Foreign Policy Under The New Order Until 1975

Indonesian foreign policy under the new order was based on the Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, which emphasised independence and active opposition to imperialism and colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. The new leaders placed their highest foreign policy priority on economic development. External diplomacy therefore had to be geared

"...towards the maximisation of all available foreign aid, technical assistance, private investment and trade in support of our national development goals."

In this context the new order naturally looked towards the West and Japan. However the new leaders emphasized that it was not a tilt towards the West. They pointed to their participation, "in non-aligned conferences, their Middle East diplomacy, their continuing relationship with the Soviet Union and the East European countries, and above all their role in the formation of ASEAN" as proof of their adherence to an independent foreign policy. The emphasis on economic development was due to the country's economic decline during the Sukarno regime. The regime was worried that this state of economic disarray would bring about political instability, so the leaders of the New Order stressed the need for national resilience (Ketahanan Nasional). The basis of

11 Malik, op cit., p.28.
12 Morrison and Suhrke, op cit., p.201.
national resilience emphasises a need for economic development, political stability and the psychological commitment of the people to the nation.\textsuperscript{13}

\textbf{Indonesian Perceptions From 1975}

Indonesia was less alarmed than the other ASEAN countries over the fall of Indochina to communist forces. Its leaders were resigned to the fact that Vietnam was armed to the teeth and apparently determined to have a leadership role in the region. Although this could compete with Indonesian aspirations, the conclusion of the war was perceived to have brought much needed stability to the region. The national resilience concept was translated into the Southeast Asian setting to aid the creation of regional resilience, as Suharto observed,

"through regional resilience Southeast Asia can be jointly managed by the nations concerned thus permitting them to determine their own future."\textsuperscript{14).

In this context it is noteworthy that Indonesia was unimpressed with Malaysia's neutralisation proposal when it was first mooted, even though Jakarta had signed the neutralisation proposal in November 1971. Foreign Minister Adam Malik stated that neutralisation was not in the interest of Southeast Asian Countries as it was "a product of 'one way' benevolence on the part of the big power and at this stage, would prove

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{13} National resilience is based on the teachings of Asta Gatra (Eight Aspects of Life). It means,
\end{itemize}

"the dynamic condition of a nation, with its perseverence and endurance, which contains the ability to develop national strength, in facing and surmounting all challenges, threats, hindrances and disturbances coming from without as well as from within, which directly or indirectly endangers the integrity, indentity, survival of nation and country and the pursuit of the purpose of its national struggle."


\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{14} Cited in Justice van der Kroef, "ASEAN and US Security Interests", in Strategic Review, Vol 6, No 2, Spring 1978, p.34
\end{itemize}
as brittle and unstable as the interrelationship between the major powers themselves." Indonasa's displeasure could be understood, as it feared that the superpower guarantee would jeopardize its intentions of becoming a regional power in Southeast Asia.

Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the Vietnam war Suharto undertook a trip to Washington in July 1975, and had talks with President Ford. He successfully asked for more US military aid. However to maintain a non-aligned stand in foreign policy Suharto also added a visit to Yugoslavia to his itinerary. Adam Malik also stressed to a group of visiting US Congressmen in January 1976 that it was in the US interest to provide economic and military aid to Indonesia. He added that the aid would be tantamount to protecting US interests in the region.

The convergence of US and Indonesian interests against the spread of communist influence in the region was clearly reflected by the handling of the East Timor crisis in December 1975. In the same

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16. Indonesian leaders perceive that due to Indonesia's "physical attributes and its more authentic independence" other Southeast Asian countries in general and ASEAN in particular should follow Indonesia's lead in world politics. For a discussion on this issue see Weinstein, Indonesiam Foreign Policy and the Dilemma of Dependence, op.cit., Chapter 5.


19. Following the coup led by General Spinola which overthrew the Salazar government in Lisbon in 1974, Portugal began to abandon its overseas empire. In preparation for self-rule the Portuguese colonial administration encouraged the growth of political organisations among the East Timorese and offered them three alternatives - full independence, continuing association with Portugal or merger with Indonesia. However by mid-1975, a leftist party "The Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor" (Fretlin) emerged as the strongest political force in Timor. Jakarta was not happy with this development and provided covert aid to the Timorese Democratic Union (UDTI), a pro-Indonesian party. It feared that if Fretlin came to power East Timor could become a bastion for insurgency operations throughout Indonesia. When Fretlin proclaimed East Timor independent on 28 November 1975, Indonesia invaded the territory. For a brief survey of the Timor crisis see William R Liddle, "Indonesia in 1976: Challenges to Suharto's Authority", in Asian Survey, Vol 17, No 2, February 1977, pp.99-102.
month President Ford visited Indonesia and assured its leaders of the continued interest of the US in the region. On 7 December 1975, one day after President Ford visited Jakarta, Indonesian 'volunteers' equipped with US weapons invaded East Timor. It could be argued that Washington gave tacit blessings to the invasion. Even though the US voted for the UN Security Council resolution of 22 December 1975, which stressed the right of self-determination of the people of East Timor, it abstained from voting on the subsequent resolutions demanding Indonesian withdrawal. Washington also suspended arms shipments for six months as the Indonesians had used US arms for the invasion, which contravened the US Military Aid Act.

The Carter Administration accepted the fait accompli of East Timor and the subsequent incorporation of the territory into Indonesia in July 1976. Even the human rights foreign policy of the Carter Administration did not cause the same degree of irritation in Jakarta as it did in Manila. The Carter Administration perceived that Jakarta's policies were not predictable as in the Philippines, so Washington did not want to pressurize Jakarta and jeopardize bilateral relations. Nevertheless, Jakarta criticised the Carter administration's decision to sever its relations with Taiwan, when it established diplomatic relations with China in January 1979. Suharto commented strongly that the US decision showed that "you can't trust a superpower."

The Reagan Administration also views Indonesia as a vital strategic ally, due to its location along sea lanes linking the Indian and Pacific Oceans. However Indonesian officials were not happy with the low priority given to the region. This was exacerbated when

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20 Pringle contends that the suspension was implemented with such exquisite tract that the Indonesians were never aware of being chastised. In fact some arm shipments continued throughout the period of suspension. See Pringle, op cit., p.107, and News Straits Times, March 19, 1977, p.5.

21 The USA often takes its relations with the Philippines for granted, whereas Indonesia born through a revolution and based on a volatile nationalism is perceived to epitomize the remote and unpredictable. Moreover, Indonesia's population size, strategic configuration and natural resources dictated a quiet diplomacy with regard to human rights. See Pringle, ibid., pp.108-112.

Reagan's Southeast Asian tour was cancelled in August 1983, after the Aquino assassination in Manila. Jakarta was also offended by the administration's efforts to ease tensions by planning the visit of President Reagan to Jakarta prior to his visit to China in May 1984. The Indonesians felt that this should not have been the way to treat them; as one official commented, this "was a classic example of superpower indifference to implications of a decision basically involving other countries." Nonetheless, Foreign Minister Mochtar Kusumadja emphasized prior to the cancelled visit of the US President that talks would only centre on bilateral economic issues rather than political-military issues. This could be argued as an attempt to downgrade the proposed visit and not to give the impression that there was a possibility of an alignment between Indonesia and the USA.

Jakarta also criticised the Reagan Administration's decision to sell lethal weapons to Beijing. Indonesia has accused Beijing of complicity in the PKI attempted coup of September 1965, and its suspicions remain unabated. These suspicions increased when Chinese leaders visiting other ASEAN countries refused to renounce their support for insurgency in the region. This has been one argument against the resumption of diplomatic relations with Beijing. The army also declared that diplomatic relations be considered only when Beijing apologised for its alleged role in the 1965 coup. However, to the Chinese government this would amount to admitting that it did play a role in the coup. Therefore, Washington's courting of Beijing and its decision to sell lethal weapons to China, irritated Indonesian leaders, who perceived China as a longterm threat to the region. Washington was accused of being insensitive to the fears of the Southeast Asian nations due to its cold war attitude towards the world, and this was aptly described by Mochtar, who stated that,

24Adam Malik was replaced as Foreign Minister by Mochtar, when he was appointed as Vice President in 1979.
"sometimes the US views situations too much in global superpower terms neglecting other aspects. For instance, the relationship with China is seen to counterbalance US policy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union... This picture forgets the other nations in Asia to whom China means something else ... Ultimately the biggest threat is China."  

Nevertheless in the early 1980s there were moves to at least establish bilateral trade links, considering the fact that trade between Indonesia and China through third countries favoured Beijing heavily. (For instance in 1984 Indonesian exports to China only reached US$7.6m while imports stood at S$24.4m.) Even though trade links had been established through the signing of a memorandum of understanding in July 1985 the military was still sceptical about Beijing, with the Indonesian armed forces newspaper, Angkatan Bersenjata, stating in its editorial,

"Apart from the factor of (China's) involvement in the coup and its role in communist subversive activities in various Southeast Asian countries, we do not have any objective need (for normalization) ... Indonesia has not encountered any difficulty in international forums (while not) having diplomatic ties (with China). On the contrary Indonesia has enjoyed peace and stability."  

Indonesia also stressed that it was not happy with US pressure on Japan to increase Japan's defence spending, and to police the 1000 nautical miles defence perimeter. The main concern of Jakarta was the fact that if the 1000 nautical miles was measured from Okinawa it would extend to the whole of Southeast Asia. However US officials have assured Indonesia that it would be measured from Tokyo Bay and as such it stops short of the Philippines. During Suharto's trip to

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27 Cited in Gordon R Hein, "Indonesia in 1982", in Asian Survey, Vol 23, No 2,  
28 Asian Wall Street Journal, 3 July 1985, p.3.  
29 It is noteworthy that the memorandum of understanding was not signed either in Indonesia or the People's Republic of China but in Singapore. This was due to the fact that Indonesian leaders did not want to give the impression that there was a diplomatic thaw between Beijing and Jakarta. See Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 July 1985, pp 98-99.  
30 See Far Eastern Economic Review, 28 February 1985, p.42  
Washington in October 1982 he was assured by the US that it would not make Japan a proxy of the US 'with sufficient reach to stretch down into the ASEAN area'. The Indonesians doubted whether mere policy guidelines could contain what they perceived as a historical momentum of Japanese rearmament, but Jakarta was assured by Washington that in any relations with Japan the interests of Southeast Asian nations would be duly taken note of and not jeopardized.

With regard to Kampuchea, Indonesia does not approve of Washington's policy of following China's stand of pressurizing Hanoi into withdrawing its troops. As one Indonesian official aptly stated:

"There are two keys to the Cambodian solution. One is whether Thailand and Vietnam can agree and the other is whether the United States sides with us (ASEAN) or with China."

Indonesia shares Vietnam's perception of the Chinese threat and understands the security fears and revolutionary goals of a unified Vietnam which Indonesia experienced after its independence. Even Mochtar acknowledged this when he stated that there "was a special flavour in our relationship." Moreover, Jakarta felt that a strong Vietnam would be a countervailing force against Chinese influence in the region. Jakarta was of the view that US pressure would only push Hanoi closer to Moscow. Mochtar emphasised in an interview that the US should give the Kampuchean issue top priority rather than toe the

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32ibid., p.30.
33ibid., p.30.
34ibid., p.25.
36Leifer, op.cit.,p.169. Indonesia has had diplomatic relations with Vietnam since 1964. Whatever common experience Jakarta and Hanoi would have shared in their pursuit for independence, it does not mean that Jakarta does not fear Vietnam as a threat to its security. The Indonesian Defence Department did acknowledge Hanoi as an indirect threat when it stated

"since the fall of South Vietnam and Cambodia the Indonesian government has been increasingly concerned about infiltration of weapons into the Indonesian archipelago."

Chinese line of making the occupation of Kampuchea by Hanoi as expensive as possible. Indonesia was also sympathetic towards Vietnam when China carried out a punitive invasion of Northern Vietnam. The invasion was seen as evidence of Beijing's ambition to dominate Southeast Asia.37 Vice-President Adam Malik stressed in an interview that normalization of relations between Hanoi and Washington was crucial to a peaceful solution in Kampuchea,38 and in this context during a visit to Hanoi in March 1985 urged his hosts to accelerate the accounting of US servicemen missing in action during the Vietnam war, which would clear one obstacle to the normalization of relations between the two countries.39 Jakarta wanted the Kampuchean issue to be settled as soon as possible, as it perceived that continuation of the issue would only entrench the presence of the major powers in the region. This was expressed by a commentary on Jakarta Radio in February 1982, which pointed out that the Kampuchean issue had contributed to major power rivalry in the region. It added,

"If unsolved, the problem will be a great danger because it could lead to direct involvement of the big powers and eventually to their permanent stay in the region."40

37 Vice-President Adam Malik commented on the invasion, stating that this was a typical Chinese reaction to tension, that is to subject the state to the classical device(sic) in Chinese foreign affairs,

"to teach the young a lesson in order that they know their place."

See Adam Malik, In Service to the République, Gunung Agong (S) Ptd Ltd, Singapore, 1980, p.268

38 Sydney Morning Herald, 17 August 1979, p.6.

39 The USA has been against setting up of any interest section in Hanoi or any other steps which might have implications of recognition of Vietnam. As such Washington has indicated that it would not support Jakarta's proposal if ASEAN did not endorse it. Even though ASEAN has agreed in principle to Jakarta's intention but it perceives that the mere presence of US personnel in Hanoi would be construed as a gain for Hanoi. Mochtar even consulted China's Foreign Minister Wu about the proposal and in response Wu told him that Beijing would not oppose normalization as long as the normalization came after Vietnamese withdrawal and not before. See Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 June 1985.

This situation would be inimical to Indonesian ambitions to become a regional power in Southeast Asia.

However Jakarta perceived that the Soviet presence in Southwest Asia was due to US and Chinese pressure on Vietnam. It also does not share the Reagan Administration's threat perception of the Soviet presence in the region. Mochtar unequivocally stated in an interview that the Reagan Administration had overstated the Soviet threat in Southeast Asia in a bid to justify an increased defence budget. He also stated that the Soviet force deployments in the region, despite their forward staging facilities in Vietnam, were seriously handicapped by logistical problems and the bases in Vietnam could not be compared with US facilities in the Philippines. Mochtar also undertook a trip to Moscow in April 1984, the first trip by an Indonesian leader in 10 years. He told Soviet leaders that Moscow could make valuable contributions toward establishing peace in Southeast Asia. This could be a hint to the Soviets to pressure Vietnam to negotiate on the Kampuchean issue.

Indonesia does not consider the US as playing as important a strategic role in the region as it did during the Vietnam war. Nevertheless Indonesian leaders do not want the Americans to shift the defence burden of the region to other major powers, especially to Japan. It could be argued that the Indonesians take it for granted that the Americans will maintain some sort of strategic presence, especially considering the location of the strategic SLOC's in the region. However, Jakarta does not want an overt US presence as this...
would invite superpower rivalry in the region. Moreover it would also threaten Jakarta's perception of itself as the region's leader.
MALAYSIA

Malaysia has not openly endorsed a strong US strategic presence in the Southeast Asian region. This can be traced back to the 1970's when Malaysia opted for a policy of non-alignment, evidenced by its participation in the Third Conference of Non-Aligned Countries held in Lusaka in September 1970. Prior to 1970 Malaysia's foreign policy was pro-Western. This could be attributed to its membership in the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement (AMDA). However with the British decision to withdraw from East of Suez in 1967 and the enunciation of the Guam Doctrine in 1969, Malaysia formulated the concept of neutralization of Southeast Asia and also adopted a non-aligned foreign policy. Furthermore AMDA was dismantled and replaced by the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA) in November 1971. It was also at the Lusaka Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1970 that former Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak forwarded the proposal to neutralize Southeast Asia. However this proposal was received coldly.

Despite the FPDA, neutrality became the official cornerstone of Malaysia's foreign policy at the turn of the 1970's. This posture was institutionalised in November 1971 at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Conference, and came to be known as the Kuala Lumpur Declaration or the ZOPFAN Declaration. In pursing a policy of non-alignment Malaysia also emphasised the policy of equidistance towards superpowers. Former Foreign Affairs Minister Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie in describing the advantages of pursuing a policy of equidistance stated,

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2. Under the FPDA, in the event of an external aggression the signatories would consult, but there is no provision to guarantee formal commitments for further action. Therefore it is less binding than that of AMDA.


4. Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie was the Home Affairs Minister from August 1973 until July 1981 when he was appointed Foreign Minister. He held this portfolio until September 1984.
"In [the] short term, equidistance reinforces the adoption of a neutral non-aligned foreign policy stance which in turn reinforces accommodation between external powers. In the longer term, equidistance will entrench a regional policy of neutrality and non-alignment that will facilitate, and perpetuate great power disengagement from Southeast Asia."\(^5\)

With this policy of neutrality and equidistance, in essence Malaysia emphasised a situation in the region whereby the superpowers were urged to demonstrate a mutual denial of strategic interests. In this context the US was placed on equal footing with other major powers. Tun Abdul Razak also undertook a trip to Beijing in May 1974, recognising Beijing's role as one of the guarantors of ZOPFAN in Southeast Asia.\(^6\)

Like other ASEAN member countries Malaysia was also taken by surprise by the swift takeover of non-communist Indochina states by communist forces in April 1975. Nevertheless the government immediately extended diplomatic recognition to Cambodia and Vietnam in April and May 1975 respectively.\(^7\) In the wake of the fall of Saigon to communist forces, Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie went on Radio Malaysia to exorcise the influence of the Domino Theory. He stated,

"In theoretical as well as in practical empirical terms the domino theory has little relevance to the states of Southeast Asia. The collapse of American policy in Indochina does not determine the internal order of these states unless their


\(^6\) It is noteworthy that Malaysia recognised China's emergence as a leading power in the region as far back as 1970 when Tun Abdul Razak in his speech at the Lusaka Conference stated,

"...the world today is no longer bipolar. It is at least tripolar with the emergence of China onto the international stage. The fact of China and her legitimate role in the world cannot be simply wished away by those who are opposed to her."


\(^7\) It is interesting to note that one of the first foreign advisers in South Vietnam after the French withdrawal was from Malaysia (then Malaya). Malaysian officials were in Saigon long before the Americans with film equipment to disseminate anti-communist information. See Far Eastern Economic Review Asia '1976 Yearbook, p.216.
internal order happens to be a function of American support, and unless they depend on the United States for the maintenance of their internal political system."

With this new power alignment in the region the Malaysian government further emphasised the creation of ZOPFAN. In March 1976, during a trip by the former US Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller to Kuala Lumpur, former Prime Minister Datuk Hussein Onn commenting on the Pacific Doctrine of the Ford Administration, stressed that Malaysia supported the US principle that "peace in Asia required a structure of economic cooperation reflecting the aspirations of all the peoples in the broader Asian-Pacific region". He further emphasised that this principle of the doctrine contains crucial elements of Malaysia's perspective of the role the US could play in the region. However when Datuk Hussein Onn undertook a trip to Washington in October 1977, the topic of security was also on the diplomatic agenda. This was due to the continued strategic disinterest shown by the US towards the region, apart from US bases in the Philippines. Although Kuala Lumpur eschews superpower rivalry in the region, it did not want a further shrinkage of American presence, as this would upset superpower equilibrium in the region. In response President Carter assured Datuk Hussein Onn of continued US presence in the region.

The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the subsequent Chinese incursion into Vietnam alarmed the Malaysian government because of the vulnerability of the region to superpower rivalry. In the wake of the invasion Malaysia moved away from its policy of equidistance between superpowers to an obviously pro-Western stance. Tan Sri Ghazalie Shafie accused the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam of wanting to create communist spheres of influence in the world. He said,

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8 For the full text of the speech see Ghazalie Shafie, op.cit., pp.223-240.
9 Tun Abdul Razak was Malaysian Prime Minister from 1971-1976, Datuk Hussein Onn succeeded him in January 1976, and he was succeeded by Datuk Dr Mahathir Mohammed in July 1981.
10 "Speech by Datuk Hussein Onn During the Visit of US Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller to Malaysia on 27 March, in Foreign Affairs Malaysia Vol 9, No 1, March 1976, p.75.
11 FBIS-Asia Pacific, 4 October 1977, p.01.
"The Soviet objective is in line with the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of communising the world under one power centered in Moscow. While China wants to communise the whole of Asia, Hanoi wants to dominate Southeast Asia using the Indochina Federation of Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos as the nucleus."  

Kuala Lumpur welcomed the deployment of the US Seventh Fleet in the South China Sea especially during the major exodus of the "boat people" from Vietnam. Tan Sri Ghazalie Shafie stated that the deployment of the US armada did not mean that the US was putting on a show of strength for the Soviet Union, but rather that its presence had stabilized the situation in the region.

Malaysia does not endorse Washington's policy of 'bleeding' Vietnam into submission. Speaking at the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College, Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie stated that some sort of restorative measure should be encouraged to bring back confidence between ASEAN and Hanoi. He further stated that this could not be achieved if Malaysia or ASEAN were to apply "leechcraft" or to bleed Vietnam. Malaysia believes that the situation in Kampuchea can only be reversed through negotiation rather than by force.

The strategic presence of the Soviet Union for the first time in Southeast Asian waters further increased Malaysia's apprehension. During Datuk Hussein Onn's visit to Moscow in September 1979, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev guaranteed Vietnam's non-aggression vis-a-vis ASEAN. However prior to this trip the Prime Minister visited Beijing where he said in a press conference that "...China will not be satisfied unless some solution is found with regard to the future of Kampuchea", clearly indicating Malaysia's support for China's stand on the issue. Moreover Datuk Hussein Onn downgraded his visit to Moscow by taking an extended holiday in Europe immediately after the Moscow trip. Kuala Lumpur also turned down a request from the Soviets to allow 20 of its warships to visit Kuala Lumpur for supplies and to allow its

12 FBIS, 17 July 1979, p.01.
sailors to take shore leaves.\textsuperscript{15}

This apparent tilt towards Beijing was further reflected by Tan Sri Ghazalie Shafie, who stated that the credibility of the US or the United Nations against transgressions was questionable. Beijing was the only countervailing force against Hanoi's territorial designs in the region. However he emphasised that the US should play a major role not through direct involvement, but by providing timely and adequate supply of military hardware.\textsuperscript{16}

The Mahathir Government

Dato Seri Dr Mahathir Mohammed who became the Prime Minister in July 1981\textsuperscript{17} has been critical of US policies in the region as a whole and towards Malaysia in particular. He emphasised that the US had neglected the economic and security concerns of Malaysia and charged Washington with misinterpreting Kuala Lumpur's "historical desire for low profile ties with the US as giving them the right to put Malaysia as low priority".\textsuperscript{18} The problem with Washington, commented one observer, is that "it finds it is much easier to deal with allies and well defined enemies. But their good versus bad guys policy making guidebook apparently do not contain any guidelines on how to deal with good friends who are not allies."\textsuperscript{19} Malaysia's displeasure with the US was clearly reflected during Dr Mahathir's visit to the US in January 1984. The Prime Minister stressed that the US role in the region should not only be in terms of strategic considerations but also in helping

\textsuperscript{15}This request had also been made to other ASEAN states. However ASEAN countries decided that it was not appropriate to receive Soviet vessels and regarded the Soviet request as a 'deliberate attempt to show the flag in the region as part of an increased Soviet presence in the South China Sea and the Pacific. See Sydney Morning Herald, 19 September 1979, p.8.
\textsuperscript{16}Ghazalie Shafie, op.cit., p.320.
\textsuperscript{17}Datuk Hussein Onn resigned from the Premiership for health reasons.
\textsuperscript{18}New Straits Times, 29 July 1983.
\textsuperscript{19}M A Razman, "Ties with the US", in Asian Research Bulletin, Vol 13, No 5, 31 October 1983, p.11.
ASEAN in economic terms. "Your (US) best defence" he said "must ultimately lie in cohesive and stable states in Asia and not on the last minute infusion of arms and naval forces." The Prime Minister also stated in a speech to the Foreign Policy Association in Washington that the USA being a Pacific Power with enormous economic and political stake in the region should play an important role in helping ASEAN states in resolving longstanding issues in the region such as the Kampuchean issue. However he criticised Washington for endorsing the Chinese stand on pressurising Hanoi to withdraw from Kampuchea. He advised Washington should open the prospect for a normal relationship with Vietnam and provide construction aid in return for a negotiated settlement on the Kampuchean issue.

The most obvious example of displeasure shown by the Mahathir Government towards Washington was in sending a military delegation to the Soviet Union in September 1984 to look into the feasibility of acquiring Soviet medium and heavy helicopters. If the deal goes through Malaysia will be the first country in ASEAN to use Soviet weaponry since 1965.

In this context also the Mahathir Government does not share Washington's anxiety over increased Soviet strategic presence in the region. Even though Mahathir criticised Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Kapitsa who reportedly told Singapore's Foreign Minister Dhanabalan that the Soviets would aid communist insurgents in the region if Malaysia and other ASEAN member countries do not accept the situation in Kampuchea, it is obvious that the Soviets do not have much

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20 This statement was attributed especially to the US GSA decision to release tin from its strategic reserve which led to tin prices plummeting in the world market.


influence over insurgent movements in ASEAN. Furthermore Malaysia sees Moscow as a countervailing force to any of Beijing's hegemonistic designs towards the South. Nevertheless Kuala Lumpur does not want to cultivate its relations with Moscow to an extent which might raise concern in the US and other Western countries.

Malaysia criticised Washington's decision to sell lethal weapons to Beijing, citing Washington's indifference and insensitiveness to Malaysia's security interests. During the visits of former US Ambassador to the United Nations Jeanne Kirkpatrick in June 1984 and Secretary of State George Schultz in July 1984, the Prime Minister expressed Malaysia's concern over US enthusiasm in supporting China's programme of economic modernisation. He stated that a prosperous and more economically advanced China would be equally a militarily stronger China, and that "this would definitely pose a threat to the countries in the region in the long run". Further displeasure against Washington over its aid to China was shown when Malaysia received PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat within days of Secretary of State George Schultz's departure. Arafat attacked American and Zionist Imperialism at an unprecedented rally organised by the Malaysian government. Malaysia's apprehension was due to the fact that China has refused to withdraw its support for the outlawed Communist Party of Malaya (CPM). During his visit to Malaysia in November 1978 Deng Xiaoping had reiterated that party-to-party relations were separate from state-to-state relations and that this was a matter of "a very big principle" that could not be changed without "very serious international

25 See FBIS, 13 April 1983, p.01, for Mahathir's comments following the statement made by Kapitsa in Singapore.


implications to China".29 Malaysia is particularly annoyed with Beijing for supporting the Malayan Communist Party's broadcasting station called the Voice of the Malayan Revolution based in China, which beams messages hostile to Malaysia. When Deng Xiaoping undertook a tour of Southeast Asia the broadcasting suddenly stopped but resumed later from a broadcasting station outside China.

However, the government does not have any apprehensions about US pressure on Japan to share its defence burden, especially in protecting SLOC's. Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie emphasised this fact when he stated at a conference in Boston that Japan should play an important role so long as it does not compromise its constitutional commitments.30 Japan's proposal to defend the sea lanes 1,000 nautical miles Southeast of Tokyo and the same distance Southwest from Osaka, was further endorsed by Dr Mahathir during a visit to Japan in January 1983. The Prime Minister expressed support for Japan's military build-up to defend its own archipelago.31 Nevertheless he added that Japan could contribute to the security of the region by helping ASEAN member countries to develop economically so that they can strengthen their national resilience and ensure regional stability.32

Nevertheless the strong non-aligned posture of Malaysia does not mean that the government does not perceive a strategic role for the US in the region. Speaking at a news conference in Kuala Lumpur, Dr Mahathir stated that "unless all of them move out, it is not welcome for us if only one of them gets out", thus clearly emphasising that with the present strategic presence of the Soviet Union in the region the only countervailing force would be the US.33 In this context the government also toned down its proposal to create a Nuclear Weapons

32FBIS ASIA-Pacific, 11 May 1983, p.01.
Free Zone (NWFZ) in Southeast Asia after it sensed the tough line taken by the US vis-a-vis New Zealand. This toning down was clearly reflected when present Foreign Minister Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen stated that he did not see how a NWFZ "will be realised in the next few years". The government too stressed that the US should play a role in protecting the strategic SLOC's in the region. Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie has also stated that the US was needed in helping to establish a regional capability as an auxiliary to the global strategy. Thus it could be argued that Malaysia welcomes a US presence over the horizon whereby if hostilities were to occur it could count on the Americans to come to its aid.

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"Foreign Affairs, December 1981, op.cit."
SINGAPORE

The focus of Singapore's foreign policy has been its capability in surviving the changes in the balance of power in the region. Its foreign policy was aptly described by former Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Lee Khoon Choy who stated,

"Singapore has little capacity of its own to shape the main course of world events. Essentially, for its survival and economic well-being its foreign policy has to respond to the realities of the regional and international environment".¹

This survival ideology, especially pertinent to the smallest ASEAN member country has influenced its foreign policy outlook. Singapore's membership in ASEAN further demonstrated its commitment to Southeast Asia and helped to allay any lingering suspicion that it was a fifth column or Trojan Horse for China.

To safeguard its national interest, Singapore in its early days of independence declared a non-aligned foreign policy. Nevertheless Senior Minister Rajaretanam made a clear distinction stating that,

"While generally speaking, we are sincere in our wish to be friendly with all countries which want to be with us, in the hard world of international realities there are bound to be degrees of friendship between countries. Those closest to us will naturally be those countries whose foreign policy principles and deeds coincides with our national interest and our basic aspirations."²

In other words Singapore had in fact a pro-Western foreign policy posture. This was clearly reflected in Singapore's actions in the Non Aligned Conferences, especially by its not supporting resolutions condemning Western Bloc countries, and in criticising the movement for its pro-Soviet tendencies. Singapore also decided to follow in US footsteps and withdraw from Unesco. Even though the government cited

²Ibid., p.108.
budgetary reasons for its withdrawal, this move was known to have been aimed at pleasing the US.³

During the Indochina conflict Singapore supported the US presence in the region, which compensated for British withdrawal from the East of Suez. However with the fall of Indochina to communist forces, Singapore's stand shifted from supporting one superpower to advocating a multi-major-power presence in the region. Speaking at a press conference in Manila Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew stressed that Southeast Asian countries had to look after themselves to maintain peace and stability due to the decline of Western dominance in the region.⁴ Singapore's attitude towards a multi-major-power presence is best summed up by Rajaretnam, who stated in Bangkok in July 1977 that Singapore accepted the existence of great powers and their rivalries as an immutable fact of international relations.⁵ He further said that

"The only rational course for Southeast Asian nations is not to work for the liquidation of great power presence in the region but rather to ensure a multi power presence as a more agreeable alternative to a single power dominance."⁶

Even though Singapore favoured a multi-power presence in the region, privately its leaders preferred the US presence to be stronger than that of any other major power. In this context Singapore was also known to have extended its servicing facilities to the US 7th Fleet.⁷

⁵Ibid., p. 110.
⁶Far Eastern Economic Review Asia 1977 Yearbook, p.283. It is noteworthy that Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew advocated this position as far back as 1967 when he stated in an interview with Time that "The smaller countries of Southeast Asia would prefer the comfort of their own separable selves which is only possible if there are countervailing forces to enable them not to fall into the orbit of larger powers in the continent." See Charles Morrison and Astri Suhrke, Strategies of Survival: The Foreign Policy Dilemma of Smaller Asian States, University of Queensland Press, 1978, p.171.
⁷Far Eastern Economic Review, 27 February and 26 March 1976, p.11
However with the withdrawal of US troops from Thailand in 1976 and the diminishing strategic interest of the US towards the region, Singapore realised that this situation would render its balance of power formula inoperable. As a result Singapore openly advocated a strong and permanent US strategic presence in the Southeast Asian region. During a visit to Washington in October 1977 Lee Kuan Yew stressed that

"there must be sufficient American forces to influence the thinking of governments, to assure them that outside intervention against them would not be permitted and to caution them that they themselves should not embark on such ventures".

With the fall of Pol Pot’s Kampuchea to Vietnamese forces supported by the Soviet Union in January 1979, Lee Kuan Yew echoed Rajaretinam in stating that the maintenance of a strict neutral stand in international relations was impossible. In stressing this point he stated,

"We must try to defend our interests and if it means from time to time taking sides or appearing to take sides with one as against the other, it must not be consistently on one side against the other."  

With this new power alignment in the region Singapore identified itself with a stronger US strategic presence in the region. In this context Singapore also offered the former British airbase of Tengah for the use of US Orion P-3 (maritime reconnaissance) aircraft flying to and from the Indian Ocean. In providing access to the base Lee Kuan Yew stressed that it was in line with the Republic’s Realpolitik of maintaining balance of power in the region. He further stated that,

"As long as there is a Soviet naval presence that naval presence can only be matched by an American presence."  

Thus the base access was to monitor Soviet submarine and ship movements in the region.

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8 Straits Times, 10 October 1977, p.12
9 Far Eastern Economic Review, 9 March 1979 p.17, cited in K K Nair, ASEAN Indo China Relations since 1975, op. cit. p. 120.
Singapore too advocated strongly that the Reagan Administration operate fleet in the Indian Ocean, to counter any attempts by the Soviets towards naval domination in the region.\(^1\) Lee Kuan Yew added that,

"The US must ensure that the Soviet Union—either on her own or through her surrogate Vietnam—should not be allowed to dominate or intimidate Southeast Asia with her military might."\(^1\)

He also stressed that the Straits of Malacca "must never become chokable [sic] by the Soviets".\(^1\) When US Defence Secretary Weinberger visited Singapore during a tour of Asia and the Pacific region in November 1983, Lee Kuan Yew and Defence Minister Goh Chok Tong requested that another US aircraft carrier should be stationed in the region, to demonstrate a continued US commitment to the Southeast Asian region.\(^1\)

Singapore also stressed the need for a new defence umbrella in Southeast Asia, which included some form of military understanding with the US. The then Second Deputy Prime Minister Rajaratnam expressed that the Five Power Defence Agreement (FPDA) was inadequate vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and its surrogate Vietnam.\(^1\) He further added that the threat in the region was an overall global problem and "the linchpin is the US and things must be worked around the US."\(^1\) Foreign Minister Dhanabalan also expressed Singapore's concern over the differences which had arisen in the ANZUS pact, during the visit by the New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange to the city in April 1985. He further stated that any split in ANZUS is likely to have repercussions for the whole Southeast Asian region, especially in causing an imbalance of major

\(^1\) "US should have Indian Ocean Fleet, says Lee" in *Asian Defence Journal*, April 1982, p.7.
\(^1\) Ibid.
\(^1\) Ibid.
\(^1\) Ibid., p.4
powers in the region. This he stressed "can weaken the security of Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand as the security of Southeast Asia and the Pacific region is 'closely interwoven'."  

Singapore has also taken a virulently anti-Soviet stand with regard to the Soviet presence in the region. In the wake of the Afghanistian invasion Foreign Minister Rajaratna commented that there was a rising tide of Soviet-led communist revolutions. "Non-communist Southeast Asia" he added, "should face up to the hard reality that a Soviet-led and financed communist revolution had been launched." Singapore also banned indefinitely Soviet naval ships from using repair facilities at its dockyards. The ban was imposed when Singapore discovered a Soviet espionage ring operating in the island in 1980.  

Singapore had strongly endorsed Japan's defence buildup within the context of defending its archipelago and contributing to the balance of power in Northeast Asia. In an interview with a leading Japanese newspaper, "Asahi Shimbun", Lee Kuan Yew stated that if Japan were to strengthen her self defence capability then more US forces could be brought from Northeast Asia to cover Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific. Nevertheless also stressed that Japan's buildup should be within the framework of role sharing defined by the US. For instance he suggested that Japan could take over the air and naval surveillance of the sealanes close to Japan. In conclusion he stressed that whatever arrangement the US and Japan agreed upon, it should not

18 FBIS-Asia Pacific, 7 April 1980. p.01
19 "Ban on Soviet Naval Vessels to stay" in Asian Defence Journal, April 1982, p.7. The islands air force has also purchased four early warning and reconnaissance (AWACS) planes from the US to monitor Soviet ship movements in the region. See FBIS-Asia Pacific,1 September 1983, p.02 It is noteworthy that Singapore is the only country in ASEAN whose leaders have not visited Moscow.
20 The Age, 14 January 1983 p.8
result in a diminished US presence in the region.\textsuperscript{21}

With regards to the Reagan Administration's decision to sell lethal weapons to China, Singapore shares ASEAN's apprehension. The dilemma facing ASEAN countries over Chinese ambition in the region was aptly described by Lee Kuan Yew, when China launched a punitive drive against Vietnam in February 1979, whereby he stated,

"Our dilemma is acute. If there had been no (Chinese) intervention, we would face Vietnamese supremacy which in this case means Soviet supremacy. If the intervention is over-successful, it means that in ten, fifteen years there will be an assertion of influence, perhaps not amounting to hegemony, by a Communist power that has influence over all guerilla movements in the countries of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia."\textsuperscript{22}

Nevertheless Lee Kuan Yew qualified himself on this matter when he stated in an interview that the Reagan Administration's decision to sell arms to China was an admission that the US had few options in maintaining the balance of power in East Asia. He also stressed that if the US weapon technology did not help China to build up an amphibious capability, then the decision to sell weapons would be welcomed as maintaining the balance.\textsuperscript{23}

Singapore has taken the most adamant line among the ASEAN countries against Vietnam's occupation of Kampuchea. Lee Kuan Yew in an interview with \textit{Time} has even accused Hanoi of having designs to occupy the whole of Southeast Asia.\textsuperscript{24} Even though Singapore leaders have accused Vietnam in unequivocal terms of being a Soviet surrogate with intentions to destabilize the whole region, they do not share the US perception that Vietnam can be bled into submission over the Kampuchean issue. Singapore leaders are of the opinion that the Kampuchean conflict can only be solved through negotiations.

\textsuperscript{21}Dilip Mukerjee, op. cit., p. 35. See also \textit{FBIS - Asia Pacific}, January 1983, p. 04
\textsuperscript{22}\textit{Singapore Bulletin}, August 1979, cited in K K Nair, op.cit. p.120
\textsuperscript{23}\textit{Far Eastern Economic Review}, 23 October 1981, p.20
\textsuperscript{24}"Lee Kuan Yew: Peace I Hope" in \textit{Time}, 7 May 1976, p.19
Thus it is obvious that Singapore wants a strong US strategic presence in the region. This stems from its fundamental sense of insecurity due to its size and ethnicity. Even though it welcomes all major powers to the region to maintain the balance, Singapore prefers a strong US presence over the other superpowers. Its rhetoric, warning of growing Soviet presence and threat in the region and of its surrogates Vietnam, could be regarded as being one of its strong points in lobbying for a continued US strategic presence in the region.
ASEAN was not the first attempt by Southeast Asian countries to form a regional organisation. Prior to ASEAN there were attempts such as Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), Maphilindo (acronym for Malaya, Philippines and Indonesia) and the Asia-Pacific Council (ASPAC).\(^1\) However each of these failed, due to mutual suspicion and internal tension among the Southeast Asian countries. But with the ending of confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia and the toning down of the claim over Sabah by Philippines, a reconciliation conference took place in Bangkok in 1966. Following this, ASEAN was formed in August 1967 to strengthen socio-economic and cultural relations among its members.\(^2\)

The early years of ASEAN were still clouded with suspicion and tension, such as over Sabah issue between the Philippines and Malaysia. Moreover no summit meeting was held in the early years. The first took place only 9 years after its formation. However, as Lee Kuan Yew stressed, the most important achievement of ASEAN in its first years since its inception "was the understanding and goodwill created at the various ASEAN meetings which had helped to lubricate relationships which could otherwise have generated friction".\(^3\)

The enunciation of the Guam Doctrine and the proclamation of the Collective Security System by Brezhnev, both in 1969, instilled in ASEAN the awareness that the region would be open to superpower rivalry, and ASEAN, therefore, advocated in 1971 that Southeast Asia should be a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN). (See Appendix 4 for the declaration) In the declaration ASEAN stated that it

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\(^1\) For a brief survey of each of these regional organizations see Rajendran "ASEAN Foreign Policy, The Shift to Collective Action", Arenabuku Sdn. Bhd. Kuala Lumpur 1985, pp. 15-34.

\(^2\) Each of the member countries had its own reasons for joining ASEAN. For the reasons see Ibid. pp. 17-21.

\(^3\) Ten Years of ASEAN', ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, 1977, p. 168.
"was determined to exert initially necessary efforts to secure recognition of, and respect for, Southeast Asia as ZOPFAN, free from any form or manner of interference by outside powers". However, due to different threat perceptions there was no common concern in ASEAN on how ZOPFAN should be defined. This was a typical example of how declaratory policy of ASEAN runs counter to the individual members' foreign policy perceptions.

The fall of Indo-China shifted ASEAN to a new dimension. The new alignment prompted ASEAN to convene its first summit meeting in Bali in July 1976. The major outcome of this was the Declaration of ASEAN concord and the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia which established ASEAN as a 'regional political community with shared common outlook and the broad requirements for regional order and stability'. This common perception was translated into what was defined as regional resilience, whereby through the strengthening of their economies and internal political positions (national resilience), ASEAN could withstand any external pressures. However there was no proposal to form a military pact among ASEAN countries.

Even though the Bali summit of July 1975 and the subsequent Vietnamese invasion brought ASEAN closer together than ever before, there were differences in perceptions. These were also seen in respect of the US strategic role in the Southeast Asian region. ASEAN declaratory policy is non-aligned. But all the members stress the importance of maintaining friendly relations with the US and share similar distrust with the Soviet Union and China. However the intensity of commitment to this view varies between countries.

Within ASEAN there are two distinct views on the strategic role of the US in the region. Thailand, Philippines and Singapore want a strong US presence and role, while Malaysia and Indonesia do not, believing this would contribute to superpower rivalry in the region and defeat ASEAN's stand on ZOPFAN. Nevertheless all ASEAN countries want the US to remain in the region.

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4 Op. Cit. p. 27.
Even though ASEAN states welcome US presence, ASEAN ironically regards US intentions as flawed and tinged with double standards, and present US policies as an indirect threat to security, peace and stability in the region. For instance ASEAN unequivocally opposes the US pressure on Japan to increase its defence budget and share the defence burden of East Asia.

In this context also, ASEAN is critical of the US decision to sell lethal weapons to China, and ASEAN states have criticised the US of toeing the Chinese line on the Kampuchean issue. For ASEAN this would improve Beijing's regional power position, which is detrimental to the security of the region.

ASEAN member countries have accepted the likelihood that the US would not intervene militarily in another regional conflict, and is developing a capacity to respond to regional crises on a self-reliance basis. ASEAN countries have already carried out bilateral military exercises, sharing of intelligence and standardizing of command systems, but never a multilateral exercise which might be construed as a revival of SEATO. However these efforts contribute less to deterrence than could through regular multilateral exercises dealing with major contingencies. Until this is achieved ASEAN would want US to play a strategic role either in the region, or at least over the horizon, and intervene when a contingency arises, even though this is contradictory to its declaratory policies of ZOPFAN.

For the US Southeast Asia had become low in strategic priority especially after the Vietnam War. The Vietnam syndrome has still a strong influence among US policymakers. Even though the current administration has stressed that the Vietnam syndrome has been overcome, neither it nor its predecessor has clearly stated what it would do if Thailand is attacked. It would, therefore, seem that the strategic role of the US in the three administrations after the Vietnam War has not changed. Even the aid provided for the Afghan resistance and Contra rebels in Nicaragua far exceeds the meagre $US5 million in "humanitarian" assistance provided to the non-communist resistance

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groups in Kampuchea. The very nature of the assistance clearly signifies that the US does not have any intention to intervene militarily in the region.

Even the strategic interest of the US in the Pacific region signifies a low priority to Southeast Asia. The present strategic interest of the US in East Asia emphasises China's military modernisation to counter the fifty Soviet divisions in East Asia; encouragement of Japanese rearmament to share the defence burden in the region; the maintenance of US troops in South Korea; and the maintenance of naval and air facilities in the region, including Subic and Clark bases in the Philippines.

However, even these bases contribute more to the US global strategic posture than to regional interest. Compared to the two previous administrations, the Reagan administration has projected an image of strident commitment towards the region, as can be seen from its expansion of force deployment and projection. However, the US has tacitly accepted China as the main deterrent factor in the region vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and its ally Vietnam, and has also pressured Japan to share the defence burden of the SLOCs. Thus it could be argued that how the US would react would depend on the particular contingency and until then Washington would continue to be evasive about its strategic role in the region.
Mutual Defence Treaty Between The Republic of Philippines

And The United States Of America

THE Parties of this Treaty

REAFFIRMING their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments, and desiring to strengthen the fabric of peace in the Pacific area.

RECALLING with mutual pride the historic relationship which brought their two peoples together in a common bond of sympathy and mutual ideals to fight side-by-side against imperialist aggression during the last war.

DESIRING to declare publicly and formally their sense of unity and their common determination to defend themselves against external armed attack, so that no potential aggressor could be under the illusion that either of them stands alone in the Pacific area.

DESIRING further to strengthen their present efforts for collective defense for the preservation of peace and security pending the development of a more comprehensive system of regional security in the Pacific area.

AGREEING that nothing in this present instrument shall be considered or interpreted as in any way or sense altering or diminishing any existing agreements or understandings between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America.
HAVZ agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

THE Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered and to refrain in their international relation from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

ARTICLE II

IN order more effectively to achieve the objective of this Treaty, the Parties separately and jointly by self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.

ARTICLE III

THE Parties, through their Foreign Ministers or their deputies, will consult together from time to time regarding the implementation of this Treaty and whenever in the opinion of either of them the territorial integrity, political independence or security of either of the Parties is threatened by external armed attack in the Pacific.

ARTICLE IV

EACH Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on
either of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common dangers in accordance with its constitutional processes.

ANY such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

ARTICLE V

FOR the purpose of Article IV, an armed attack on either of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the metropolitan territory of either of the Parties, or on the island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific Ocean, its armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific.

ARTICLE VI

THIS Treaty does not affect and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintainance of international peace and security.

ARTICLE VII

THIS Treaty shall be ratified by the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America in accordance with their respective constitutional processes and will come into force when instruments of ratification thereof have been exchanged by them at Manila.
ARTICLE VIII

THIS Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely. Either Party may terminate it one year after notice has been given to the other party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty.

DONE in duplicate at Washington this thirtieth day of August, 1951.

For the Republic of the Philippines:

(Sgd.) CARLOS P. ROMULO (Sgd.) JOAQUIN M. ELIZALDE (Sgd.) VICENTE J. FRANCISCO (Sgd.) DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL

For the United States of America:

(Sgd.) DEAN ACHESON (Sgd.) JOHN FOSTER DULLES (Sgd.) TOM CONNALLY (Sgd.) ALEXANDER WILEY

(Signed at Washington, 30 August 1951. The agreement entered into force, 27 August 1952)
APPENDIX 2

THE MANILA PACT

THE Parties to this Treaty,

RECOGNIZING the sovereign equality of all the Parties,

REITERATING their faith in the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments,

REAFFIRMING that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they uphold the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and declaring that they will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to promote self-government and to secure the independence of all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities,

DESIRING to strengthen the fabric of peace and freedom and to uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, and to promote the economic well-being and development of all peoples in the treaty area,

INTENDING to declare publicly and formally their sense of unity, so that any potential aggressor will appreciate that the Parties stand together in the area, and

DESIRING further to coordinate their efforts for collective defense for the preservation of peace and security,

ARTICLE I
THE Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

ARTICLE II

IN order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and to prevent and counter subversive activities directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability.

ARTICLE III

THE Parties undertake to strengthen their free institutions and to cooperate with one another in the further development of economic measures, including technical assistance, designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being and to further the individual and collective efforts of governments toward these ends.

ARTICLE IV

1. EACH Party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the Parties or against any State or territory which the Parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it
will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. Measures taken under this paragraph shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations.

2. IF, in the opinion of any of the Parties, the inviolability or the integrity of the territory or the sovereignty or political independence of any Party in the treaty area or of any other State or territory to which the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article from time to time apply is threatened in any way other than by armed attack or is affected or threatened by any fact or situation which might endanger the peace of the area, the Parties shall consult immediately in order to agree on the measures which should be taken for the common defense.

3. IT is understood that no action on the territory of any State designated by unanimous agreement under paragraph 1 of this Article or on any territory so designated shall be taken except at the invitation or consent of the government concerned.

ARTICLE V

THE Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. The Council shall provide for consultation with regard to military and any other planning as the situation obtaining in the treaty area may from time to time require. The Council shall be so organized as to be able to meet at any time.

ARTICLE VI

THIS Treaty does not affect and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations of any of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. Each
Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third party is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

ARTICLE VII

ANY other State in a position to further the objectives of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the area may, by unanimous agreement of the Parties, be invited to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines shall inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

ARTICLE VIII

AS used in this Treaty, the "treaty area" is the general area of Southeast Asia, including also the entire territories of the Asian Parties, and the general area of the Southwest Pacific not including the Pacific area north of 21 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, amend this Article to include within the treaty area the territory of any State acceding to this Treaty in accordance with Article VII or otherwise to change the treaty area.

ARTICLE IX

1. THIS Treaty shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. Duly certified copies thereof shall be transmitted by that government to the other signatories. 2. THE
Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall notify all of the other signatories of such deposit. 3. THE Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the instruments of ratification of a majority of the signatories shall have been deposited, and shall come into effect with respect to each other State on the date of the deposit of its instrument of ratification.

ARTICLE X

THIS Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely, but any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall inform the governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunciation.

ARTICLE XI

THE English text of this Treaty is binding on the Parties, but when the Parties have agreed to the French text thereof and have so notified the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, the French text shall be equally authentic and binding on the Parties.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE United States of America in executing the present Treaty does so with the understanding that its recognition of the effect of aggression and armed attack and its agreement with reference thereto in
Article IV, paragraph 1, apply only to communist aggression but affirms that in the event of other aggression or armed attack it will consult under the provisions of Article IV, paragraph 2.

IN witness whereof, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty.

DONE at Manila, this eighth day of September, 1954.

THE FOREIGN MINISTER of Thailand, Thanat Khoman, and the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, met on several occasions during the past few days for discussions on the current situation in Southeast Asia, the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty and the security of Thailand.

THE Secretary of State reaffirmed that the United States regards the preservation of the independence and integrity of Thailand as vital to the national interest of the United States and to world peace. He expressed the firm intention of the United States to aid Thailand, its ally and historic friend, in resisting Communist aggression and subversion.

THE Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State reviewed the close association of Thailand and the United States in the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty and agreed that such association is an effective deterrent to direct Communist aggression against Thailand. They agreed that the Treaty provides the basis for the signatories collectively to assist Thailand in case of Communist armed attack against that country. The Secretary of State assured the Foreign Minister that in the event of such aggression, the United States intends to give full effect to its obligations under the Treaty to act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. The Secretary of State reaffirmed that this obligation of the United States does not depend upon the prior agreement of all other parties to the Treaty, since this Treaty obligation is individual as well as collective.

IN reviewing measures to meet indirect aggression, the Secretary of State stated that the United States regards its commitments to Thailand under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty and under its bilateral economic and military assistance agreements with Thailand as
providing an important basis for United States actions to help Thailand meet indirect aggression. In this connection the Secretary reviewed with the Foreign Minister the actions being taken by the United States to assist the Republic of Viet-Nam to meet the threat of indirect aggression.

The Foreign Minister assured the Secretary of State of the determination of the Government of Thailand to meet the threat of indirect aggression by pursuing vigorously measures for the economic and social welfare and the safety of its people.

The situation in Laos was reviewed in detail and full agreement was reached on the necessity for the stability of Southeast Asia, of achieving a free, independent and truly neutral Laos.

The Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State reviewed the mutual efforts of their governments to increase the capabilities and readiness of the Thai armed forces to defend the Kingdom. They noted also that the United States is making a significant contribution to this effort and that the United States intends to accelerate future deliveries to the greatest extent possible. The Secretary and the Foreign Minister also took note of the work of the Joint Thai-United States Committee which has been established in Bangkok to assure effective cooperation in social, economic and military measures to increase Thailand's national capabilities. They agreed that this Joint Committee and its subcommittees should continue to work toward the most effective utilization of Thailand's resources and those provided by the United States to promote Thailand's development and security.

The Foreign Minister and the Secretary were in full agreement that continued economic and social progress is essential to the stability of Thailand. They reviewed Thailand's impressive economic and social progress and the Thai Government's plans to accelerate development, particularly Thailand's continuing determination fully to utilize its own resources in moving toward its development goals.
THE Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State also discussed the desirability of an early conclusion of a treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation between the two countries which would bring into accord with current conditions the existing treaty of 1937.

WE the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and the Special Envoy of the National Executive Council of Thailand:

FIRMLY believing in the merits of regional co-operation which has drawn our countries to co-operate together in the economic, social and cultural fields in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations;

DESIROUS of bringing about a relaxation of international tension and of achieving a lasting peace in Southeast Asia;

INSPIRED by the worthy aims and objectives of the United Nations, in particular by the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, abstention from the threat or use of force, peaceful settlement of international disputes, equal rights and self-determination and non-interference in the internal affairs of States;

BELIEVING in the continuing validity of the "Declaration on the Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation" of the Bandung Conference of 1955, which, among others, enunciates the principles by which States may co-exist peacefully:

RECONGNISING the right of every state, large or small, to lead its national existence free from outside interference in its internal affairs as this interference will adversely affect its freedom, independence and integrity;
DEDICATED to the maintenance of peace, freedom and independence unimpaired;

BELIEVING in the need to meet present challenges and new development by co-operating with all peace and freedom loving nations, both within and outside the region, in the furtherance of world peace, stability and harmony;

COGNIZANT of the significant trend toward establishing nuclear-free zone, as in the "Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapon in Latin America" and the Luasaka Declaration Proclaiming Africa a nuclear-free zone, for the purpose of promoting world peace and security by reducing the areas of international conflicts and tensions;

REITERATION our commitment to the principle in the Bangkok Declaration which established ASEAN in 1967, "that the countries of Southeast Asia share a primary responsibility for strengthening the economic and social stability of the region and ensuring their peaceful and progressive national development, and that they are determined to ensure their stability and security from external interference in any form or manifestation in order to preserve their national identities in accordance with the ideals and aspirations of their people";

AGREEING that the neutralization of Southeast Asia is a desirable objective and that we should explore ways and means of bringing about its realization, and

CONVINCED that the time is propitious for joint action to give effective expression to the deeply felt desire of the people of Southeast Asia to ensure the conditions of peace and stability indispensable to their independence and their economic and social well-being;
DO hereby state

1. that Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand are determined to exert initially efforts to secure the recognition of, and respect for, Southeast Asia as Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside Powers;

2. that Southeast Asian countries should make concerted efforts to broaden the areas of co-operation which would contribute to their strength, solidarity and closer relationship.
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