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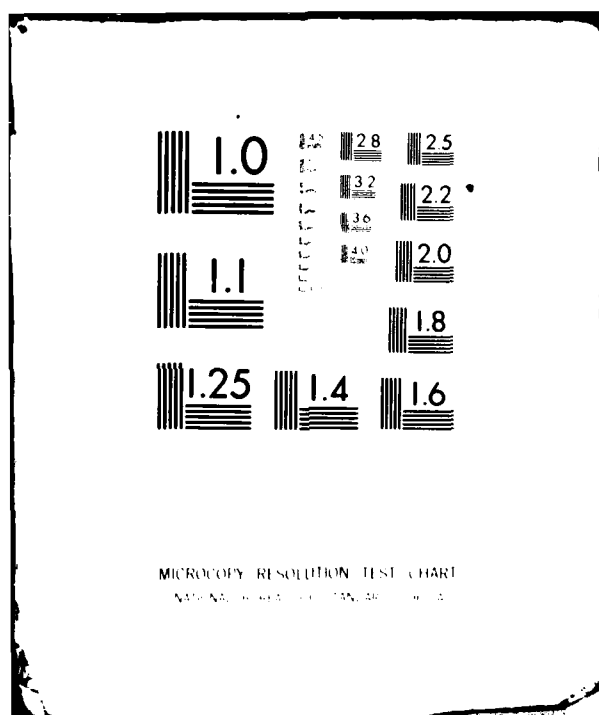
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MAXIMIZING NEGOTIATIONS OVER UNITED STATES'
NATIONAL INTERESTS WITH THE ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS

by

Gary L. Stubblefield

December 1980

Thesis Advisor:

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Maximizing Negotiations Over United States'
National Interests with the Association
of Southeast Asian Nations

by

Gary L. Stubblefield
Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy
B.S., University of Idaho, 1969

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

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ABSTRACT

→ The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is comprised of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippine Islands. This region strategically encompasses the primary route between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Furthermore, it is rich in natural resources. Consequently the U.S. has many national interests in the ASEAN region. This paper describes those interests in four categories: (1) Security, (2) Economic, (3) Political, and (4) Social/Cultural. Some Washington policy-makers negotiate U.S. interests bi-laterally with each individual nation without regard for their grouping. Others deal regionally through ASEAN. It is the intent of this thesis to analyze the optimum route our planners should follow when negotiating our policies and goals concerning this region.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION	7
I. OBJECTIVE	7
II. METHODOLOGY	7
III. BACKGROUND	8
CHAPTER TWO - U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS IN ASEAN'S MEMBERS --	14
I. SECURITY INTERESTS	14
A. U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN SINGAPORE	18
B. U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN INDONESIA	20
C. U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN THAILAND	25
D. U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	28
E. U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN MALAYSIA	32
II. ECONOMIC INTERESTS	34
A. U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN SINGAPORE	35
B. U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN INDONESIA	37
C. U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THAILAND	38
D. U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	39
E. U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN MALAYSIA	41
III. POLITICAL INTERESTS	42
IV. CULTURAL/SOCIAL INTERESTS	46
CHAPTER THREE - UNITED STATES NATIONAL INTERESTS ASEAN	49
I. SECURITY INTERESTS	50

A.	U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN SINGAPORE THROUGH ASEAN -----	58
B.	U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN INDONESIA THROUGH ASEAN -----	60
C.	U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN THAILAND THROUGH ASEAN -----	61
D.	U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS THROUGH ASEAN -----	62
E.	U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS IN MALAYSIA THROUGH ASEAN -----	64
II.	ECONOMIC INTERESTS -----	65
A.	U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN SINGAPORE THROUGH ASEAN -----	67
B.	U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN INDONESIA THROUGH ASEAN -----	68
C.	U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THAILAND THROUGH ASEAN -----	69
D.	U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS THROUGH ASEAN -----	70
E.	U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN MALAYSIA THROUGH ASEAN -----	71
III.	POLITICAL INTERESTS -----	71
IV.	CULTURAL/SOCIAL INTERESTS -----	72
CHAPTER FOUR - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS -----		74
I.	SECURITY INTERESTS -----	75
II.	ECONOMIC INTERESTS -----	76
III.	POLITICAL INTERESTS -----	77
IV.	CULTURAL/SOCIAL INTERESTS -----	78
APPENDIX A - THE ASEAN DECLARATION -----		80
APPENDIX B - REGIONAL MAP -----		83
APPENDIX C - ASIAN SELECTED RAW MATERIAL EXPORTS -----		84
BIBLIOGRAPHY-----		85
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST -----		89

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

I. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this thesis is to analyze the most effective means the United States government can undertake in dealing and negotiating with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, referred to throughout this paper as ASEAN. The organization of this paper will first determine the extent of United States' national interests in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. This extent should indicate whether or not the Association plays a relevant importance in the policies and decisions which Washington sets over this region. Thereafter suggestions for future direction of U.S. national interests, either through the Association, or outside it, will be provided.

II. METHODOLOGY

The above objective will be accomplished through a comparative analysis, first by depicting the United States' interests in this region, without considering the interests connected through the Association, and then by analyzing those U.S. interests connected through the Association. Prior to examining the specific U.S. position and ties with the Association, a background summary of ASEAN, since its conception will be provided. Once this foundation has been established, the specific interests of the United States outside of ASEAN will

be discussed in four categories for each country: (1) Security, (2) Economics, (3) Politics, and (4) Cultural/Social. Following that, a similar presentation describing U.S. interests dealt through ASEAN, in the same four categories, will be developed. From this analysis, the two summaries will be compared and conclusions as to the relevant importance of ASEAN in American decisions over the U.S. interests in this region will be drawn. This in turn will provide a means for policy- and decision-makers in Washington to maximize their dealings with this region in future negotiations, ie. to deal with the respective nations unilaterally or with the Association as the regional representative.

III. BACKGROUND

In August 1967, five Southeast Asian Nations, who were facing similar economic and security dilemmas, concluded that it would be mutually advantageous to pool their resources into a regional organization. (The declaration to form this union is presented as Appendix A). This organization assumed the title of the Association of South East Asian Nations or ASEAN. Its membership is comprised of (1) Thailand, (2) Malaysia, (3) Singapore, (4) Indonesia, and, (5) the Philippine Islands.

ASEAN is unique from other regional international organizations such as the European Economic Community (EEC) or the Organization of American States (OAS), in that its members' have vast cultural, ethnic, and linguistic variances. Instead

these countries have pronounced differences in those very aspects for which they united to promote (such as political, social, and economic structures). In the past, these differences created territorial disputes, ethnic conflicts, religious prejudices, and mistrust between the five nations. However, each recognized its inability to solve these conflicts on a bi- or multi-lateral basis, so the organization seemingly provided a forum whereby the intra-regional differences could be discussed, mitigated, and hopefully even resolved. Furthermore, ASEAN now serves as a basis to minimize each nation's feeling of insecurity and provides strength in economic bargaining throughout the world.

It appears that this association was formed as a second attempt of a similar effort to unify the region through a pact in 1961. In this first case, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand formed what became known as the Association of South-east Asia (ASA). This initial group unity failed primarily because of a territorial dispute over the Malaysian state of Sabah between Malaya and the Philippines.¹ In the mid-sixties, the formation of ASEAN served to minimize manipulation or domination by any of the world's major powers through their regional cooperation. It preserved these states' desires to

¹J. M. Vanderkroef, "The New Southeast Asia," Contemporary Reading, 231: Nov. 77, pp. 245-251.

remain clear of reliance upon either the Communist Bloc or Capitalist influences.

This attempt at non-alignment was clearly set forth in a declaration by the ASEAN nations in November 1971. The initiative came primarily from Malaysia; endeavors toward neutralization had begun there early in 1968, mainly in response to a new situation being created by the British military withdrawal. Peter Polomka, an Australian journalist, outlined the three elements contained in this neutralization as: (1) a guarantee by a major powers, thought to be China, the Soviet Union and the U.S., to not interfere in the internal affairs of South-East Asian states; (2) a state of neutrality and a non-aggression pact by the states within the region; and (3) the maintenance of national stability and co-operation within the region.²

Each nation has its own basis or reasons for its respective cooperation within this regional association and, while security and economics remain the primary concepts, each respective member possesses varying degrees of interest in those aspects, dependent upon its own unique situations and goals presented by its government elitist structure. Although the five ASEAN countries have always proclaimed economic, political, and cultural cooperation as their banner, the perceived threat

²Adelphi Papers Number One Hundred and Four: "Indonesia's Future and Southeast Asia." International Institute for Strategic Studies, Spring 1974, p. 26.

from Vietnam in the short term, and possibly China and Russia in the long term, was the regional grouping's real reason for the diligent rally during a Bali summit meeting in February 1976. That meeting had been called in the wake of the Communist takeovers in Indochina the year before. In fact, at that time, the 'domino theory' was prevalent in the minds of most ASEAN nations' rulers.³ These anxieties were confirmed by the steady string of accusations from the USSR and Vietnam that ASEAN was purely a military alliance set by the United States.

Some of the hostility and apprehension was alleviated in 1978 when China began to express friendship and solidarity with the five nations. Then in June 1978, when the ASEAN foreign ministers were gathering at Thailand for the annual meeting, Vietnam suddenly dropped its heretofore hostile attitude towards the association.⁴ This was done possibly to gain some economic concessions from this region such as oil, or could even have been done to alleviate the ASEAN region from forming a military alliance to counter the Vietnamese aggression into the region.

There is another agreement linking the ASEAN countries with the West which still has importance: the Manila Pact.

³J.M. Vanderkroef, "ASEAN and U.S. Security Interests," Strategic Review, Vol. 6, Spring 1978, pp. 153-155.

⁴Rodney Tasker, "A Quest For Peaceful Coexistence," Far Eastern Economic Review, February 29, 1980, p. 8-9.

This agreement was a security arrangement drawn up in 1954 to link the Thai's by treaty with the United States, Australia, Britain, New Zealand, and the Philippines. (Two other signatories, Pakistan and France, have since withdrawn). The pact is a pledge by members to consult each other whenever any of the other territories are threatened. (The relevance of this pact will be further examined when the interests between the U.S., Thailand, and the Philippine Islands are discussed.)⁵

ASEAN initially expressed the desire to remain outside the influence of any single power, either Communist or non-Communist. All the countries, other than Thailand, have had a past history of such domination when they were colonies of European powers. However, there is now a total consensus within the association that the United States should display a more substantial presence in the region as a counter-balance to the expansionist Communist powers surrounding the northern and eastern borders of the region.⁶ The U.S. has already established stronger economic ties with the area than has the Soviet Union, China, or Vietnam through trade and investment. Furthermore, there are signs from the ASEAN countries that they would also like more visible indications of an American military and political commitment to the region. Having

⁵Rodney Tasker, "A Useful Role For Superpowers," Far Eastern Economic Review, Feb. 29, 1980, pp. 11-12.

⁶V.G. Kalkarni, "Despite U.S. Airlift of Arms, Thailand Still Frets Over More Powerful Viets," Christian Science Monitor, July 22, 1980, p. 18.

presented a brief background of the Association, this essay will next delineate specific United State's national interests in this region.

CHAPTER TWO

U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS IN ASEAN'S MEMBERS

I. SECURITY INTERESTS

For most of the last decade there has been an obvious downplay of U.S. involvement in the region of the ASEAN nations, even though Washington has strongly denied this neglect. The downplay is a natural reaction to the debacle America faced in Vietnam. Recently the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, Richard Holbrooke, said during a press conference: "America has ended its period of drift in this region. We are, and we will, remain a Pacific power and Asian power."⁷ Evidence of this involvement may be most obviously supported by noting the substantial increases in the U.S. military assistance and sales in the most recent years. Also notable are efforts of the Americans during the resettlement of nearly 200,000 Indochinese refugees in 1978 and 1979.

ASEAN formed in 1967. Both before and since that date the United States has shown involvement and concern in the security aspects of that region. In nearly all instances Washington D.C. has linked the security concern to the American anti-expansionist and 'free world' theme proffered by our nation since its conception; The first involvement was a U.S. con-

⁷Rodney Tasker, "A Useful Role For Superpowers," Far Eastern Economic Review, p. 12.

frontation with Spain in the Philippines in the late 1800's. Following the Spanish-American War, the islands were ceded to the United States by Spain under the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. Following World War One, the United States joined with the major powers to limit the sizes of the navies, partly in an effort to affirm its then growing interests in the Pacific. During World War Two, the United States and her allies waged an expansive island hopping campaign to repel the Japanese expansion in the Pacific. The reasoning behind the United State's policy of the 1950's was to involve itself with the countries of the region through pacts such as the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). Each agreement was part of the crusade against Communism during the cold war period. Bruce M. Russett, writing for the Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group of the Asia Society, explained the American policy of pacts in the region during this period:

For Americans, it is clear that these groupings (functional groups, regionally focused) have a double purpose, and this is especially true in Southeast Asia. They hope that these functional efforts will in time develop into areas of regional solidarity capable of providing, at least implicitly,⁸ a basis for collective defense and containment.

The United States has long recognized the strategic importance of ASEAN: The five members of the association lie roughly in a rectangle 3200 miles east to west and 2200 miles north to

⁸"Singapore's Strategic Role Looks Vulnerable," Far Eastern Economic Review, 101, 11 August 1978, p. 66.

south, and, with the exception of Thailand and Malaysia, all of the nations are composed of islands. Also the region is located in the most direct and obvious passage between the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Indonesia, on the southern border of the region, is composed of over 3000 islands and is the world's largest archipelago. It is the third largest nation of Asia and the fifth most populous nation of the world; the Eastern border of the region is made up of over 7000 islands known as the Philippine Islands. Malaysia is a peninsula which extends from the mainland of Asia to the islands of Indonesia and was once part of a land mass reaching almost to the continent of Australia. Thailand is the only ASEAN state located on the mainland Asia and has extensive boundaries with non-ASEAN nations. Singapore, the smallest in the grouping, is a 250 square mile island located at the southern tip of Malaysia.

The strategic importance of the ASEAN region is mainly due to the geographical position, for the waters between the Malay Peninsula and Indonesian Archipelago form a choke point or funnel for the majority of the shipping between two oceans. In fact, more than 1,000 vessels pass through the Strait of Malacca alone each week.⁹

This shipping takes place primarily through three channels of water: the Strait of Malacca, the, the Sunda Strait,

⁹Rodney Tasker, "Reinforcing Ties With ASEAN," Far Eastern Economic Review, Sept. 23, 1977, pp. 125-128.

and the Lombok Strait. (See Appendix B for a map of the area.)

The recent influx of Soviet influence into Indochina and potential desire for use of the harbors and airfields, (not only of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam but of other parts of the region for projection of Moscow's power and influence) has not gone unnoticed by Washington. The U.S. has a vested interest, along with Japan and other nations, to see that the right of free passage is maintained through ASEAN's straits. Over the past decade this interest has become accentuated with the growing importance of Mid-east oil and the security aspects surrounding that area.

In addition to the strategic position of the region it is also important to take into account that the region has abundant indigenous natural resources which include oil, tin, bauxite, rubber, copper, and numerous other minerals and agriculture products. In 1976, economist Allan E. Goodman of the National Defense University, noted that two of nineteen major strategic materials imported by the United States relied on ASEAN sources. These were tin and natural rubber. Over 70% of these two resources were from this Asian region. However, both Western Europe and Japan rely quite heavily on the ASEAN region for many of these same nineteen strategic

resources.¹⁰ (See Appendix C for a complete listing of these resources).

Both the strategic location, and the abundance of natural resources pose a threat to the region in terms of an external power or powers desiring control over the area through overt military and economic pressures. Besides this problem, each nation is threatened from within its borders by insurgent efforts either by external support or by political factions within the nations. These threats appear to pose at least as large a concern for ASEAN leaders as do those alien forces external to their borders. In fact, they are more important to counter in the short term. It is these internal threats which have demanded many of the types of armament being procured by these five nations, especially counter-insurgency operational equipment.

A. U. S. Security Interests in Singapore

With the Communist victories in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, in Southeast Asia, Singapore's defense policy has necessarily changed over the past decade. Formerly, Singapore relied heavily upon Malaysia and Britain for its external security, but, in 1971, Singapore signed a joint defense pact with Britain, Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand to replace the British responsibility.

¹⁰Allan E. Goodman, "The Threat from the Third World: Mounting Challenge to U.S. and West Europe Superiority?", in Proceedings of the National Security Affairs Conference July 17-19, 1978, National Defense University Equivalence, Sufficiency and the International Balance, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 186.

Domestically, the only external threat to Singapore comes from the Chinese Communist guerillas. To help mitigate this threat, Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Kwan Yew, gained reassurances from the People's Republic of China in a 1976 visit. It was agreed the PRC would not interfere with Singapore's internal affairs. Externally, Singapore feels that the greatest threat to the region comes from the Vietnamese expansion in the North. In fact Singapore, unlike the other ASEAN members, has made overt verbal attacks against the intrusion of the Vietnamese along the Thai-Cambodian border.

Singapore has a relatively small combined armed force with only 36,000 regulars, but their area of responsibility is also correspondingly small. Furthermore, the regulars are backed by a 7,500 man police force and nearly 75,000 reservists or home guard personnel. While Washington has never provided any security assistance to Singapore, the U.S. was its biggest supplier of military hardware from 1973-1977 (\$110.2 million). No Foreign Military Sales (FMS) credits have been received by Singapore from the United States since 1969.¹¹

Singapore has increased its export oriented industries in the past several years. In fact in 1976, that nation exported \$20 million worth of military equipment. They are one of ten countries approved by our government for co-production and co-assembly of M-16 rifles, and have begun

¹¹DMS Inc. Market Intelligence Report 1980, Australasia Section, Singapore Summary, pp. 2-3.

producing weapon sight devices, communication/electronic equipment and military vehicle engines on a large scale. They have also procured 40 ex-U.S. A-4 fighter aircraft with extensive modifications, 20 UH-1B helicopters, support for their F-5E aircraft, Hawk AD missiles, numerous armored personnel carriers, and tanks. (More recently Singapore has shown interest in Israel's C-2 Supersonic jet fighter.) Her ability to construct surface craft is noteworthy. Singapore has constructed several fast attack craft and patrol boats recently. Her port is the fourth largest in the world and she services nearly 40,000 vessels annually. Singapore's construction of patrol boats is primarily for export. The Singapore government also signed a contract with Moscow to repair Soviet ships and has done so since 1977.¹²

Singapore's arms procurement suggest that she has placed more priority over defense of ASEAN than over domestic instability. It is inefficient to combat insurgents with high performance jet aircraft, missiles, and armored tanks on a 225 square mile island, for one might well assume these sophisticated items would be better suited against an outside aggressor.

B. U. S. Security Interests in Indonesia

The United States recognizes the strategic importance of the Archipelagic Chain which makes up Indonesia. First,

¹²Ibid.

this island nation is positioned so as to control the main waterways between the continents of Australia and Asia. Second, discoveries of more oil reserves in her territorial waters have increased each year.

The United States has long recognized Indonesia as a stabilizing force in the Southwest Pacific region.¹³ In 1965, Indonesia turned strongly anti-Communist when the PKI, the oldest Communist party in Asia, attempted an abortive coup to overthrow the government of then-President Sukarno. The result of that incident was the purging and slaughter of nearly 100,000 Communists and Communist sympathizers in that nation. Indonesia had been one of the largest importers of arms from 1958-1965 with its chief supplier being the Soviet Union, but following the 1965 Communist purge, the Indonesian government found itself holding a military arsenal for which there was no source of spare parts. From necessity, the nation began to replace its arsenal with arms from the Western nations, and the United States in particular began contributing heavy military assistance. Until 1978, the U.S. maintained an 82 member Military Assistance Group after which time it was reduced to 54 personnel. As of 1977, the United States

¹³Philip Habib, Statement on "Shifting Balance of Power In Asia: Implications For Future U.S. Policy," to Committee on International Relations, U.S. Government Printing Office, November 18, 1976.

Congress had appropriated \$141.4 million for the military assistance program. Other major projects under America's Military Assistance Program (MAP) to Indonesia have included installation of command and operational communications equipment, replacement of antiquated equipment, provision of certain radios and vehicles, and maintenance support of U.S. manufactured equipment. MAP cost the U.S. around \$15 million annually.¹⁴ As of 1978, the Carter administration attempted to eliminate the Military Assistance Program in all but a few countries and instead compensate by increasing Foreign Military Sales (FMS). Washington's State Department officials have been quick to emphasize to Jakarta that elimination of Indonesia's MAP funds is not unique to them, but there is an on going, across-the-board reduction in worldwide MAP funds.

Indonesia is the only ASEAN country which has a basic aircraft industry. Thus, far it has assembled only aircraft for military use, however, there is a viable potential that it can expand this into an economic asset to supply both domestic and foreign requirements. There have been orders to supply their military aircraft to Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Further, the Indonesians have entered into a co-production agreement with France's Aerospatiale to produce SA-330 Puma helicopters, and this would allegedly create

¹⁴DMS Inc. Market Intelligence Report 1980, Australasia Section, Indonesia Summary, pp. 4-5.

a transfer of technology to Indonesia and technical training of Indonesian personnel. In 1978 and 1979, Indonesia placed orders for 16 F5 aircraft, a transfer from Israel of 14 F4E attack aircraft, and three Lockheed L-100-30 Super Hercules aircraft. Besides the actual aircraft, and perhaps even more significant, are the contracts for special modifications to ordered aircraft; these would include jettisonable fuel tanks and transponders for the F-5 aircraft. The modifications would increase the range and capabilities of those aircraft.¹⁵

Currently in Indonesia's navy only those vessels which have been obtained from sources other than the Soviet Union can be maintained in active duty, therefore, they must reconstruct and replace their obsolete non-supportable Navy. The plans call for emphasis on expansion and modernization of its major and light displacement warships and small force of submarines. While the U.S. may be able to provide a quantity of light displacement craft, it must be considered that Indonesia also has a shipbuilding capability. Furthermore, South Korea - presently a strong contender in the building of fast patrol boats - has filled an order for four patrol craft for Indonesia.¹⁶

The Army has begun to modernize through the purchase of tanks, armored personnel carriers, and trucks, to upgrade their forces. Also they have procured the M-16 rifle and its

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 9-10.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 8-9.

accessories for their standard troop assault weapon. There is also a firm commitment for an M-16 production factory to be built in Indonesia, confirmed by Vice President Mondal's visit to Jakarta in May 1979.¹⁷

Most of what the Jakarta government has purchased is designed for the purpose of strengthening its defenses against possible Communist insurgency. This means investing in counter-insurgency and surveillance items such as helicopters, small high speed coastal craft and sophisticated electronics equipment. In 1979/1980, the defense budget was doubled to an amazing \$3 billion of a total national of \$11 billion. The government has plans to double its force size from approximately 250,000 personnel to nearly 500,000. The reason for this massive rebuild is stated as threefold: first, to deter further expansion by Vietnam into ASEAN; second, to squelch an internal fear of an Iranian style revolution; and third, to counter the ever-present fear of domestic Communist insurgent moves.¹⁸ I propose a fourth subtle reason for this expansion - it would act as a means to stimulate the economy and provide state funded employment for its young men. The heretofore high unemployment and illiteracy rate by the

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸DMS Inc. Market Intelligence Report 1980, Australasia Section, Indonesia Summary, pp. 1-13.

youth would be partly combated through mandatory conscription which would train and politically socialize the youth at an impressionable age.

C. U. S. Security Interests in Thailand

Thailand, like her fellow ASEAN sisters, has both internal and external threats. The internal threats are primarily from two sources. The first is a group of roughly 3,000 bandit insurgents called Communists along the Thai-Malay border who conduct guerrilla raids against the two nations; but there is good cooperation between Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok in controlling them. The second and perhaps more serious internal threat comes from operations against the nation conducted by the Pattani United Liberation Organization. This faction is a predominantly Muslim group attempting to act as an independent state within Thailand, and is a nearly 7,000 man guerrilla force.

The external threat facing Thailand looms strongest above all else. The entire Thai Army of 145,000 is greatly outmanned by the 160,000 Vietnamese battle-hardened forces along their Cambodian/Laotian border. Furthermore, Hanoi has nearly one million men in its standing army. The highly publicized U.S. military airlift in early July 1980 has done little to offset this large military imbalance, for

"All that the touted U.S. airlift brought in was 18 howitzers (105 mm), 38 recoilless rifles (106 mm), 1,000 assault rifles

(m-16), and ammunition to go with them."¹⁹ Thirty-five tanks (M-48) and more ammunition and artillery followed in August, all being a part of a \$40 million military aid package agreed to by Washington.²⁰ While additional and stronger U.S. support is possible in terms of air strikes and troops if Hanoi attacks Thailand, it would require the U.S. President to overcome domestic opposition to waging another battle in Asia.

The United States has been the chief supplier of arms to Thailand. From 1973-1977, the U.S. supplied over 80% of all arms delivered there; the U.S. provision for education and training of Thai military personnel is roughly \$850,000 for 1980 and 1981. MAP funding, while on the decline before 1980, is projected to begin rising again in 1981. Furthermore, the U.S. still keeps a Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) located in Bangkok, staffed with about 50 personnel.²¹

Thailand is also beginning to build her arms industry, but thus far only producing non-sophisticated weaponry and ordnance. However, there have been signs of cooperation between herself and other ASEAN countries in developing joint

¹⁹V.G. Kulkarni, "Despite U.S. Airlift of Arms, Thailand Still Frets Over More Powerful Viets," Christian Science Monitor, 22 July, 1980, p. 18.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹DMS Inc. Market Intelligence Report 1980, Australasia Section, Thailand Summary, pp. 3-5.

arms manufacturing businesses (such as a recent agreement with Singapore to produce seven types of arms and ammunition common to both nations in the near future.)²²

As mentioned previously, the United States became formally committed in a security arrangement with Thailand and the Philippine Islands through the Manila Pact in 1954.

Even this relatively old agreement still has importance today. Washington treats it as a valid agreement and President Carter and former Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, recently pledged to stand by the Pact in relation to our commitment to Thailand within it. It was during the Vietnam conflict that the United States had extensively staged assets and invested military dollars in Thailand. The U.S. Air Force based many of its B52 bomber forces, used against Vietnam, at U.S. air bases there. The last major utilization of American assets in Thailand was during 1976, when the United States Air Force helicopters were flown from bases in Thailand to assist in the recovery of the U.S. commercial ship, *Mayaguez*.

Relations with Thailand began to decline after the U.S. pullout of South Vietnam. Historically, Thailand has acted more as a power barometer for the region, nurturing more cordial relations with whichever country was more in line with Bangkok's policies and goals; this constant flux in loyalty

²²Ibid.

is partly attributable for the Thai's strengthening cooperation within the Association through which she felt the regional unification against Communist expansion was her most sensible direction

D. U. S. Security Interests in the Philippine Islands

The United States has probably invested more heavily in the Philippine Islands than any other ASEAN nation. The extent of this investment is understandable when one considers the historical relations and close traditional ties the U.S. holds with these islands. The U.S. security perspective as concerns the Philippines is important for two primary reasons. Primarily, there is both a mutual Defense Treaty dating from 1951 and the 1954 Manila Pact which binds the United States to provide defense assistance to this nation in the event of necessity. Secondly, there are American naval and air bases in the Philippine Islands which are an integral part of our presence in Asia. This presence is recognized as important not only by the Philippines, but also by other Asian neighbors and was formalized by a separate Military Bases Agreement dating from 1947. According to Admiral John S. McCain Jr. (retired), the leaders of both the U.S. and Philippines agreed that the American bases are essential to the maintenance of an "effective U.S. presence in the Western Pacific in support of mutual objectives and in maintaining a balance of power in

the region."²³ He further stressed the United States must recognize that the Philippines control the eastward approach to one of four of the great bottlenecks to world sea trade (the Strait of Malacca, the Suez Canal, Strait of Gibraltar, and the Panama Canal). He also emphasized that the Philippine Islands are presently our farthest forward outpost in helping keep open the sealanes which we use to transport vital strategic materials.²⁴

The Philippines' planning in regard to their military doctrine concentrates on countering their internal threat of domestic insurgencies. In this area they are presently facing two crises: A battle against the New Peoples' Army in the north - a Maoist group, and an externally supported Muslim group in the southern islands around Mindanao. This Southern insurgency has thus far resulted in roughly 50,000 casualties in only six years whereas the Communist insurgency by the Maoists is presently at a lower key but could potentially pose a greater threat in the long run.

The Philippines place little concern to external threats primarily because they are able to depend heavily on the deterrence created by U.S. presence in their country.

²³Adm. John S. McCain Jr. (ret), Hearings before the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy, U.S. Government Printing Office, May 18, 1976.

²⁴Ibid.

Despite many infractions which occurred during the Carter Administration between the two nations over the human rights violations in the Philippine Islands, the Manila government recognizes the importance of this deterrence and is trying to create a new basis to continue a healthy relationship with the U.S.

There is a Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group in the Philippines comprised of 54 personnel which has primarily a liaison function in all U.S. Military sales matters. From 1946-1974, the American Congress legislated over \$1416 million to the Philippines in MAP, FMS, grants, education, and other such assistance. And, since 1977, the major procurements from the United States have included helicopters, patrol boats, trucks, armored personnel carriers and small arms;²⁵ these items are obviously intended to bolster the counter-insurgency efforts. Prior to their latest procurements, the Philippines purchased many items which could be intended for the defense of the nation from external forces (ie. fighter aircraft, transport aircraft, frigates, mine-sweepers, tanks air-to-air/surface-to-air missiles). The primary supplier has always been the United States.

Not all agree to the Washington policy regarding military assistance and bases in the Philippines. The former

²⁵DMS Inc. Market Intelligence Report 1980, Australasia Section, Philippines Summary, pp. 4-6.

Foreign Secretary and Senator of the Philippines and now President of the Movement for a Free Philippines opposed this policy during a Congressional Sub-Committee hearing. He characterized the U.S. support for the unstable and illegitimate island's government under President Marcos, as both confusing and demoralizing to the Filipino citizens. He also criticized the U.S. for allowing itself to be coerced into a defenseless corner by staking out support to a government which will not survive. Therefore he suspects the Filipino population will hold America in low esteem in the future. He claimed, furthermore that the U.S. policy for supporting only governments which are conscious of human rights for its citizens is a hollow, empty gesture.²⁶ (On this point I fully agree, as his stance demonstrates that the U.S. State Department has continued to consider real issues as opposed to idealistic views).

Considering the international situation with the Iran/Iraq war, the Afghanistan invasion and the Vietnamese push along the Thai border, the strategic position of the Philippine Islands becomes even more prominent. While President Marcos does violate many basic human rights issues, he knows the U.S. will necessarily tolerate a fair amount of such action because she needs the bases she holds in their nation.

²⁶Raul S. Manglapus, Hearings before the Sub-Committee on Future Foreign Policy, 18 May 1976, U.S. Government Printing Office.

Perhaps as a threat, the Soviet Union has been showing close attentiveness to the wife of the President, Imelda Marcos, with some success.²⁷ Diplomatic relations have been established with both the U.S.S.R. and P.R.C. here. The obvious intent of all this is to create the illusion of a non-aligned state to the third world, which is not easy to do considering the umbilical relationship she has with the United States. Perhaps one of the most significant shifts in the Philippine defense doctrine is the apparent strengthening of ties between Manila and the other four ASEAN capitals regarding policy, joint defense production, and counter-insurgency cooperation.

E. U. S. Security Interests in Malaysia

From 1947 to 1960, Malaysia, with strong British support, waged a tough battle against the Chinese supported Communist insurgency which threatened her fragile government. Only since the British relinquished control has Malaysia begun to take an active self-interest in repelling the insurgent threats to her integral sovereignty. In fact, in 1979, she joined forces with Thailand in a joint effort to destroy the Communist supported guerrillas along their common border.

Malaysia called for regional neutrality and even suggested China, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos join ASEAN at the close of the Vietnam war in 1975. At the same time Malaysia

²⁷DMS Inc. Market Intelligence Report 1980, Australasia Section, Philippines Summary, p. 9.

appears to be taking positive steps to build a viable force capable of repelling both internal and external threats to her security.

News of a U.S. \$645 million Air Force base to be built on the east coast of Malaysia is thought to be an indication of her preparation against the threat of a new Vietnamese military adventure in that region. Included in the plan was the intent to buy 80 American-made A4 Skyhawk fighter-bombers; this purchase is being further studied. The U.S. has denied however that the new 3,000 acre base is designed as a part of contingency plans for American presence in Malaysia.²⁸ It does confirm that this vulnerable nation appears to have shifted to a more alert position against the possible threat from the Soviet Union dressed up as a Vietnamese. Still, Malaysia's main security problem lies in containing the continuing Communist supported insurgency in the Jungles along its northern Thai border; it is this internal threat which is helping Kuala Lumpur to shape its weapons inventory and force structure.

While no exports have been negotiated to date, Malaysia has a fledgling arms manufacturing capability for they have begun assembling German assault rifles and some ordnance. They have also purchased some fighter aircraft, large transports, helicopters, high-speed coastal gunboats, armored

²⁸K. Das, "Malaysia: Starting the Decade with a Bang," Far Eastern Economic Review, Jan. 18, 1980, p. 30.

cars and armored personnel carriers. Further, her plans remain firm to purchase the aforementioned A4 Skyhawks in the near future.²⁹ Continued buildup and increasing cooperation with the other ASEAN states over security matters is helping to enhance the resolve of the region.

II. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

As we have seen, the economic importance the U.S. places in the ASEAN region has been increasing each year, for U.S. trade with East Asia since 1972 has been greater even than with the European Common Market (EEC). The U.S. is considered to be an important trading country to these nations, not only in terms of our exports to the area, but also because our industries are supported by an important and stable supply of raw materials from that area. The strategic importance of tin and rubber supply has already been discussed. Also coconut oil and over eight percent of our petroleum imports come from East Asia.

Since this region is one of the important sources of certain types raw materials, many of these materials are sold on the U.S. market. In the 1960's, the United States, by means of the region's resources, met 85% of its demand for natural rubber; 50% for tin; and 90% for jute and mica. These quantities increased in the 1970's. The past decade has been

²⁹DMS Inc. Market Intelligence Report 1980, Australasia Section, Malaysian Summary, pp. 5-7.

marked by expansion of American capital in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore and the total amount of U.S. investments in 1975 was nearly 6 billion dollars. Also, U.S. petroleum companies are actively exploring for and extracting petroleum from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the sea shelves off their coastlines.³⁰

There are economic similarities among the members of ASEAN. In fact, in 1976, the United Nations suggested that the ASEAN countries adopt a common industrialization scheme in which one industry of regional importance be assigned to each member respectively, who would then manufacture its product for the other four nations. After a substantial delay in implementing this plan, caused by debate and settlement in the selection of acceptable industries, the program has finally been launched. From this plan the following industry per country is operational for the joint benefit of all:

A urea plant each in Malaysia and Indonesia;
a soda ash plant in Thailand; a diesel engine
production plant in Singapore; and a phosphate
plant in the Philippines.³¹

A. U.S. Economic Interests in Singapore

Of all the ASEAN countries Singapore is by a large margin the most developed and industrialized member. Her

³⁰I.B. Bulay: "Washington's Plans Concerning ASEAN,"
U.S.A.: Economics, Politics, Ideology, p. 78.

³¹Rodney Tasker, "ASEAN: Economics, The Key to Success
Far Eastern Economic Review, Feb. 18, 1977, p. 33.

citizens enjoy a much higher standard of living than that of any other country in Southeast Asia; the average per-capita earnings being \$7,500. Her 1978 GNP attained the mark of \$17.5 billion.³² Her per capita income is second in Asia only to Japan. This nation has been declared a 'developed' country by the International Monetary Fund, reportedly the first 'developing' country to achieve this redesignation.³³

With only limited raw materials and a small home market, the Singapore economy is one of the most vulnerable to international economic developments. However, she has pursued capitalism in a powerful, yet controlled manner under the positive leadership of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. According to James Strodes, during 1976, this nation's real GNP grew an estimated 7% and was expected to continue to show more growth as her non-industrialized trading partners began to show economic improvement. In 1976, imports from the United States exceeded \$1,000 million, while exports to the U.S. reached almost the same level. U.S. sales to Singapore are expected to be favorable in such commodities as building and construction supplies and equipment, metalworking machinery, energy and fluid-transfer systems, communications equipment,

³²D. Roosevelt, "Singapore-Stable Regime Seeks Change," Financial Times Survey, Nov. 26, 1979.

³³DMS Markets Inc. Intelligence Report, Australasia Section, Singapore Summary, 1980, p. 2.

process control laboratory instrumentation, food processing, and materials handling equipment.³⁴

B. U. S. Economic Interests in Indonesia

Indonesia is becoming increasingly important in the ASEAN region and the world. She has all the potential of a leading regional power in Southeast Asia, and U.S. interests are therefore substantial in a country of such size and significance. In terms of natural resources, she is rich in many products such as natural rubber, rice, tin, coffee, and tobacco. Her most important product, however, is oil which she has only begun to exploit. Significantly, in Indonesia, the American oil monopolies have invested \$2 billion in oil recovery. Indonesia is currently the third greatest supplier of petroleum to the United States following only Saudi Arabia and Nigeria.³⁵ Indonesian oil has become even more pertinent since President Carter halted oil imports from Iran in retaliation for the takeover of the American Embassy and the Americans assigned to it being held hostage in November 1979. Further, the United States is also interested in extracting natural gas from Indonesia; in the northern part of Sumatra

³⁴James Strodes, "Washington Maps Out Its Asian Trade Prospects," Far Eastern Economic Review, Feb. 18, 1977, p. 48.

³⁵I.B. Bulay, "Washington's Plans Concerning ASEAN," pp. 78-79.

and eastern side of Kalimantan, two plants are being constructed for the liquification of Indonesian natural gas which will be transported to America and Japan.³⁶

As the Honorable Philip Habib stated to the Sub-committee on Future Foreign Policy during hearings in 1975:

.....Indonesia is important to the United States for political and economic reasons, and in the coming years the relationship will be worthy of our most careful attention.... We expect to continue to provide some economic and political assistance because of the Government's laudable efforts to emphasize development and improve the well-being of the people, and because generally speaking, their revenues will not be sufficient to meet the needs of one of the world's poorer nations.³⁷

By 'Government's efforts', he was referring to the extensive three-tiered, five year development plans, REPLITA I-III, which were launched in 1970. These plans have the following targets: (1) improve the food and clothing quality and availability for her citizens, (2) increase availability of the required building facilities and housing, (3) expand and improve the government infrastructure, (4) improve the welfare program and, (5) improve employment opportunities.³⁸

C. U. S. Economic Interests in Thailand

Thailand is another well-endowed nation with natural resources and good agricultural ability. She is a major pro-

³⁶Ibid., p. 78.

³⁷Philip Habib, Statement on "Shifting Balance of Power in Asia: Implications For Future U. S. Policy" to the Committee on International Relations, Nov. 18, 1975.

³⁸Indonesia Handbook-1977, Dept. of Information; Republic of Indonesia.

ducer of basically primary products and is not dominated by intensive capital industry. Her import of petroleum, iron, automobiles, machinery, and other such goods testify to this. The population is predominantly agrarian (with a variety of agricultural products) and, therefore, Thailand is classified as labor intensive. Because her lands hold so much promise for increased yield in the respective agricultural products, the labor intensive work force here provides a strong potential for becoming a major producer in the world of these primary commodities.

Exports from Thailand grew with the increasing demand for her products from the U.S., Japan, and Western Europe. Exports to the United States are estimated to have exceeded \$3,000 million in 1976; imports from the U.S. are estimated at about \$430 million. More government emphasis is being placed on irrigation on mining, signaling good potential for U.S. sales of related equipment. This will help to balance the trade deficit the U.S. carries with that country.³⁹

D. U. S. Economic Interests in the Philippine Islands

Economic ties with the Philippine Islands are very close. Traditionally there has been an annual two-way trade close to two billion dollars. Additionally, in 1974, the Laurel-Langley agreement expired and, thereby, ended the

³⁹James Strodes, "Washington Maps Out Its Again Trade Prospects," p. 48.

period of exemption for American investors from restrictions on certain business activities by foreigners in the Philippines. This also spelled the end of special tariff preference on trade between our two nations.⁴⁰ (This may partially explain the unfavorable balance-of-payments experienced during the 1977 and since that time.) The 1976 imports from the United States totalled nearly \$700 million, while exports to the U.S. were roughly \$650 million.⁴¹

As in other ASEAN countries, with the exception of Singapore, the Philippines export a basic list of primary agricultural products such as pineapple, copra, lumber, sugar, and coconut oil. On the other side of the ledger, her imports generally consist of products such as mineral fuels, petroleum products, and machinery which will enable her to produce goods for export. As noted by Shee-Poon Kim in an article covering the first ten years of ASEAN existence, the U.S. remains a primary economic supporter of the Philippines despite a growing concern over the instability of the pseudo-democracy being run by President Marcos. Perhaps this instability has slowed the influx of other international investment from what might have been; certainly this nation has the natural resources and

⁴⁰ Philip Habib, Statement to Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy, November 18, 1975, (U. S. Govt. Printing Office).

⁴¹ James Strodes, "Washington Maps Out Its Asian Trade Prospects," p. 48.

labor assets necessary to become a major producer of capital goods.⁴²

E. U. S. Economic Interests in Malaysia

Malaysia is considered a developing country with abundant natural resources, high savings, an improving balance of payments surplus over the last five years, and increasing levels of foreign reserves. She has become the largest producer and exporter in the world of natural rubber, tin, palm oil, tropical hardwoods, and pepper. While these primary products account for 80% of her exports, Malaysia has, nevertheless, managed to attain a rapid industrial growth. In fact, between 1970-1977, her manufacturing output expanded by over 12% each year. Despite this, there is very little unilateral economic interplay between the United States and Malaysia, nor is Malaysia conducting the majority of her trade with other ASEAN countries. Instead, she is doing most of her business with Japan by exporting almost three billion dollars worth of goods to the Japanese islands and importing almost 2.2 billion dollars in goods from there. She exports only slightly less to the European Economic Community - (\$2,813 million) - but imports considerably less - (\$1,678 million).⁴³

⁴²Shee-Poon Kim, "Decade of ASEAN, 1967-1977," Asia Survey, August 1977, p. 755.

⁴³P. Bowring, "Steady Growth In the Past Year," Financial Times, April 28, 1987.

III. POLITICAL INTERESTS

As one looks at this region, it should be noted that the U.S. interests and policies are not necessarily any distance from aspirations and desires of the countries which form the Association. Both politically and strategically, the United States supports the sovereignty and independence of the non-Communist nations of the region; that is probably the overriding U.S. interest and objective in the area. These policies are directed toward maintenance of U.S. commitments and U.S. presence in the region, albeit, the presence in the Post-Vietnam era is more modest than it once was. "The basic policy in Asia is to cooperate with the Asian countries in their search for peace and development, two factors which are most on their minds, and to cooperate with the Asian countries themselves who will fundamentally play the primary role in this process."⁴⁴

Japan has expressed concern for the apparent disinterest the United States has displayed in the last few years. She would like to see the establishment of a stable international framework for Southeast Asia in which Japan, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China can each play constructive roles. She views the ambiguity of U.S. policy in this region as troublesome and perhaps this attitude is well-founded. In

⁴⁴ Philip Habib, Statement to Sub-Committee on Foreign Relations, November 18, 1975.

an article written for the Far Eastern Economic Review by Toru Yano in 1978, the following was expressed:

To stress the unimportance of Southeast Asia to the U.S., one American participant in a conference held in Honolulu in Mid-January this year, described the region as a 'small potato'. This conference on Southeast Asia, attended by such significant U.S. intellectuals as Edwin O. Reischauer, John K. Fairbanks and the like, provided a good opportunity for forecasting the drift of America. Although this Harvard conference was made the most of by a Japanese gaimusho (diplomat), who delivered a speech urging the U.S. to be more mindful of its constructive role in Southeast Asia, the Americans merely clapped their hands courteously and, a moment later, forgot the whole message.⁴⁵

Under the political category, two recent situations arose which have involved the policies of the United States with individual countries of the association. The first concerns the 1976 policy of President Carter over his human rights issue. The second relates to the Law of the Sea as relegated by the United Nations Conference (UNCLOS) which, in part, applies to all nations' seaboard transit of this region.

In the first issue, the Philippines and Indonesia, have been put under pressure to revise their policies regarding Human Rights. The interesting fact is that both nations have chosen to more or less ignore the pressures as applied by President Carter's administration, apparently with no rebuke.

⁴⁵Toru Yano, "U.S. Inertia and the High Expectations of Japan," Far Eastern Economic Review, March 10, 1978, p. 38.

Thus, this has made the impression that the U.S. 'human rights' program is little more than rhetoric. In one respect, their refusal to be influenced on this issue may be more advantageous than currently comprehended. If the U.S. were to impose her standards for human rights upon these two nations whose governments operate much differently from that of the U.S., then perhaps these two Asian nations might decide to retaliate by ceasing all cooperative relations with America; this is a situation we can ill-afford politically or economically.

In the second issue, over the right of passage through these international waterways within this region, part of the controversy over the use of the waters is indicative of the trend of smaller nations asserting their 'rights' over more powerful nations through means of International Law. As island nations, both Indonesia and the Philippines have claimed that the seas connecting their land members are territorial waters. Singapore is caught in the middle by geography (since she is at the mouth of the Strait of Malacca) and by economics (as a major port in Southeast Asia whose bunkering and shipping facilities depend on unimpeded access). She noted that the Indonesian/Malaysian assertion of control over the Strait of Malacca is a hollow one, since neither state has the capability of closing the passageway to outside powers.⁴⁶

⁴⁶Sheldon W. Simon, Asian Neutralism and U.S. Policy, Foreign Affairs Study No. 21, August 1975, pp. 44-46.

In 1972, the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Thomas Moorer, issued a statement regarding these waterways which was later affirmed by both Japan and the Soviet Union. This statement objected to what Indonesia and Malaysia termed the "right of innocent passage." The reasoning was due to the necessity of these waters to be kept open for international passage. Thus major powers, even as international rivals, agree on the point that 'chokepoints' such as these straits, and island waterways between two oceans, must be open for all nations to unrestricted passage in terms of economic and security interests. It will be one of the major obstacles for the UNCLOS to unravel if the conference is to have any meaning in the coming decades.⁴⁷

Irrespective of one's evaluation of American politics in this region, one point stands out clearly: the nations in the five-member association are vehemently anti-Communist, and regardless of what type of government they profess, or how they conduct their policies, they should be considered allies of the United States. Therefore, any uni- or bi-lateral political motions in which we engage with them, should be done as friends rather than as adversaries.

⁴⁷ Leifer and Nelson, "Conflict of Interest in the Straits of Malacca," *International Affairs*, (London), Vol. 49, No. 2, April 1978, p. 198.

IV. CULTURAL/SOCIAL INTERESTS

In the last category, which is Cultural/Social interests with the five nations, a number of crossover exchanges have been evident. The most recent and major issue has been the role in which the United States has played in resettling nearly 160,000 Indochinese refugees since about 1977. While America is not the only nation to be involved in this endeavor, much of the financial aid and foodstuffs have been provided by this country. The flow of refugees still has not abated. There are approximately 14,000 Vietnamese per month being resettled in the United States from Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Furthermore, since the Vietnamese invasion into Cambodia one and one-half years ago, 3.5 million Cambodians have been displaced, many fleeing across the Thailand border. U.S. and other assistance is nearly \$300 million for this troublespot alone.⁴⁸

While the above situation falls under a U.S. foreign aid status, there are other types of interaction, such as religious, ethnic and educational, which take place between the United States and these five nations and have no connection to the ASEAN organization. For example, in Thailand there has been an unusually large number of Christian Missionaries living throughout the country working to instill Christianity in its

⁴⁸ John Yemma, "Displaced Persons Now Political Weapon," Christian Science Monitor, June 8, 1980.

populace (the majority is Buddhist). According to LCDR Meiss, a son of one of these missionary families, the majority of the efforts have been in the agrarian northern regions of Thailand along the Laotian border.⁴⁹

The United States Peace Corps has been particularly active in three of the nations, namely Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. This organization involves a number of young American personnel who volunteer for one or more years to work in these and other foreign countries utilizing their particular skills to assist the population at the lowest levels. They are paid a small portion of their salary; the remainder is placed into their bank account in America which can be drawn upon when their duty overseas is completed. The success of this program has been greatly increased in the last decade due to the manner in which it is conducted. It places the personnel into the foreign culture at the same economic level as the people with whom they will be working. They are provided with extensive language and cultural training prior to being sent to their positions. Each member of the Corps is initially a volunteer so enthusiasm is self-generated. It is the opinion of this author that this has been one of the

⁴⁹ Conversations with LCDR Samuae Meiss, presently on assignment at the Pentagon for OPNAV-06, Strategic Plans. LCDR Meiss was raised in Thailand and speaks Thai fluently. He and his family spent three years in the mid-seventies assigned to the JUSMAG in Bangkok.

most successful low cost assistance programs sponsored by the United States to date.⁵⁰

There have been studies and projects ventured by the U.S. and the five nations in social and scientific areas which help to draw together the people of the nations and the United States. For example, over the last eight years, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences has sponsored a pair of American Scientists to study the wild orangutan on Kalimantan. Various scientific foundations within the United States have supported this type of research in hopes of producing information which will benefit all of mankind.⁵¹

⁵⁰During the four years which I was in Asia for duty, I encountered several Peace Corps volunteers in several countries. Their attitudes and the responses they produced in the population of the areas in which they worked was most refreshing. Presently there is one student attending the NPS who only recently returned from a Peace Corps assignment in Malaysia.

⁵¹B. Galdikas, "Living with the Great Orange Apes," National Geographic, Vol. 157, No. 6, June 1980, p. 830.

CHAPTER THREE

UNITED STATES NATIONAL INTERESTS IN ASEAN

The association was conceived and established in a turbulent time in an area marked by intra-regional conflicts, heavy American involvement in Indochina, and major power rivalry in this region. Perhaps the five founding member nations recognized each other's vulnerability and limitations in facing the world; despite minor territorial disputes, ethnic conflicts and animosities, religious differences and economic difficulties, they decided to unite their resources to promote stability and unity in the region.

Certainly during the initial years, America paid little attention to the newly formed organization. Of course, the focus of U.S. interest at that time was its involvement in the conflict with North Vietnam. During that period the main interest in the countries of this Association mainly concerned whatever support these nations could provide to assist the American military actions. Thailand and the Philippines were most closely involved by their grants for U.S. bases as support and staging areas for the conflict.

While the move to establish ASEAN could also be expressed as a step to identify more closely with other third world nations, the members also took steps to improve relations with the developed countries, particularly through their economic

relations. A greater emphasis was placed upon regionalism as part of the trend toward self-reliance. In the more recent years, this organization has begun to have greater meaning. The nations of ASEAN have begun to effectively exercise their interactions as a unit and thus bring about advancement toward their goals. Concomitantly, the United States has come to deal with this region more frequently through the association rather than its former bilateral means.

I. SECURITY INTERESTS

Dealing with this region on security matters through an association or regional organization is not a new concept for the United States. Following World War Two, Southeast Asia was an area of turbulent politics, revolts, and Communist Aggression. Many nations expressed hopes that the United States would take an active role in helping to stabilize the region and to crush the traditional colonization of the area. Although reluctant to do so, the U.S. separated itself from attempts to reinstate colonial rule, as in 1946, when she rebuffed an attempt by France and Great Britain to form a Pacific security pact. Washington, for the most part, confined itself to granting independence to the Philippines and chastizing the colonial powers as they attempted to re-establish their prewar holdings. Concurrently, India's Nehru began active efforts at regional unity in the early months of 1947 by forming the Asian Relations Organization. Through

this group, Nehru proclaimed that unity was essential as the colonialization receded. The first resolution passed by this organization pressured the United Nations to resolve the dispute between nationalists and the Dutch Army in Indonesia in 1949. The U.S. was forced to deal with this situation as a member of the United Nations Security Council.⁵²

Following the collapse of the Nationalist government in China in 1949, Philippine President Quirino suggested the initiation of a Pacific Security Pact to resist the Communist threat. The American Congress incorporated a provision for support of any regional security organization of non-Communist Asian states into a Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1949. The pledge of this type favored the development of some sort of collective security agreement, with limited American participation.⁵³

In 1950, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Dean Rusk, maintained that any Asian effort to promote economic welfare and regional security would be endorsed by Washington. The State Department then proceeded on a bilateral or multi-lateral basis to protect perceived U.S. interests in Asia through the Philippines - U.S. Mutual Defense Pact (30 August 1951). The Australian-New Zealand-

⁵²D. Wightman, Toward Economic Cooperation in Asia; the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, (New York: Yale University Press, 1963).

⁵³Richard Wright, "The Association of Southeast Asian Nations An Inquiry into the Problems of Regional Organization and Future Development in Southeast Asia," NPS Thesis, December 1978.

United States (ANZUS) Treaty (1 September 1951), and the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Pact (8 September 1951) were hastily conceived to block the spread of Communism throughout Asia. These agreements expressed the ultimate American goal to develop a more comprehensive system of regional security in the Pacific.⁵⁴

In 1954, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was created. Only two Southeast Asian nations, Thailand and the Philippine Islands, comprised the original signatories. However, as Russel Fifield pointed out in his 1958 study, the fact that Great Britain signed automatically, meant the inclusion of Malaysia and British Borneo (soon to be incorporated within Malaysia); also, Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam were included in the treaty as protocol states. The pact, therefore, had far more territorial significance than the roster of its membership indicated.⁵⁵

While many critics of SEATO compare the treaty to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a study of the 1954 agreement points out that the Americans did not wish SEATO to be an Asian NATO. Secretary Dulles rejected a similar unified military command structure, a joint command headquarters, a common strategy, and called for a SEATO standing

⁵⁴Russel J. Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958, (New York: Harper and Brothers), 1958.

⁵⁵Fifield, The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958, p. 456.

force, the nations of which were key elements of NATO. The U.S. position held that the Asian treaty would be used to halt international aggression in any of SEATO's member states.⁵⁶

American involvement in SEATO was considered by Washington to be a temporary measure. Russel Fifield brought this out in his study of American involvement in S. E. Asia:

American support for security....was essentially a holding operation until the states of the area gained in internal strength and external posture and worked together in broader patterns of regional cooperation... The promotion of good-neighbor relations, of regional consciousness, and of regionalism was a broad goal supported by U. S. policy.⁵⁷

Another organization established was the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). The Asians believed this grouping would serve as a tool to procure economic aid and recovery paralleling the Marshall Plan in Europe following the Second World War. However, Great Britain and the United States did not accede to the proposals presented by the group. Instead they persuaded the underdeveloped nations to adopt rhetorical programs such as expansion of exports, trade promotion, training of manpower, institution of domestic savings programs, and other such unrealistic moves for these troubled nations. Nonetheless, ECAFE existed as the first united grouping or front against the Western powers. By 1955,

⁵⁶Wright, "The Association of Southeast Asian Nations..." pp. 44-46.

⁵⁷Rusel Fifield, Americans in Southeast Asia--The Roots of Commitment, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1973) p. 252.

however, the creation of SEATO divided ECAFE into predictable voting blocs (Western vs. Communist) and, thereafter, little was achieved in the way of economic progress.⁵⁸

In 1959, the Prime Minister of Malay, Abdul Rahman, became the proponent of another attempt at a regional organization. In January of that year, Rahman proposed to the Philippine President, Juan Carlos Garcia, that their nations initiate a "Southeast Asia Friendship and Economic Treaty (SEAFET)". It was to include only Malaya, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam. However, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Burma refused to enter and by 1961 only the Philippines, Malaya, and Thailand remained interested; consequently they formed the aforementioned Association of Southeast Asia (ASA). This organization was soon doomed due to the territorial disputes which broke out between Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. In fact, from 1963 until Sukarno's downfall in Indonesia after the abortive communist coup in 1965, an Indonesian campaign ensued in an attempt to crush Malaysia. This campaign was known in Indonesia as KONFRONTASI.⁵⁹ ASA was the last attempt by nations of the region to establish an organization uniting them as a single front facing the major powers of the world.

⁵⁸Hiroshi Kitamura, Regional Cooperation as Seen From ECAFE, (New York: The Asia Society--SEADAG, 1972), pp. 9 51-52.

⁵⁹Indonesia Handbook 1977, Department of Information, Republic of Indonesia.

What this lengthy review affirms is that since World War Two, the United States has repeatedly dealt with the Southeast Asia region, and through one attempt or another, assisted and supported the establishment of unified groupings between the nations of the Southeast Asian region.

Today there exists a counterpart pact with which ASEAN must consider itself a military contender. That is the Indo-chinese triad of Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea (Cambodia), owned and operated by Hanoi and supported by Moscow. This is not unlike the Warsaw Pact/NATO situation existing in Europe. At this time ASEAN is not espousing itself as a military alliance, but rather as an economic and social cooperative grouping. The major question now is whether these five nations will in fact become an overt, full scale military alliance. As brought out earlier, there has been some military cooperation between the members such as between Malaysia and Thailand in battling the insurgents along their common border. Singapore openly called for the association to create a formal military alliance when Afghanistan was invaded.

There appears to be a feeling of despair within the Association in regards to forming a military alliance. Thailand's Deputy Foreign Minister recently stated that "Even if (ASEAN) becomes a military bloc, it cannot do anything. Even NATO is facing all kinds of problems. The five ASEAN members have

less weapons than Vietnam. What is the use of making a military pact?"⁶⁰

A major factor in ASEAN's sovereign outlook is the area's military ties to the United States. The confidence of this region in the U.S. must have been shaken by the American withdrawal in Taiwan and rhetorically proposed pullout of the 8th Army from the Republic of Korea. American leaders, however, have been attempting to reverse this feeling through policy statements and accelerated delivery of military equipment to Thailand.⁶¹ Despite these token appeasements, it is hard to block out the feelings of doubt in the minds of ASEAN leaders when they observe our ever dominant priority over Western Europe and the shift of assets and protection from the Far East to the Middle East over the existing crises around the Persian Gulf.⁶²

That the ASEAN nations, even united, do not stack up against the Vietnam counterforces is true. The requirement for the U.S. security blanket is valid in order to either deter or support a regional conflict. The U.S. may be able, in part, to do this by increasing the supply of arms and

⁶⁰John C. Burton, "ASEAN Faces the Prospect of Military Alliance," Defense and Foreign Affairs, August 1980, p. 13.

⁶¹V.G. Kulkarni, "Despite U.S. Airlift of Arms, Thailand Still Frets Over More Powerful Viets," Christian Science Monitor, 22 July 1980, p. 18.

⁶²John C. Burton, "ASEAN Faces the Prospect of a Military Alliance," p. 13.

other military equipment to ASEAN states. Most of the ASEAN nations' equipment is obsolete or in short supply, there is little attempt at standardization (a dilemma not unlike that facing NATO), and the forces of ASEAN are more suited to combating insurgencies than facing an overt military threat. Along with this lies another stumbling block: there is a financial problem involved by those nations procuring arms from the outside. They would naturally like to see more financial aid from Washington. But there may be a possible solution or trade-off option considering the extensive oil finds in and around Indonesia and the existing crisis in the Persian Gulf.

In a recent report from our Congress, it was noted that "all of the ASEAN countries have, in the wake of the new challenges they face, placed renewed emphasis on improving their military capabilities. However, each ASEAN country also continues to view economic and social progress as the major factor affecting their long term stability and security. Military modernization plans have, therefore, been moderate and balanced to prevent resources from being significantly diverted from economic development programs."⁶³

The defensive buildup among the five ASEAN nations has been assisted by the development of domestic defense industries. It is one means of providing an in-house, cost-effective, standardized buildup of arms for the region, but the

⁶³Ibid., p. 13.

U.S. has not exploited this aspect very well. It has side-benefits of providing technological gains for the respective nations, profits through export sales, and a reliable supply source since it is internal within the Association.

At present, the weakest common factor existing in the ASEAN nations is the instability of each nation forced by internal unrest and insurgency against the respective regimes. Even Singapore (which has managed to minimize the internal threat through Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's strong direction and ethnic cohesion) is still delicate since it is bracketed by instability in both Indonesia and Malaysia. Since insurgency is a common threat (albeit not from the same sources) perhaps the Washington planners would do well to place some thought on how to best shore up the individual nations against this unconventional type of warfare. Even better, this assistance to the Association would provide a basis of cooperation and cohesion amongst the member states within the organization.

A. U. S. Security Interests in Singapore Through ASEAN

Singapore initially disavowed the use of ASEAN for any security aspect dealing with extra-regional powers. In 1969, her Foreign Minister, Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, insisted the organization remain clear of any defensive matters:

ASEAN should remain an organization solely
to promote economic cooperation in the region.
We should not burden it with responsibilities

for sorting out the ideological complexion of Southeast Asia or resolving its military and security problems.⁶⁴

Yet by March 1971, Singapore's United Nations ambassador held that without some type of regional security apparatus, ASEAN was powerless to act against the intrigues of a super-power like Japan, who may be adamant on securing foreign sources of supply:

Japan traditionally has had a very definite policy toward the area in which she lives... If her sources of raw materials, her markets, or her sea lanes were threatened, this would encourage her toward militarism.⁶⁵

Further, Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew recently publicly urged American military forces to remain in Southeast Asia:

What we'd like to see is a balance of powers in the region, or at least no preponderance or overwhelming weight of any single great power. As long as there is a Soviet naval presence, that presence can only be matched by an American naval presence.⁶⁶

To support what he preached, Premier Lee and his government agreed to permit U.S. maritime air patrols in the Indian Ocean to use Singapore as a staging point. The U.S. Navy P-3 ORIONS fly four monthly patrols, though the

⁶⁴Dick Wilson, The Future Role of Singapore, (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 71.

⁶⁵Yuan-li Wu, Strategic Significance of Singapore, (Washington D. C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1972), p. 15.

⁶⁶Michael Richardson, "U.S. Sub Spotters Win Singapore Assent," Far Eastern Economic Review, 19 May 1978, p. 10.

frequency is likely to be increased as U.S. interest in the Indian Ocean becomes more prominent. Singapore's military airfield at Tengah is being used as a base for the patrols.⁶⁷

Even with these strong pro-United States statements, Singapore's defensive posture remains unique, in that among the ASEAN states, it alone receives no U.S. MAP funding. It purchases whatever military hardware it needs on a cash basis, including American aircraft and surface vessels, such as the C-130 Hercules Transports and two ex-U.S. Minesweepers.⁶⁸ Her shipbuilding capability will likely preclude any future purchases of vessels.

B. U. S. Security Interests in Indonesia Through ASEAN

Indonesia has been wary of any arrangement which would call for any type of formal alliance or defense organization structure. President Suharto stresses continually that his country is non-aligned and has no ties with the great powers. Indonesia's size and population tends to place it into a position as a natural leader of the region and it could potentially become a middle power of the world. In a speech by President Suharto in August 1977, he pointed out that "our strength is not a military strength, but one that is based on strong national and regional resilience....250 million

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 10.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 10.

people of ASEAN...."⁶⁹ The total military strength of the forces in that nation has declined from 400,000 in 1967 to 270,000 in 1977, and many of those men are employed in civil administrative duties.⁷⁰ Concurrently, Indonesia's armed forces undoubtedly depend on the Western bloc made evident by the U.S. foreign military sales of \$40 million to Jakarta in 1979.⁷¹

C. U. S. Security Interests in Thailand Through ASEAN

Thailand's concept of mutual security in Southeast Asia is the least consistent of all ASEAN nations. This is probably due to its constant changes in government since 1973 and the neighboring threat of Communist forces from Indochina. As usual, Bangkok will support whatever arrangement will ensure its survival. (This is not meant to sound like chastisement of a seemingly logical policy). After the fall of South Vietnam, Thailand emphasized that ASEAN would first have to seek accommodation with its northern neighbors. She remained opposed to any evolution of ASEAN into a mutual security organization from March 1976 to October 1976. Then in October 1976, a coup deposed Seni Promoj and in his stead, the military

⁶⁹Justus M. Van der Kroef, "ASEAN and U.S. Security Interests," Strategic Review, Spring 1978, p. 55.

⁷⁰David Jenkins, "Where Generals Reign Supreme," Far Eastern Economic Review, 99, 13 January 1978, pp. 22-23.

⁷¹Rodney Tasker, "Wallflowers No Longer," Far Eastern Economic Review, 100, 19 May 1978, p. 11.

installed a vehement anti-Communist regime. The Thai foreign policy reversed itself and began to favor the idea of mutual security in Southeast Asia. Bangkok then began pushing for stronger ASEAN military cooperation. She invited U.S. technicians to prepare for P-3 flights monitoring Soviet naval movements in the Indian Ocean.⁷²

In 1977, another coup resulted in a new face, and General Kriangsak Chamanand, became the premier. His policy has been to relax tensions with Hanoi and Phnom Penh. At the same time, Thailand expressed a desire more vehemently than any other ASEAN state, to strengthen her relationship with the U.S.⁷³ (The 40 million dollars worth of military sales from the United States mentioned earlier, certainly tends to substantiate this.) Today the border conflicts with Laos and Cambodia loom as strongly as ever. It is expected that as long as the present regime holds power, and the threat remains on these borders, Thailand will continue pressing for strong ties with Washington.

D. U. S. Security Interests in the Philippine Islands Through ASEAN

The ASEAN nation, which has traditionally and historically shown the strongest ties with the United States, is now publically denouncing its special relationship with

⁷²Van der Kroef, "ASEAN Security and Development: Some Paradoxes and Symbols," Asian Affairs, 9 June 1978, p. 153-55.

⁷³Rodney Tasker, "Wallflowers No Longer," Far Eastern Economic Review, 100, 19 May 1978, p. 11.

Washington. This is fairly recent as the Philippines maintained a pro-U.S. and anti-Communist doctrine even after President Nixon's visit with China. Following the 1973 American withdrawal from Indochina, they began to request agreements for new bases. While negotiations over these bases encountered some rocky paths, the Philippines began suggesting that the association strengthen its internal aspects on security.⁷⁴

The Human Rights rhetoric, displayed by the Carter Administration, created some uneasiness between the two nations for some time. Occasionally it surfaces again when some Filipino or American interest group pulls it out to wave in front of our policy-makers. In May 1978, Vice President Mondale visited the Philippine Islands. President Marcos conceded to our representative that the two bases at Clark AFB and Subic Navy Facility "contribute to the mutual benefit of both countries", and a four point agreement was put together to deal with Philippine sovereignty.⁷⁵ The Philippines would stand to lose economically if the bases were closed, as the total annual U.S. Initiated contribution to the national economy is estimated at \$200 million. Therefore, it is

⁷⁴Van der Kroef, "ASEAN Security and Development: Some paradoxes and Symbols," p. 153.

⁷⁵"Mondale Sows the Seeds," Far Eastern Economic Review, 100, (19 May 1978), p. 11.

doubtful the bases will ever be closed and the Americans thrown off the islands.⁷⁶

The commander of the U.S. Thirteenth Air Force, Major General F. Poston, interviewed with the Far Eastern Economic Review, in June 1978. He summarized security ties between the U.S. and Philippines and how they relate with the other ASEAN nations:

I feel confident that President Marcos recognizes the U.S. presence here as a stabilizing factor in his region. And he knows this feeling is shared by his ASEAN partners.⁷⁷

E. U. S. Security Interests in Malaysia Through ASEAN

Malaysia was the cornerstone to founding the original doctrine of neutralization in the early years of ASEAN. However, from 1975, she favored altering ASEAN's planned strategy from defense to one of positive security. This change was brought about by the Communist victory in Indochina in the spring of 1975; Kuala Lumpur no longer considered the environment suitable for a neutralization scheme. Their government stressed that cooperation in the region was paramount, but were careful not to go so far as to establish any collective security arrangement or formal military agreement between the five nations. Malaysia already maintains two squadrons of

⁷⁶ Lewis Purnell, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy, May 18, 1976.

⁷⁷ Russell Spurr, "Carter's Front-Line Fighters," Far Eastern Economic Review, January 18, 1980, p. 30.

U.S. built supersonic F-5Es at an air base at Butterworth. Also, as mentioned earlier, they plan to buy 80 American-made A4 Skyhawk fighter-bombers.⁷⁸

Malaysia appears to have now shifted to a more alert position to the possible threat from the Soviet Union, especially through a Vietnamese proxy. However, in an article in the Christian Science Monitor, it is reported that the U.S. has supposedly encouraged Malaysia to seek accommodation with Hanoi.⁷⁹ Apparently the United States is not entirely sure of its long-range objectives vis-a-vis Indochina, but does not expect the return to power of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia. Right now the Americans are playing the Chinese Card but that is not to say their dialogue with Moscow will not be resumed within the near future. Therefore, it may be desirable to 'help' Vietnam establish its independence from both Moscow and possibly Peking in the future. In any case, the Vietnamese stubbornness regarding Cambodia, leaves the members of the triple alliance (China-U.S.-ASEAN) with few choices for diplomatic moves.

II. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

One aspect of ASEAN that has been a part of its primary intent since the conception of the association, has been the

⁷⁸K. Das, "Starting the Decade With a Bang," Far Eastern Economic Review, January 18, 1980, p. 30.

⁷⁹Louis Wiznitzer, "U.S.-ASEAN-China Stance Against Vietnam Shows Signs of Strain," Christian Science Monitor, 3 June 1980, p. 18.

goal to achieve economic growth and development. This region has been traditionally one of the most poverty-stricken areas of the entire globe. In 1974, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) listed the world's GNP at \$4,820 billion. Southeast Asia's portion of that total was a mere 1.43 percent, or \$69 billion. At the same time, the region comprised approximately 8 percent of the world's population.⁸⁰

Poor nations of the world are frequently referred to as "Less Developed Countries" (LDCs), and have several traits common to each other such as: poverty levels of income, a high rate of population growth, low rates of adult literacy, and a large agrarian work force.⁸¹ Except for Singapore, each of the ASEAN states possess these characteristics. There are other problems that exist which inhibit their growth such as corruption, government inefficiency, low industrial capacity, and little technical expertise. Since 1967, ASEAN has placed acceleration of the economic growth as the first priority, showing this region's concern to address the challenge which is facing all LDCs. One dilemma of which all LDCs must be aware, is a global economic trend indicating a widening per-capita income gap between the developed countries and the LDCs. Actually, by the mid-1970s, it was estimated that

⁸⁰ Guy J. Pauker et al, Diversity and Development in South-east Asia--The Coming Decade, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company), 1977, p. 35.

⁸¹ A. LeRoy Bennett, International Organizations, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1977, p. 211.

twenty-five percent of the world's population, in the developed countries produced 80 percent of the world's goods and services.⁸²

While the past economic record of ASEAN has been less than impressive, and is below the level it was to have attained by this time, there nevertheless, has been a significant change in the outlook by the region's policy and decision-makers. The most important ingredient of international/regional cooperation has thus been initiated. Today all five members place the development of relations and cooperation with their fellow members of ASEAN very high on the list of economic priorities. Other organizations, such as the European Economic Community, seem to have taken notice of the changing attitudes within this Asian regional association.

A. U. S. Economic Interests in Singapore Through ASEAN

Singapore carries on a fairly well-balanced import/export trade with the United States; in 1976, the total amounts for each were roughly near \$1,000 million. Her main export is petroleum products. Among her other main products are crude rubber, electric office machinery, telecommunication equipment, ships and boats. In 1977, Singapore's Premier Lee called for a dialogue between ASEAN and the United States,

⁸²Milton H. Spencer, Contemporary Economics, 3rd Ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, Inc.), 1977, p. 655.

to expand favorable relations with America as a primary external market.⁸³

B. U. S. Economic Interests in Indonesia Through ASEAN

The American business community reflects little understanding of the present Indonesian government and economic situation. This is astounding in view of the fact that this Asian nation is the fifth largest in world by population and has a large untapped resource base. It is a member of OPEC with over 30 Western oil companies engaging in exploration and production. Also, it is situated on the strategic waterways which connect the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Moreover, it is involved in planning programs through ASEAN and may, in the near future, emerge as the natural leader of this regional grouping. Further, Indonesia has a large extent of trade and interdependency with Japan. This takes on added importance to American businesses when one considers the relations between the U.S. and Japan. Indonesia's per-capita GNP is among the lowest in the world, but in the last eight years she has excelled in programs for economic growth.

Indonesia has an abundant source of oil which is her most important natural resource. Actually, her proven oil reserves are roughly 15 billion barrels. Indonesia has other natural resources also, including very fertile soil and an

⁸³Rodney Tasker, "ASEAN--Economics, the Key to Success," Far Eastern Economic Review, February 18, 1977, p. 34.

excellent climate for agriculture, substantial forest resources, promising amounts of minerals, and natural gas.⁸⁴

American investment in this nation tends to be capital-intensive. The firms coming to Indonesia attempt to reproduce a highly mechanized working environment such as they are accustomed to in the United States.⁸⁵ Perhaps the best plan would be to concentrate on labor-intensive industries and draw from the tremendous population existing on these islands. Indonesia's economy shows strengthening and growing potential. Future trade prospects with the United States look good, providing the U.S. does not upset these relations with degrading statements about 'Human Rights'. There appears to be more bilateral trade with Indonesia than through any agreements with the Asian association.

C. U. S. Economic Interests in Thailand Through ASEAN

Thailand enjoys a substantial trade exchange with the United States. In 1977, Bangkok entered into a joint ASEAN memorandum which was sent to the United States government, asking Washington to retain the tax deferral system which works to the benefit of the ASEAN states.⁸⁶

⁸⁴Guy Pauker, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy, April 7, 1976.

⁸⁵James Jeffords, Hearing before the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy, April 7, 1976.

⁸⁶Shee-Poon Kim, "A Decade of ASEAN," p. 763.

At present Thailand must be concerned with its government's ability to widen the support of its base by decreasing poverty among the minority ethnic groups in the Northeastern and Southern portions of the nation. Her major concentration however, has been in facing the security threat along her borders. Once this has been brought under control, the nation will be better able to concentrate on her economic structure and enter more fully into the ASEAN cooperation towards rapid economic and regional development.

D. U. S. Economic Interests in the Philippines Islands Through ASEAN

Most of the economic dealings in the Philippines were established in years past prior to the formation of ASEAN. In 1977, she came forth with an ASEAN proposal to coerce the United States into taking on a leading role in North-South Dialogue discussions. Concurrently, the Philippines confronted the Americans at an ASEAN meeting held in Manila that same year, with a series of requests for tariff and quota concessions for export products, including mahogany and palm oil. The Americans countered with a desire for a non-discrimination clause for U.S. investors in the Philippines; an old agreement had formerly placed American businessmen on equal ground with Filipino businessmen.⁸⁷

⁸⁷Rodney Tasker, "Reinforcing Ties With ASEAN," p. 129.

E. U. S. Economic Interests in Malaysia Through ASEAN

Again, there has been little trade exchange with the United States by Malaysia, other than the 'cash only' military purchases of aircraft and equipment. However, Malaysia has good potential for coordinating heavy trade exports of both tin and agricultural products. Her main contribution through ASEAN in an economic sense, has been in cooperating with the other members in their proposals to the U.S., with regard to trade and economic issues.

III. POLITICAL INTERESTS

All the ASEAN nations are public advocates of non-alignment and neutralization. However, each nation maintains current ties to either the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, or Japan in some form or another. The tentativeness and apparent lack of confidence of ASEAN political moves is a reflection of the youth and inexperience of this regional cooperation.

The questions facing the Washington planners appear to be twofold: (1) Would American disengagement from the Southeast Asian region, along with Sino-U.S. detente, offer the opportunity to venture further into a U.S. Alliance structure in the region? Or, (2) should the United States try to associate itself with those Asian governments which represent change and a commitment to social justice, no matter what their international alignments may be? The Vietnamese

expansion and Soviet move into Afghanistan may be a sufficient enough communist threat which could pressure Washington to opt for further involvement into an alliance structure in the region, particularly if Europe can be persuaded to do the same.

The five ASEAN nations do not want to create a vacuum which would tempt one of the superpowers to move in. But the recent Soviet and Vietnamese acts of aggression have caused the United States to sharpen its focus on ASEAN. Washington has pledged a strong commitment to the area; the recent placements of military equipment into Thailand is one attempt by America to impress upon the five governments that its post-Vietnam war apathy toward the area is 'water over the bridge'. To further substantiate U.S. concern, Washington has also increased military sales credits to Malaysia and Indonesia, and in early 1979, entered into a new five-year agreement with the Philippines to maintain its military bases there.⁸⁸ As the Association strengthens itself through better cooperation and communications, the Washington planners may find themselves having to deal more through the regional grouping, and less through bi- or multi-lateral arrangements.

IV. CULTURAL/SOCIAL INTERESTS

Little could be found to indicate that the United States has been involving itself over relations in this category

⁸⁸Rodney Tasker, "A Useful Role for Superpowers," p. 11-12.

through the association. The most which seems to be evident is the U.S. has sent representatives to their summit meetings and has been involved as a United Nations member, in projects, which fall under the heading of Cultural or Social titles.

CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The three objectives of this paper have been to (1) determine the extent of the United States' national interests in ASEAN; (2) determine whether the Association plays a relevant part in the policies and decisions Washington sets over this region, and (3) establish whether the U.S. should deal in its national interests through ASEAN or on a bi-lateral basis with each respective ASEAN nation.

Chapters Two and Three described the extent of America's national interests and also what proportion of these interests were being dealt directly through the ASEAN grouping. If one were to construct a graph of the U.S. national interests which have been found and described in the preceding text, certain data becomes evident: First, it is apparent the United States has been dealing with the region primarily on a country-to-country basis rather than through the association. This may be in part due to the original linkages formed with each nation before the birth of this association in 1967. Secondly, it has only recently become apparent, that mutual trust and commitments between the member states, have become their primary concerns exceeding those of external commitments. Nationalism had taken priority over regionalism during the initial years of the Association's history.

I. SECURITY INTERESTS

Bi-lateral agreements and arrangements reign prevalent in security. It is becoming evident however, that the ASEAN states are increasing their defense cooperation out of fear of Soviet Communism and Vietnamese aggression. Their ties with Japan and China have also shown signs of strengthening. And now, for the first time in decades, the desire for a firm United States commitment is unanimous.

It would benefit the United States to shift the policy of dealing with each nation as an individual and begin to construct its agreements through the Association of Southeast Asian Nation. This would accomplish two things: first, the association itself would become more unified, since all its security arrangements with the United States would then be conducted on a regional basis. Second, from a global perspective, the unification of the nations concerning security matters would have more of an impact. The Communist nations would be more hesitant to infringe upon any part of the territory from fear of retribution from the rest of the area. The combined strength of all the member nations would have significantly more impact. Other regional associations (such as ANZUS) would be more inclined to establish ties with ASEAN. In addition to the two obvious benefits, Washington might find it easier to gain approval for appropriations when setting up military assistance and aid for one region, rather than five separate countries, in view of the unified goals

and stability our planners would perceive the association to create.

II. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

This study has shown that economic interests by the United States have been more frequent on a nation-to-nation basis, rather than the Americans working through ASEAN. This has been contrary to the dealings ASEAN is conducting with both the European Economic Community and Japan. Both of those areas/nations are beginning to work directly through the association.

If the United States were to work directly with the association, the region would probably have the most to gain. It would have better bargaining power on pricing, quantity, tariffs, quotas, and other trade barrier disintegration. The rest of the Less Developed Countries of the world would have this grouping to exemplify methods for developing themselves more rapidly. Unified, the nations and areas in the world, which may have similar products or labor potential. In effect, they would become more competitive.

Conversely, if the United States were to continue to deal with the region as they have been doing, (choosing to ignore the association in all but rhetoric and dialogue about their economic interests), the association stands to lose the potential for economic gains. The U.S. is creating intra-regional rivalry and competition over many of their similar products

and resources. American businessmen can deal with each nation to establish maximum gains more discreetly. It in effect breaks down any cartel-like action which may be possible by the group should they become unified. It is recommended, therefore, that the United States continue to deal with the region in the manner which provides her the optimum return. While this policy should continue, the U.S. must also remain flexible and prepare to change if the feelings against this sort of maneuver become too strong and a potential falling out in other areas occurs, (such as political relations or security matters).

III. POLITICAL INTERESTS

Again, the United States has been dealing primarily with each individual nation on a case by case basis concerning all political matters. Yet there appears to be a gradual shift in this trend in that the U.S. now has representatives attending all of the ASEAN conferences and speaking in her behalf. This indicates that Washington has begun to recognize ASEAN as a true regional concern. ASEAN has been attempting to shelve its nationalism in order to come up with enhanced security and economic gains. It is the opinion of this author that the shift of the United States - to deal with the association on political topics - is beneficial to both sides. It shows concern for the region as a whole rather than for mere local trouble spots which may show up from time to time.

Should the Communists be forced to realize that any section of this region is as vital as the other and just as capably supported by a united defense, both the Americans and the nations of ASEAN will carry greater impetus when facing the Communist Bloc.

IV. CULTURAL/SOCIAL INTERESTS

In this category, almost all such interests take place through the individual nations. This is one area which would be very difficult to handle through the association, for there is a large range of cultural differences among the member nations. If the Americans were to deal with such topics through the grouping, it might indicate a level of U.S. insensitivity over the respective differences displayed by the countries. Furthermore, ties in this category are so diverse that they cannot be easily placed under one grouping, (ie. education, scientific research, ethnics, religions, etc.). Continuation of the U.S. present manner of handling this category is recommended.

ASEAN has become a sound organization and the ties which have lent themselves to strengthening it still exist (such as external threat, need for economic development, a new feeling of regionalism, and so on). The Washington planners must be made more aware of this shifting tide toward unity and recognize optimum means to deal with the association which will be mutually beneficial. This study has shown how the

U.S. is currently dealing with this region in four important categories, (Security, Politics, Economics, and Cultural/Social). More importantly, it presents observations which can provide a means for planners to determine the most effective manner in which to negotiate United States' interests in this region - through the countries themselves or directly with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

APPENDIX A
THE ASEAN DECLARATION

The Presidium Minister for Political Affairs/Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand;

MINDFUL of the existence of mutual interests and common problems among the countries of South-East Asia and convinced of the need to strengthen further the existing bonds of regional solidarity and cooperation;

DESIRING to establish a firm foundation for common action to promote regional cooperation in South-East Asia in the spirit of equality and partnership and thereby contribute towards peace, progress and prosperity in the region;

CONSCIOUS that in a increasingly interdependent world, the cherished ideals of peace, freedom, social justice and economic well-being are best attained by fostering good understanding, good neighbourliness and meaningful cooperation among the countries of the region already bound together by ties of history and culture;

CONSIDERING that the countries of South-East 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 of manifestation in order to preserve their national identities in accordance with the ideals and aspirations of their peoples;

AFFIRMING that all foreign bases are temporary and remain only with the expressed concurrence of the countries concerned and are not intended to be used directly or indirectly to subvert the national independence and freedom of States in the area or prejudice the orderly processes of their national development;

DO HEREBY DECLARE:

FIRST, the establishment of an Association for Regional Cooperation among the countries of South-East Asia to be known as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

SECOND, that the aims and purposes of the Association shall be:

1. To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of South-East Asian Nations;
2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural technical scientific and administrative fields;
4. To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
5. To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilization of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communication facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
6. To promote South-East Asian studies;
7. To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

THIRD, that to carry out the aims and purposes, the following machinery shall be established:

1. Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers, which shall be by rotation and referred to as ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. Special Meetings of Foreign Ministers may be convened as required.
2. A Standing Committee, under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister of the host country or his representative and having as its members the accredited Ambassadors of the other member countries, to carry on the work of the Association in between Meeting of Foreign Ministers;
3. Ad-Hoc Committees and Permanent Committees of specialists and officials on specific subjects;

4. A National Secretariat in each member country to carry out the work of the Association on behalf of that country and to service the Annual or Special Meetings of Foreign Ministers, the Standing Committee and such other committees as may hereafter be established.

FOURTH, that the Association is open for participation to all States in the South-East Asian Region subscribing to the aforementioned aims, principles and purposes.

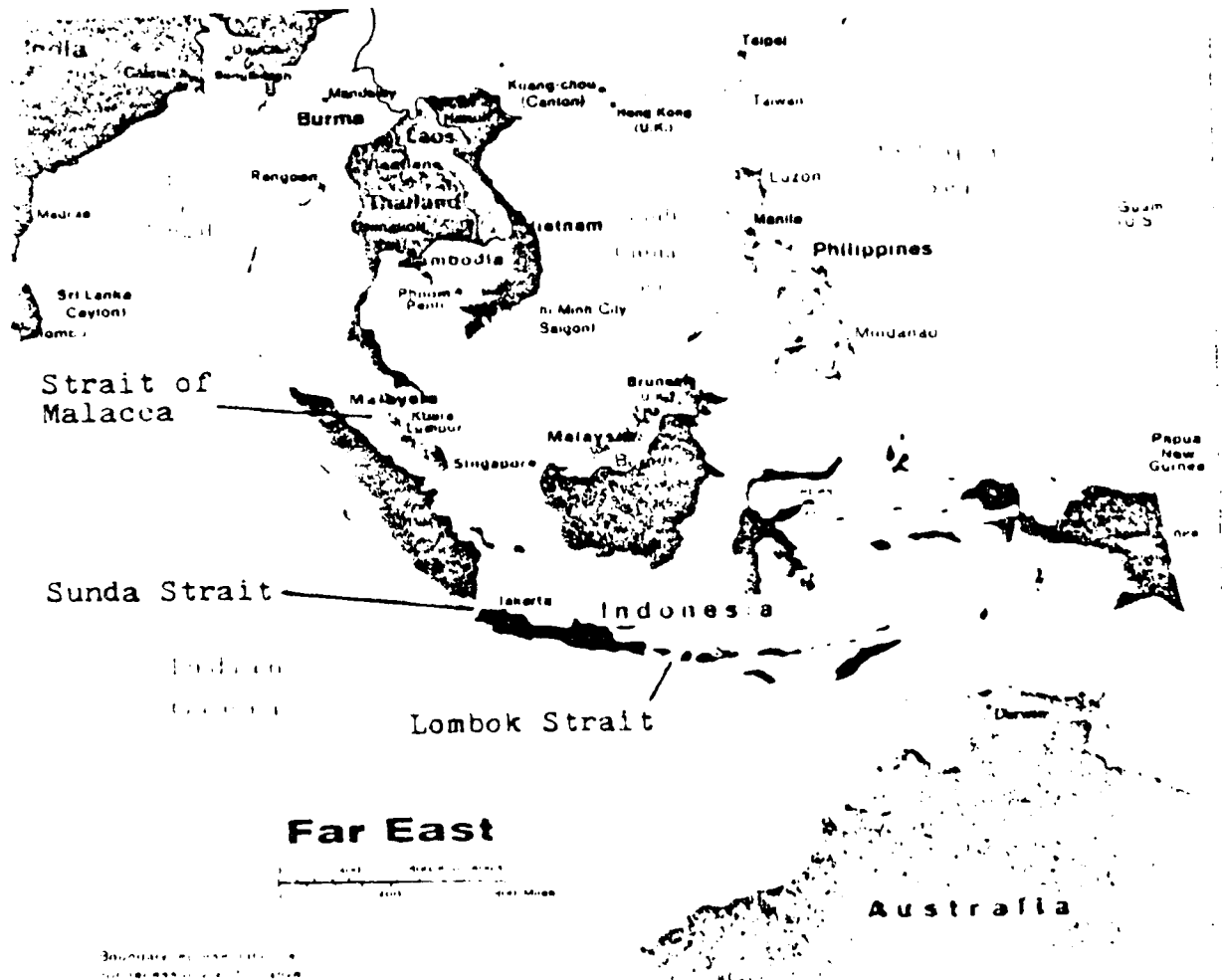
FIFTH, that the Association represents the collective will of the nations of South-East Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation, and through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessing of peace, freedom and prosperity.

DONE in Bangkok on the Eighth Day of August in the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Seven.

FOR INDONESIA	: (Signed) (ADAM MALIK) Presidium Minister for Political Affairs/ Minister for Foreign Affairs.
FOR MALAYSIA	: (Signed) (TUN ABDUL RAZAK) Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of National Development.
FOR THE PHILIPPINES	: (Signed) (NARCISO RAMOS) Secretary for Foreign Affairs.
FOR SINGAPORE	: (Signed) (S. RAJARATNAM) Minister for Foreign Affairs.
FOR THAILAND	: (Signed) (THANAT KHOMAN) Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Source: Reproduced from Department of Information, Republic of Indonesia, "The ASEAN Declaration." Contained in Indonesia's Special Issue 039/1969, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), p. 11.

APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C

Asian¹ Selected Raw Material Exports to the United States², Western Europe, and Japan

(% Share of Asian Exports in Nation's Total Consumption)

	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>Western Europe</u>	<u>Japan</u>
Aluminum	---	0.4	20.9
Bauxite/Alumina	---	3.0	31.1
Chromium Ore and Conc.	27	31.7	55.2
Copper Ore and Conc.	---	47.7	53.4
Iron Ore and Conc.	---	0.6	15.4
Lead	---	4.0	31.9
Lead Ore and Conc.	---	0.9	10.2
Manganese Ore and Conc.	---	1.7	15.8
Nickel Ore and Conc.	---	10.7	100.0
Tin	74	58.8	99.9
Tungsten Ore and Conc.	---	34.3	56.5
Zinc Ore and Conc.	---	1.7	10.1
Iron Ore	---	0.6	15.4
Felspar, Fluorspar	---	4.6	56.7
Natural Rubber	77	84.9	99.1
Tungsten	---	6.6	47.0

Note: ¹Includes the Middle East and Oceania, but not Australia

²Almost all U.S. sources for these materials, except those indicated, are in Canada and Latin America. America's Asian chromium source is Turkey.

Source: Excerpted from data in Allan E. Goodman's "The Threat from the Third World: Mounting Challenge to U.S. and Western Economic Superiority?" In Proceedings of the National Security Affairs Conference July 17-19, 1978. National Defense University Equivalence, Sufficiency, and the International Balance (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978): pp. 185-187.

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- 8