The Strategic Situation in the 1980s
By the 1980s Britain will long have ceased to be a force East of Suez, the war in Vietnam will be over, China’s Cultural Revolution have drawn to a close.

This is the world for which Australia’s foreign and defence policies have to be shaped now; it is the world whose alignments and policies Mr Jukes is attempting to predict.

His analysis is concerned not with the effect of economic and ideological factors but with the impact of already apparent developments and trends on strategic balance and the effects that changes in that balance will have on relations between states.

No 1984, this forecast is intended to provoke consideration and discussion among students of international affairs and strategic studies, officials concerned with External Affairs and Defence, journalists and politicians, and the ordinary Australians concerned for their country’s future.
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THE STRATEGIC SITUATION
IN THE 1980s

An Exercise in Forecasting

That forecasting is an undertaking full of pitfalls is so obvious as hardly to need stating. Neither the spread of affluence in the advanced societies nor the pace of scientific and technological progress so closely linked with it were foreseen by any bar a handful of visionaries, and the field of international relations is one in which all that can be said with confidence is that the unexpected will happen frequently. Nevertheless it is possible to make some assumptions as to the near future—say fifteen years ahead—based on developments and trends already apparent, to foresee to some extent the effects which these are likely to have on the strategic balance, and to draw certain tentative conclusions as to the effects which changes in the strategic balance will have upon relations between states, both major and minor. It must be borne in mind that most of such forecasting is little more than educated guesswork, which at most can serve as no more than a general outline of future developments. In this paper, only limited account is taken of the effects of economic and ideological factors, and the main emphasis is placed on the possible consequences of changes in the strategic balance. This is not to deny the importance of these other factors, but
global economic forecasting is a particularly hazardous business even for economists, and the only ready-made attempt at such forecasting (the Hudson Institute Study, *The Year 2000*) has attempted to sidestep the problems by a 'no-surprise' projection which merely assumes that all countries maintain the annual rates of growth of recent years, and ignores the difficulties created by the differences in growth rates of countries such as Japan and the much lower growth rates of the Asian countries which form a large part of the market for Japanese products. Nor does it take account of possible cut-backs in Japanese production resulting from action to protect home industries against Japanese imports such as Australia has already taken with respect to Japanese cars. Economic forecasting has therefore been left to the economists, and to that extent this is an incomplete study of the 1980s, as its title implies. Strategic behaviour will often be modified by economic and ideological factors, but nevertheless changes in the strategic balance confer new options upon some states and reduce those available to others and hence merit attention for their own sakes. This paper attempts to indicate the ways in which new options will be created or existing ones redistributed; it is meant as a stimulant to discussion rather than as an exhaustive study.

The strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union is inherently a stable one. That this is so owes little or nothing to the greater sense of responsibility with which major powers are prone to credit themselves, but much to the nature of the weapons with which they are equipped and their devastating force compared with those employed in the past. A modern industrial state is highly integrated and, however large it may be, is dependent on a relatively small number of conurbations, usually around twenty in number, seldom more than thirty. These contain about one-third of the population and between half and two-thirds of the heavy industrial capacity as well as the main administrative centres and communications networks. To put these conurbations out of action deprives a state of both brains and sinews, reduces the survivors in the attacked area, and also those in the unattacked remainder of the country, to preoccupation with tasks of survival, and eliminates the country from the role of advanced societies for many years to come. This result could be achieved in respect of any country, including the United States, the Soviet Union, and China, by the successful delivery of between 100 and 150 nuclear warheads of several megatons each, weapons which both the United States and the
Soviet Union have possessed in large quantities for at least a decade. Defence against these weapons may be attempted, as in the Soviet and the United States Ballistic Missile Defence programs, but the magnitude of the problem is apparent if the effects of a launch of the United States strategic missiles are compared with the bombing of Germany in World War II. Germany was subjected to continuous attacks from 1940 to 1945, but because the weapon used was high explosive the bombing campaign did no more than contain the rate of expansion of the German industrial war effort, which went on rising until late in 1944. The reason was that the whole country could not be attacked at once. Factories destroyed in one city could be replaced by expanded production elsewhere and, furthermore, because the bombing force needed to make repeated assaults, the ability on the part of the defence to destroy slightly more than one bomber in twenty per raid ensured a respite, since the Allies could not replace either crews or aircraft fast enough to maintain the force in face of such an attrition. For the defence, therefore, penetration to the target by nineteen bombers or less out of twenty despatched meant that they had succeeded in their task, and to shoot down one out of ten was a brilliant victory. About two million tons of bombs were dropped on Germany in four years; one ICBM warhead now contains more destructive force than this, and therefore 5 per cent success is no longer acceptable. The United States missile force comprises over sixteen hundred Minuteman ICBM and Polaris submarine-launched missiles. If only half of this force is targeted at Soviet cities, the arrival on target of one-fifth of the number launched ensures the obliteration of the Soviet Union as a modern state, with at least one-quarter of its population dead, half to two-thirds of its industry destroyed, and administration and communications totally disrupted. For the Soviet Union, therefore, 80 per cent success in destroying United States missiles would in practice be almost indistinguishable from total failure, and if three-quarters of the U.S. force was launched at Soviet cities, 90 per cent success by the defence would leave most of the Soviet Union’s inhabited areas in ruins.

The possibility of a technological breakthrough which would render all warheads impotent cannot be excluded, but breakthroughs of this magnitude are rare indeed, and even if achieved would do no more than force the missile designers to amend their technology—something they are already doing by introducing decoys, multiple warheads (both of these are already in service), and developing guided re-entry vehicles capable of evasive manoeuvres (these are already under development).
In short, no defensive system aimed at destroying missiles in flight is likely to overturn completely the ascendancy which nuclear warheads have given to the offensive by their capacity to destroy cities.

However, the stability of mutual deterrence could be threatened if one side should develop a capability to destroy missiles before they were launched. Both the Soviet Union and the United States have for some years past been deploying their offensive missiles in underground reinforced-concrete silos, to destroy one of which would require a number of missiles (probably running into double figures) to be launched at it. Thus any hope of success in eliminating a 'hardened' missile force would require that the attacker possess a force some ten times as large as his enemy's, and furthermore, that he launch his missiles in such a fashion that the enemy would be unable to avert destruction of their own by launching them before the attacking warheads arrived. In practice this has been impossible, because the defender's radars provide warning of the approach of enemy ICBMs in ample time for him to launch his own, and the stability of the mutual deterrent against surprise attack has therefore been ensured by (a) the inability of either side to deploy a force sufficiently large to destroy that of its adversary and (b) by the disparity between flight-time to target and the time required to launch a solid-fuel hardened ICBM.

The stability is now being modified by developments in two related fields: ballistic missile defence and changes in offensive missile warheads.

Ballistic missile defence has been under development in the United States and the Soviet Union since the mid-fifties, and has reached the stage where against a small-scale attack by 'unsophisticated' missiles a very high probability of successful defence is feasible. This in turn has prompted both countries to modify the warheads on their own offensive missiles by adding decoys (whose function is to multiply the number of objects appearing on the defender's radar screens and reduce the time available to him for identifying and attacking the warheads among them), and by developing multiple warheads, each containing several nuclear weapons and hence capable of destroying with one missile either a very large target or several adjacent targets—a task which formerly would have required several missiles. Decoy-fitted and multiple warheads are already in service in the United States, and the Soviet Union either has them or soon will have. The warheads at present used are ballistic, i.e. they depend for their accuracy on the guidance imparted to them in the first part of their trajectory, but in both countries
problems of warhead guidance are being worked on. Initially it is probable that the main function of warhead guidance will be to enhance ability to penetrate enemy ballistic missile defences by means of evasive manoeuvres, but it is likely that more developed versions of the guided warhead will embody some form of active homing enabling them to 'lock on' to some prominent feature of the target area, and hence to achieve much increased accuracy. Thus destruction of the enemy 'counter-value' targets (the main centres of population, administration, and industry) will require a far smaller number of missile launches than is at present necessary, and, furthermore, may well enable small 'hard' targets (such as ICBMs in silos) to be brought under attack. Thus the main component of the strategic force of both super-powers, the fixed-site hardened ICBM, will be a wasting asset by the end of the next decade (though ballistic missile defence of it may prolong its usefulness for some years), and a much larger proportion of the missile forces of the United States and the Soviet Union will be mobile. This will create some uncertainties in each's picture of the other's strategic posture which do not exist now. At present each side knows the size of the potential adversary's strategic armoury, because both ICBM silos and missile-carrying submarines can be counted during construction by devices such as reconnaissance satellites. Thus even though the missiles themselves cannot be counted during construction, the total launcher numbers are known to a high degree of certainty. When static missile launchers are replaced by mobile land-based ones this certainty will be much reduced. The Soviet Union has already displayed a mobile ICBM and launcher; though this may not yet be operational, it could be within a few years, and serious consideration is being given in the United States to the possibility of making the new 'Improved Capability Missile' mobile on land. So whereas now total adversary strategic strength can be computed on the basis of a launcher count with one warhead per launcher, before the early 1980s it will have to be assessed on the basis of a mix of known static ICBM sites plus known missile submarines, multiplied by an unknown number of warheads per missile, and supplemented by an unknown number of land-based mobile missiles, also with an unknown number of warheads per missile. In such circumstances it is likely that increased forces will be demanded by military leaders in each country, to cover the increased margin of uncertainty. In addition, each country will probably require to add to its strategic offensive forces to provide for deterrence of China. In the case of the Soviet Union the addition can take the form of missiles of MRBM/IRBM range, capable of alternative use against United States allies, but not the United States itself,
whereas any additions to the United States force made for purposes of deterring China will require to be of ICBM/SLBM (Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile) configuration, i.e. also capable of use against the Soviet Union. This also will tend to throw additional strain on the United States-Soviet détente, because, unlike more widely-publicised measures such as the installation of anti-ballistic missiles, the warhead with terminal guidance could threaten the stability of mutual deterrence, while the riposte to it—either an increase in the mobile component of the strategic offensive force or the installation of 'thick' ABM defence, or both—could engender further uncertainties about the adversary's capabilities and intentions and perhaps give rise to a renewed arms race with concomitant effects upon the political relationship between the super-powers. It cannot therefore be taken for granted that mutual deterrence will persist undisturbed; unquestionably each super-power will attempt to maintain and improve its position, and will probably succeed in so doing, but probably at higher levels of maintained force than at present.

It is theoretically feasible for a number of nations to develop missiles of up to ICBM range (5-6,000 miles) during the period, but in practice few are likely to do so. Because of the difficulty of producing sufficiently reliable and accurate guidance systems, the longer-range missiles would be uneconomic without nuclear warheads and are therefore unlikely to be built by nations which have no aspiration to a nuclear capability. In theory chemical or biological agents could be used instead, but the uncertainty of their effects, in particular the difficulty of ensuring that they would do their work before the country attacked could launch a riposte or induce its allies to do so, are likely to debar their use against main population centres remote from a theatre of war. Much of the military missile hardware is identical with that used in space programs, which can therefore serve as a basis for the semi-secret development of an offensive missile force. Among the non-nuclear powers, Japan already has a well-developed civil space program, and Western Germany's, though more modest in scale, has progressed far enough for long-range missiles to be in production by the late 1970s if considered necessary. So much has been published about (in particular) United States missiles that the construction from scratch of a force of 'primitive' missiles, using readily available fuels (kerosene and liquid oxygen), commercial automatic pilot components (which would give a guidance accuracy of some 4 to 5 miles, dependent on range, adequate for attacking a large city if fitted with a nuclear warhead), and requiring no specially sophisticated
metallurgy, is already possible by 'building from books'. The missiles could have a range of up to 2,000 miles, and for a force of the order of 1 to 200 would be cheaper than constructing an equivalent force of bombers—though probably more expensive than acquiring obsolescent bombers from a major power, or purchasing airliners (which are likely to be supersonic by the 1980s) for conversion. Missiles of this sort would be difficult to 'harden', and would be vulnerable to advanced ABMs which the super-powers may have deployed by the 1980s, but against most other countries could be of considerable effectiveness. Whether or not additional countries enter the missile business depends on the success of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in inhibiting the spread of nuclear weapons. This is discussed later in the paper.

Among the existing second-rank nuclear powers, neither France nor the United Kingdom is likely to acquire nuclear delivery vehicles much beyond the levels already planned, except in the unlikely event of a complete withdrawal of the United States guarantee from Western Europe. In that event either or both might deem it necessary to provide the basis for a 'European Nuclear Force'. However, it is not likely that China will be content with a small nuclear capability. It has been suggested, especially in the United States, that the Chinese ICBM, when it arrives in the mid-seventies, will be 'primitive' in the sense that the warheads will not be equipped with penetration aids, and the United States deployment of ballistic missile defences is claimed to be directed against the possibility of Chinese missile attack on the United States. Its ability to nullify such an attack is claimed to be very high. This claim must be examined closely.

Precisely how an ABM 'kills' an incoming missile warhead is a closely guarded secret, but area ABM defence is known to involve the detonation of ABM warheads in the megaton range in the path of incoming warheads above the atmosphere, so as to produce heat and x-ray effects which render the hostile warhead inoperative. The Chinese are likely to be aware of these effects (which have frequently been mentioned in Western open sources) and it would seem unwise to assume that they are designing warheads known in 1968 to be incapable of penetrating ABM defences already being built for a missile not due to enter service until 1975. By the early 1980s China will have been a nuclear power for nearly twenty years, and even if United States information on nuclear weapons effects ceases to be available in, or capable of being inferred from, published sources, Chinese scientists will have accumulated a formidable amount of experience of their own, so that the nuclear warhead of a Chinese ICBM is likely to be at least
as effective then as a Soviet or United States warhead is in 1968. Furthermore, the Chinese ICBM force is unlikely to consist at full strength of a mere handful of missiles, since China is the only major country in the world which has succeeded in antagonising both superpowers and will therefore require a force adequate to deter them both. The limited BMD program on which the United States has embarked is publicly justified on the grounds that the Chinese ICBM force is likely to be not only primitive but small in numbers. By the 1980s both grounds may well be invalid and the United States ABM program may in fact do no more than postpone for a few years the point at which United States policymakers have to take serious account of Chinese capability to damage the United States. This in itself may be well worth the expenditures involved, but will not be the same as a permanent solution to the problem of relations with China: even if Chinese warheads had originally been so planned, there would be little point in continuing the program unchanged in the light of a United States ABM deployment specifically and publicly aimed at rendering such warheads nugatory. The Chinese ICBM force may well be small in numbers from 1975 to the end of the period, but Chinese successes (a) in choosing in the early 1960s to proceed by the then technically more difficult ‘U-235 path’, which makes possible the quicker acquisition of a thermonuclear capability than the easier ‘plutonium path’; and (b) in fitting a nuclear warhead to a missile at a very early stage, makes it wiser to assume that they are already aware of the need for penetration aids and of their general principles (which have been widely canvassed in the United States technical and popular journals), and are already at work redesigning warheads to take them. In view of the amply documented experience of the United States and Soviet missile programs, China is likely to be able to cut several corners (as she has already done in by-passing both the plutonium bomb and the strategic bomber), and it is therefore probable that China’s ICBM will constitute an effective deterrent to both the Soviet Union and the United States from the mid-1970s onwards, ABM deployment notwithstanding, and by the early 1980s will number at least 200 launchers, a certain proportion of which will be either hardened or mobile. China may also deploy some missiles in submarines, probably conventionally powered, but this seems less probable, despite her alleged possession of a Soviet G-class submarine. The likely consequences for China’s behavior in the world are dealt with later.

In theory it is possible for some nineteen countries to become nuclear powers by the 1980s—Argentina, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Czecho-
slovakia, East Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, India, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Egypt, and West Germany. In practice, it is highly unlikely that many of them will do so. Some will abstain for lack of a perceived threat, some on grounds of expense, some for lack of access to testing areas, some because they believe themselves sufficiently protected by existing nuclear powers, and yet others because of the detrimental effect which they expect a nuclear weaponry program would have upon their political position. The Non-Proliferation Treaty prohibits only the manufacture or acquisition of nuclear weapons and explosive devices, and requires the application of safeguards to nuclear material capable of being fabricated into weapons. As far as can be judged from the published text, it is possible within the Treaty for any participant nation to proceed with research and development and to construct nuclear facilities (e.g. power reactors) adequate to provide enough material for a program based on plutonium bombs such that a first test of a device could take place between six months and two years after withdrawal from the Treaty. Nations likely to be so motivated, and therefore possibly to become minor nuclear powers by the early 1980s, include India, Japan, Israel, and perhaps West Germany and Sweden. Should they do so the multi-polarity of the international system will be increased, the ability of the super-powers to manage their allies will be reduced, and the danger that one super-power may be catalysed into action against the other might be increased. However, nuclear proliferation does not in the short run seem likely to increase the threat to the West in general or Australia in particular, as none of the most likely ‘proliferators’ have any foreseeable motives to pose any such threat.

CONVENTIONAL weapons which are now coming into the armouries of advanced countries will by the early 1980s be obsolescent or obsolete, and, in the absence of agreement to restrict conventional arms traffic, will for some years have been available for disposal to the armed forces of underdeveloped countries or for large-scale guerilla movements aimed at overthrowing the governments of such countries. They will include the latest types of aircraft now available to the United States and Soviet forces and the modern surface and submarine units of their fleets. The extent to which these countries or movements can utilise such advanced weapons depends to a large extent on the levels of mass education they succeed in attaining, but experience in the operation of sophisticated air defence systems by the North Vietnamese has shown that their abilities in this regard should not be underestimated. The maintenance
of advanced weaponry is likely to be more difficult than the use of it, but this is an essentially non-combatant function likely in most cases to be undertaken by the advanced power which provides it, and supply of technicians as part of a military aid agreement may well come to form an increasingly important way in which a major power exerts its influence.

As far as the forces of the major powers are concerned, the main feature is likely to be their enormously enhanced strategic mobility compared with the 1960s, the result primarily of the introduction of very large subsonic and large supersonic transport aircraft, which will multiply airlift capability by several times, enable forces to be moved very quickly to troubled areas, and reinforce the tendency, already apparent in the early 1960s, for United States forces abroad to be reduced in number on the premise that they can be moved abroad quickly, e.g. to Europe, given that much heavy equipment can be pre-stocked under care and maintenance at depots in the host countries. Although present large transport aircraft require very elaborate airfield facilities, the new generation such as the American C5A and the Soviet Antonov ‘Antaeus’ have been designed to reduce the requirements in this regard very substantially.

Although progress can be expected in increasing agricultural production and in spreading programs of birth control in the underdeveloped countries, fifteen years is too short a time for any radical transformation of the situation as a whole to take place. It is likely that the gap between them and the advanced industrial societies will have increased rather than diminished. The world therefore will still be divided into rich and poor countries, and there will still be ample sources of discontent to be exploited by militant nationalism, revolutionary communism, or a combination of both.

European countries, having gone out of the business of Empire, will be reluctant to engage themselves in any kind of policing of trouble-spots outside their own continent. Erosion of the systems of alliances constructed by the super-powers after World War II has already begun and is likely to continue. Both the United States and the Soviet Union will have reduced their military commitments in Europe, though it is not likely that the Western Europeans as a whole will press for a complete American withdrawal. It is possible that German reunification will have been achieved, but more likely that both German states will retain their separate identities, though with some easing of the tensions
between them and plans for eventual confederation, perhaps with some minor adjustments of the frontier with Poland. The unsolved problem of German reunification will therefore be less of a source of tension than during the 1950s and early 1960s, and its eventual solution will be seen within a framework of general European assertion of greater independence vis-à-vis the two super-powers and increased interdependence among the European states themselves. Loosening of the organisational ties of NATO and the Warsaw Pact may be accompanied by a re-emergence of some of the traditional sources of trouble in Europe, particularly in Eastern Europe where national boundaries as redrawn after World War II have left considerable minorities under alien rule, e.g. Hungarians in Roumania and Roumanians in Soviet Moldavia. Nevertheless, Europe is likely to remain one of the less troubled areas of the world in the early 1980s.

Africa west of Egypt and south of the Sahara bids fair to be an international source of discord for many years to come. Apart from the difficulties of feeding the growing populations and ensuring a reasonable rate of economic advance, the present map bears little relationship to the ethnic realities. Frontiers represent for the most part the points at which the various colonising powers confronted each other during the nineteenth century, splitting tribes in half or uniting within the same frontiers peoples with cultural backgrounds so disparate as to have practically nothing in common. Many of the new states have populations and/or territories so small that they are unlikely to be viable, and many came into existence without adequate cadres of administrators. In addition to these unsettling factors, additional sources of racial unrest exist in the form of the Portuguese colonies (where armed insurrection has been in progress for some years), and in the tension between the white-rulled states in the south and their black-rulled neighbours north of them. By the early 1980s the last vestiges of colonial rule will probably have vanished, as Portugal is unlikely to be able to bear for another fifteen years the political odium and economic burden of maintaining its position. South Africa and Rhodesia are militarily stronger than their neighbours, and likely to remain so. Both, however, are vulnerable to internal subversion by saboteurs and guerillas, Rhodesia especially, and have to some extent already been subjected to it. The tempo of this activity on the part of the African majorities is likely to increase, especially since several African states already operate guerilla training organisations. Unquestionably the main motivating force behind these is 'African nationalism', but they receive significant Communist support, notably from the Chinese, who claim (with some justification) that the
experience of their peasant-based guerilla movement is more applicable to African conditions than that of the Soviets. The Soviet-bloc Communists in their turn gave massive aid to the Algerian rising and attempted, though unsuccessfully, to turn events in the Congo in 1960 to their advantage. There is little comprehension of Communist doctrine among the African insurgent movements, but there is an urge for both the Soviet Union and China, as great powers, to erode what was previously an exclusively Western sphere of influence, one moreover in which their interference carries little or no risk of a major confrontation. Given these factors, Africa is likely to be a major area of Communist subversive efforts throughout the 1970s and to suffer from troubles arising from the artificial nature of many of its new states, the activity of the Soviet Union and China and, to some extent, the competition between them for influence over the nationalist revolutionary movements.

The Middle East is likely to present almost as great a source of tension as it does now. Although in the short term the outcome of the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967 was a setback for the Soviet Union, in the long run it represents an enhancement of Soviet influence in the area, in that Arab dependence on the Soviet Union both for arms and for political support has been increased as a result of it. The emergence of the Soviet Navy from the status of a coastal defence force to that of a long-range instrument of global power has long been a fact in the context of nuclear war; by the early 1980s it will be equally apparent in the form of surface forces operating for long periods away from Soviet waters and perhaps even maintained permanently at distant stations. The Soviet long-range capability in Mediterranean and possibly Red Sea and Persian Gulf waters is likely to include both submarine forces and surface units, the latter equipped with an amphibious capability in the form of landing craft and helicopter carriers, perhaps with one or more aircraft carriers as well. Apart from the provision of a naval ‘presence’ consonant with the vastly increased Soviet merchant fleet, and matching in a general sense that maintained by the United States, Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean will have as their purpose deterrence of over-exploitation by Israel of military success against Arab forces, the inhibiting of Western intervention in Middle Eastern crises, and the maintenance in power of Arab nationalist régimes hostile to the West. Containment of the spread of Chinese influence in these countries is also a likely motivation for Soviet naval presence, which may involve acquisition of bases, for example Aden, or, given that by the 1980s nuclear-powered surface ships will be more common than they are now, be met by rotation of Black Sea Fleet units.
Though the likely expansion of the long-range capability of the Soviet Navy will probably not be primarily directed against sources of Western oil supplies in the Middle East, the enhancement of the Soviet role in the Arab world resulting from Arab-Israeli tensions cannot but play its part in spurring Arab nationalism against the 'oil sheikdoms', until now mostly pro-Western and under British protection. Some at least of these will be replaced by anti-Western nationalist governments, and whether or not these governments are able to 'hold the West to ransom' depends mainly on the ability of the West to find alternative supplies, on the need of the Arab governments themselves for oil revenues, and on the caution which, for strategic and political reasons, the Soviet Union will probably show in its dealings with Western interests. There is little doubt, however, that some of the former British influence in the Persian Gulf area is already accruing to the Soviets, and that more will do so once the British withdrawal is complete. A Soviet naval presence in the area, not necessarily a large one, could serve as a guarantee to nationalist governments in the oil areas of the Middle East against military intervention by the West if they should choose to expropriate Western oil companies or impose an embargo during a renewed Arab-Israeli confrontation. This danger is probably more to be feared than that of some arbitrary Soviet or Soviet-sponsored interference with Western oil supplies.

Turkish relations with the Soviet Union will probably be warmer than at present, partly through Soviet initiatives and partly through a Turkish desire to 'reinsure' as a result of the gradual erosion of the NATO and CENTO alliances. The progress of Turkey towards a neutralist position will probably be paralleled—it could be said to have begun already—in Iran, leading to a disintegration of the 'Northern Tier' and the disappearance of CENTO, whose continued viability is already doubtful. The most easterly member of this organisation, Pakistan, will continue to be preoccupied by its relations with India, even if a settlement of the Kashmir problem should be found. For security against India, and in view of the fact that both the United States and the Soviet Union are for various reasons committed to India, Pakistan's most obvious military ally is China, especially if Indian reluctance to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty should presage an Indian nuclear weapons program. However, adherence to China would not enhance Pakistan's chances of receiving economic or military aid from the superpowers, and despite Pakistani avowals of intent to acquire nuclear weapons if India does so, it is more probable that it will rely in the future on the guarantee offered by the nuclear powers to non-nuclear
signatories and adhere to a position of neutralism, preserving its position in the confrontation of conventional forces by pressing all suppliers of military aid to India for equal treatment.

India’s prospects are particularly difficult to assess. On the one hand it will by the early 1980s be about thirty-five years since British rule ended, and the aura derived by the Congress Party from its role in the struggle for independence will long have departed. The relative political stability derived from the predominance of this party will be a thing of the past, and new political alignments are likely to have formed. In view of the racial and religious diversity of India, it is at least possible that a large number of regionally strong parties will have emerged at the expense of ‘national’ parties and that the Communists (of whatever persuasion) will benefit from this by their relatively non-racial basis and ability to appeal nationally. On the other hand, the avowed interest of the United States and the Soviet Union in giving India military and economic support as a counterweight to China, or to prevent its disintegration and possible slide into the Chinese variant of Communism, should ensure massive assistance in overcoming its agricultural and industrial problems. So far the armed forces have remained relatively aloof from political involvement, but as one of the few ‘national’ and non-communal organisations, enjoying a respect which is not accorded to all politicians, the Indian Army is at least as well placed for a takeover bid as those of a number of other countries whose officers were trained in the British tradition of political non-involvement, but who nevertheless have seized political power. A military takeover in India is not highly probable at present but, should the decline of the Congress Party lead to fragmentation of Indian politics, cannot be ruled out. This would not necessarily be strategically detrimental to Western interests in the short term, but politically would be highly so, in the long run, as marking a major failure of the attempt to provide a stable and democratic alternative to Communism in Asia.

China’s role in the world of the early 1980s is likely to depend largely on the outcome of the cultural revolution and the dispute with the Soviet Union. The inflammatory pronouncements of the Chinese have not so far been matched by incautious action, for though the harassment of Western diplomats, invasion of foreign embassies, and public brawls with the police in the streets of London are violations of normal usage, they are not nowadays deemed to constitute a casus belli, and support for the Hong Kong Communists has been relatively restrained. Though the full extent of economic dislocation caused by the cultural
revolution cannot yet be determined, there is no reason to believe that it has been, or will become, so acute as to threaten breakdown on a large scale in industry or agriculture, or that Chinese performance in these fields is or will be outstandingly bad compared to her non-Communist neighbours. The present generation of Chinese leaders will almost all be dead or retired by the 1980s and their places will have been taken by men mostly born after 1930 and too young to have played a prominent part in the Civil War. It seems likely that these men, whoever they are, will have gained most of their experience not in the making of revolution but in the running of the Chinese People’s Republic, and that, however carefully they are selected for ‘revolutionary romanticism’, there will be more in common between them and the successors to Brezhnev and Kosygin than between the present Soviet and Chinese leaders. The acute phase of the cultural revolution will have drawn to a close, its lessons absorbed, and China’s relations with the rest of the world become more ‘normal’, though probably not excessively cordial. In particular, the Sino-Soviet dispute will have been somewhat ameliorated, since neither party has any obvious interest in maintaining strained relations along their very extensive common frontier, especially when the era of mutual deterrence between them arrives with the Chinese ICBM. It is probable that the initiative to take the heat out of the dispute will be taken by the Soviet leaders, as it was by the present Soviet government after the overthrow of Khrushchev, and that China’s new rulers will be more responsive than Mao, sensing the benefits to be derived from economic co-operation, feeling that in possession of a deterrent they can treat at least as equals, and being concerned to exploit their accession to great-power status for the restoration of Communist unity against the ‘imperialists’.

The Soviet Union, for its part, uneasily poised between China and the United States, is likely to see some merit in playing the one off against the other, once a Chinese régime more amenable than the present one has taken power, and this is likely to result in some cooling off of relations with the West, though probably not to the extent of a return to the acute hostility shown at certain periods of the Cold War. China will bring strong pressure on United States’ allies in Asia to cease providing base facilities and secede from their alliances, but so far Chinese statements on what they expect nuclear weapons to do for China have been more measured than those of any other nuclear power at such an early stage; they seem to indicate that China will not fall for ‘nuclear euphoria’, but will retain strong conventional forces, improving both their firepower and their mobility. The Chinese stockpile of fissile
material may by the early 1980s be large enough only to meet the requirements of the strategic force, so that the Chinese Army may have either no tactical nuclear weapons or very few, but even this is by no means certain. The ‘other’ China may have disappeared from the map, for once China acquires the capability to deliver nuclear weapons on the United States, it seems not unreasonable to assume that Chiang Kai-shek’s successors will regard American support for Taiwan as somewhat less than certain, and seek an accommodation with the mainland government. The alternative possibility (of a breakdown on the mainland leading to an invasion from Taiwan) does not seem plausible. In its relations with its neighbours after the cultural revolution has spent itself China is likely to insist on abandonment of anti-Chinese policies, but not to indulge in the forcible ‘Communisation’ of them; to press India to acknowledge Chinese sovereignty over the disputed area of Ladakh (and perhaps, though less likely, that in NEFA as well); to react strongly against any attempts to form regional groupings directed against China; and to encourage Japan towards neutralism, even if this involves inciting the Japanese to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty and manufacture their own nuclear weapons so as to be free of United States nuclear tutelage. On balance, however, China’s preference would be for a neutral but non-nuclear Japan.

Indonesia will be considerably affected by the Chinese acquisition of a nuclear deterrent, since the present immunity from Chinese attack conferred on her by China’s lack of a strong navy will vanish, but is likely to be more preoccupied with basic problems of internal stability, since at present it does not appear that the West, Japan, or the Soviet Union will be able to provide aid on the scale required to ensure even the maintenance of the present standard of living. While Indonesia remains in a politically and economically precarious state, Maphilindo-type schemes are unlikely to prove attractive to potential partners, which will probably find it necessary either to mend their fences with China or to attempt to involve the United States, perhaps the Soviet Union, and United States allies such as Australia in guarantee arrangements—whose credibility to the Asians themselves will be doubtful once the Chinese ICBM force is operational. Credibility of the United States nuclear guarantee to its European NATO allies has on the whole been maintained despite the Soviet attainment in the mid-1950s of the ability to strike at America, but not without considerable doubt and dispute, despite an economic, political, and cultural community of interest which is less self-evident as between America and South-East Asia than between America and the countries of Western Europe.
Japan will presumably be able to maintain a high annual rate of economic growth throughout the period, though whether that sustained in recent times (involving a doubling of gross national product approximately every seven years) can be absorbed by internal or external markets may be open to some doubt. Severe economic difficulties resulting, for example, from problems in obtaining raw materials or restrictive measures by a number of countries against Japanese imports could result in internal strains such as Japanese democracy has not yet had to face, but it is assumed that these will not be so severe as to seriously impair internal stability or facilitate a recrudescence of extreme nationalism with the changes in political alignments which these would imply. At present there are few signs of any Japanese desire to translate economic power into international influence, but this condition is unlikely to persist into the 1980s. As the Soviet Union is likely to pose the main perceived threat to Japanese security even after the Chinese ICBM force become operational, Chinese incitement to Japan to construct her own nuclear force and take a neutralist stance is unlikely to be wholly successful. However, Japan may already be well within two years of an independent nuclear capability within the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and could develop a delivery system within its civil space program.

The probable course of United States policy in contexts other than the strategic confrontation with the Soviet Union is extremely difficult even to guess at. Though the war in Vietnam has not fundamentally harmed the American economy, the rise in defence spending caused by it, the amount of governmental attention which it has absorbed, and the internal dissension provoked by it have had profound effects on American society. In particular, governmental expenditure on programs for urban renewal and relief of poverty has been less than adequate and has contributed to the increase in racial tension. Though most Americans support the war, sizable and articulate minorities do not, and although American political and economic interests are too widely diffused throughout the world to permit a return to isolationism or a ‘Fortress America’ concept, the effects of the Vietnam war have on the whole been detrimental to the United States image in the world as well as to the United States balance of payments, so it is not likely that the United States will in the future be as willing to intervene on behalf of remote and weak allies as it has been in the past, especially since the growth of Soviet long-range capabilities and the presence of a Chinese deterrent will pose risks for such interventions which have not
hitherto had to be faced. On balance it seems most probable that by
the 1980s United States strategy in Asia will be based on containment
of China by existing means or developments of them, and that govern­
ments friendly to the United States will be supported by means most
appropriate to American affluence—extensive economic and military
aid—rather than by undertakings to commit valuable and expensive
manpower. This process may involve abandoning support for militantly
anti-Communist governments on the Asian periphery—notably Taiwan
and Thailand—to the extent that these countries do not themselves
come to terms with China in order to reduce the likelihood that they
could commit America to a further confrontation of conventional forces.
It may also involve United States recognition of China, political condi­
tions for which will be better in fifteen years’ time than they are now:
a new set of leaders in China and the United States, and the end of the
Korean War thirty years in the past. On the whole, therefore, United
States policy is likely to be one in which the confrontation with Asian
Communism is less emphatic than at present, with a corresponding
insistence that America’s allies bear a larger share in their own defence.
This will result in a considerable reduction in the number of United
States troops stationed overseas, in Europe as well as in Asia.

The enhancement of Soviet long-range conventional mobility, and
the advent of a Chinese deterrent against the United States and the
Soviets may or may not increase the amount of nationalist or Communist-
sponsored insurgency, but it would seem that both impose some
restriction on the number of counterinsurgency operations that Western
countries will be prepared to undertake. Without going into the merits
or demerits of past operations, it has been a fact of life that when a
counterinsurgency operation by British, Australian, or United States
forces was contemplated, neither the chance of being confronted by
Soviet troops nor the possibility of a Chinese threat to bomb London,
Canberra, or Washington had to be taken into account. By the 1980s
these immunities will no longer exist, and this circumstance will inevi­tably bring about a redefinition of ‘vital interests’. In Black Africa
spheres of influence may be ill-defined—many of the frontiers represent
neither ethnic nor economic realities—and there may well be a require­
ment for counterinsurgency operations mounted from without. But in
practice these operations may be possible only under a rubric agreed by
both super-powers and China as well (China will probably have suc­
ceded to the seat in the Security Council now held by Taiwan) and
under United Nations auspices. Latin America will probably be subject
to subversion by various types of Communist guerilla—Castroite, Peking-
ite, or, less likely, Muscovite, as well as to non-Communist uprisings of more traditional types. But here the preferred United States response is likely to take the form of training, equipping, and advising indigenous forces rather than of formal intervention with United States troops. The attempt to avoid formal commitment of United States combat units failed in South Vietnam and may fail in Latin America, but even if it does it seems unlikely on past experience that the United States will solicit the aid of allies from outside the area in this, its most widely acknowledged sphere of influence. It seems likely, therefore that on balance, failing radical agreements on arms control, the world of the 1980s will be one in which, the Non-Proliferation Treaty notwithstanding, there will be cause for concern about the spread of nuclear weapons (especially if fast breeder reactors are in widespread use), and renewed emphasis on major-war forces, less on counterinsurgency from without than in recent years, but more on the training for counterinsurgency of indigenous forces.
Geoffrey Jukes is a Fellow in the Department of International Relations of the Research School of Pacific Studies of the Australian National University.

He was educated at Wadham College, Oxford, and joined the U.K. Foreign Office in 1953, where he served till 1956, then joined the Ministry for Defence, specialising in military, historical, and strategic studies with particular reference to the Soviet Union. From 1965 to 1967 he worked with the Foreign Office (Arms Control and Disarmament Research Unit). He is consultant on Soviet bloc affairs to the Institute of Strategic Studies in London.

Mr. Jukes has written one book on the battle of Stalingrad, due to be published in 1968, and has another on the battle of the Kursk salient in preparation. He has also published a number of articles on strategic and army control matters.
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