

US POLICY ALTERNATIVES IN ASIA

by

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Since World War II, the United States has made two major commitments, one to West Europe, the other to East Asia. Thus the oft-expressed thesis that we have served as global policemen demands serious qualifications. We always had a sense of priorities, and our priorities ran strongly to these two regions. Rightly or wrongly (but I think correctly), we saw West Europe and East Asia as of critical importance to the United States in terms of strategic, as well as political and economic interests. These were, after all, the regions from whence World Wars I and II had emerged, and few of us can forget the fact that America actually entered World War II by virtue of an attack from the Pacific, not the Atlantic.

Today, the question of American will and the American commitment is in very serious doubt in Asia, and it has begun to affect not merely the policies of erstwhile allies, but also the policies of erstwhile opponents. Let me begin by stating in abbreviated fashion what I regard as the three broad alternatives that are available to American policy in Asia, and then proceed to look at some of the countries that are most intimately involved in those alternatives.

First, the United States could withdraw strategically from Asia and concentrate upon the mid-Pacific and the Western Hemisphere. This policy, which is advocated by Senator Mansfield, among others, would define the United States as a Pacific power, but not an Asian power. It would concentrate American strategic interests upon its mid-Pacific possessions as an outer defense and upon the Western Hemisphere. This is neo-isolationism—the form that isolationism takes in the late twentieth century.

A second alternative is one that I would label the enclave theory. It would make a commitment to Japan as an American enclave in Asia, couple Japan with West Europe, and orient American strategic interests around the triangular relationship of Japan, West Europe, and the United States, thereby reducing US commitments and concentrating them primarily upon the advanced industrial world.

A third alternative is what I would call “selective internationalism,” a policy based

upon the thesis that a certain linkage is indispensable given the nature of the international order today, and therefore, to have any commitment in Asia or Europe, America must have a commitment more varied and complex than the enclave theory permits. We shall explore later where linkage leads us in Asia. For the moment, it is sufficient to set forth the three basic alternatives currently confronting the United States as it contemplates its Asian posture in the post-Vietnam era.

Before examining these alternatives in greater detail, let me turn to the countries with which the United States must interact, in one form or another, as long as it is involved in Asia. I start with Japan.

There can be little doubt that Japan, as an individual country, is the most important of all American commitments in Asia—some would say in the world. We are closely linked with Japan in economic and political terms. That scarcely needs amplification. Approximately 22 percent of all Japanese trade is with the United States today, and while that trade forms a much smaller proportion of total American trade, Japan remains our second best customer. This trade has been particularly crucial with respect to agricultural products, but Japan is increasingly becoming a major investor in the United States, with capital flows growing in importance.

Japan is also a representative of an open society, one that has shown an increasing propensity toward the same type of problems confronting our society. We have a great deal in common with Japan, therefore, in terms of the problems of urbanization, pollution, and even a growing issue of the family in the setting of the modern Japanese metropolitan areas. And, on the affirmative side, in an era when democracy as we define it is under increasing attack, the common political values of the United States and Japan are matters of growing significance.

Thus, in such fields as research and development and in bridging the gap between the present and the future, potentially America can interact with Japan far more

easily, despite language barriers, than with a great many other societies. Moreover, if we talk about a broad political-military equilibrium in Asia, Japan is an element of importance; for despite its lack of military power and its past political timidity, today Japan is playing an economic role even greater than those who shaped the Co-Prosperity Sphere of the 1930's could have envisaged. Japan is an economic giant, just as she is a political pigmy, and that fact impresses itself upon all of Asia.

Let us now look at the internal situation in Japan. Like most other countries of the world, Japan faces an uncertain degree of political instability. Within a few years, some argue, Japan could easily shift to the left internally, profoundly influencing her foreign as well as her domestic policies. I have more doubts about that, although the international and domestic economic environment constitutes the critical variable. The conservatives will probably survive, although it is entirely possible that they may have to enter into a coalition before the 1970's are over, or at least in the early 1980's. There is little doubt, moreover, that the nature of their leadership will change in the coming decade, with coming generations of leaders likely to be more attuned to public opinion and the media. At the same time, however, no Japanese administration can ignore the demands for further economic growth and survive. Today, in any case, the great challenge for the governors of Japan is to shift from an emphasis upon very high growth rates to policies more oriented toward social welfare and toward life style issues that encompass education, housing, and environmental issues.

What are the broad alternatives that confront Japan in foreign policy, and how do they affect us? Japan's alternatives, put succinctly, are four in number. First, Japan could turn toward pacifist neutralism, but that would be likely only under a leftist government and seems most improbable. Secondly, Japan might develop what can be called a Gaullist position, one of high posture in foreign affairs including increased militarization and greater political

involvements. The thrust would be toward a new and strong Japan, either independent or partly aligned with the United States. On balance, the adoption of this policy is also unlikely. Japan is a small and exceedingly vulnerable country. Today, real power lies with continental mass societies. The age when Japan could have a significant military influence in Asia is past, in my opinion, particularly since no great vacuums of power exist as they did in the 1930's. Japan cannot protect her sea lanes or her markets through nuclear power, as we among others have discovered. There are also internal factors operating strongly against the idea of a remilitarized, nuclear, high-posture Japan. This alternative is not possible. The combination of serious, perceived threats and a total destruction of American credibility might induce Japan in that direction, but these developments are not on the horizon, and it is very doubtful that Gaullism will become Japanese policy, at least in the foreseeable future.

There is a third alternative, that of a new alliance with some other power. Normally, one would think of China or the Soviet Union in this connection. I see neither of these alliances as likely. Japan has a long history of antagonism and suspicion toward the Russians, and nothing is happening at present that is eliminating or even alleviating these sentiments. Relations with Russia remain minimal and troubled despite some increases in economic interchange.

With respect to China, the ties are becoming fairly important in economic terms, and China has certain innate advantages derived from a cultural proximity as well as from closer ethnic and historical relations. In many respects, however, Japan and China are moving apart from each other, developmentally, ideologically, and otherwise. Thus, the likelihood of a Sino-Japanese alliance is not great.

We are reduced, therefore, to the fourth alternative. While frustration in Japan is growing over US international status and regional relations, and there is increasing doubt about American credibility, any major changes would represent much greater

risks—and costs. An agonizing reappraisal of Japanese foreign policy is underway in a few circles. However, my own estimate is that, with modifications, Japan will continue to seek special ties with the United States, the type of “normal” relations with the two major Communist states that permit expanded economic opportunities, some degree of balance, and minimal interference in Japan’s internal politics. It will not be easy to achieve such relations.

Incidentally, all alliances today are different from those of the Cold War era. They are less exclusive, less binding; they allow options for high levels of independence. That is true of alliances within as well as outside of the Communist world, and it will be characteristic of the special ties between the United States and Japan. Japan will opt for some greater degree of independence, particularly vis-a-vis third world countries. She is certainly going to be much more concerned with the interests of the Arabs, for instance. But on balance, I think the Japanese-American relationship will continue as long as America maintains its credibility with respect to security and works toward the resolution of problems connected with its complex, vital economic relations.

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Let me now turn to China. It is extremely difficult to predict the future of China. My view is that political instability is almost inevitable in China in the decade that lies ahead. In the People's Republic of China (PRC) there is a combination of strong personalities and weak institutions; of recurrent problems in nation-building; and in political factionalism, abetted by the Cultural Revolution, that insures the continuance of problems, a fact which the Chinese leaders themselves periodically admit. But it would be very unwise to predict that these problems will be such as to disintegrate China. The odds seem to be strongly against any such occurrence. There has been a very deep and powerful nationalist movement in China over the last 20 years, and it has certainly had its impact. Beyond that, there have been major improvements in communications and in the capacity to transport the military, which means that the center can deal with rebellious areas far more effectively than they could when the Communists came to power in 1949.

The critical question may be: will such instability as occurs be contained at elitist levels as it was in the Lin Piao incident, or will it seep down and affect productivity and social order to some extent? Even if the latter course occurs, I doubt that we will find Communist rule in serious jeopardy, or events so weakening China as to reduce it to warlordism.

Thus, I see China playing an increasing role in Asia and, in the course of its growth, demanding both a buffer state system and a sphere of influence. I see China moving to become *the* major indigenous Asian power, albeit one that is inhibited from exercising complete hegemony both by the complexities of the area and by the presence of other major powers, including the USSR.

Ideally, China should want an equidistant position between the United States and the Soviet Union, one that enables her to play off one against the other. Equidistance, however, is always easier to covet than to realize. Let us now examine the alternatives available to China in foreign policy. These can be most easily approached in terms of the Sino-Soviet relation. Here, I see four alternatives:

- war.
- a renewed alliance of the type first initiated in 1950.
- conflict and confrontation short of war.
- limited detente.

Contrary to many Americans, I think war is quite unlikely between Russia and China, primarily because no one could win such a war, and it would cause enormous damage to both sides. Wars are not caused by incidents today. Major wars have to be carefully calculated in terms of cost. I see no conceivable advantage to the Russians in attempting a sustained massive assault. They could not occupy and control China any more easily than the Japanese in the 1930's and 1940's. It would dissipate their energies, open up their western flank to many troubles, and further divide the so-called socialist world.

This does not mean that the Russians might not use their military power to aid a faction in China should a given faction emerge, vie for power itself, and look to the Russians for support. Indeed, that is precisely what Mao claimed that Lin Piao was doing, and while this may be fictitious, it suggests the possibilities. In sum, the Russians could conceivably aid some regional or national element in a factional struggle for power, but to perceive of them engaging in an orthodox general war against the total Chinese nation is very difficult. All the more inconceivable is a Chinese attack upon the Soviet Union. The disparity in military power is too great, and it is currently growing, not diminishing. War could only be the product of madness or total miscalculation. I am very doubtful that either the Kremlin or Peking is ruled by madmen, and I think miscalculation on this front is not likely to occur.

Alliance also seems very unlikely. Here are two major states that must live cheek by jowl with each other along a frontier that permits no buffer states. Moreover, this frontier is being increasingly peopled by Russians and ethnic Chinese, as the minority peoples are being reduced appreciably in percentage terms. Thus, an increasing closeness in the physical relationship of these two states is developing. There are also major issues. Most of them are well known, and need not be detailed here. Although Russia and China

appear to hold a common ideology, they are profoundly different in the timing of their revolutions, in the stage of their development, in the degree of their power, and hence in their perceptions of national interest. There is very little likelihood that these fundamental differences, exacerbated by racial feelings and long historical divisions, are going to be ended. I see no likelihood, therefore, of the kind of trust that a new Chinese elite reposed temporarily upon the Russians in the early years of the Communist regime in China. A full-fledged alliance is quite impossible, at least for the foreseeable future.

This leaves two narrower alternatives—confrontation short of war or limited detente. These seem almost equal in probability. Let us first examine the case for confrontation short of war. In a certain sense, the Sino-Soviet rivalry has been fed in recent years, and even by the Indochina defeat of the United States. Today, for example, China is profoundly concerned about what it regards as the possibility that the Russians will seek to increase their role in Asia as the United States reduces its role. Asian visitors to Peking are told repeatedly to guard against the tiger seeking to enter the back door, while expelling the wolf from the front gate. In a curious way, the Russians today are following policies of containment toward China very similar to those the United States was following in the late 1950's and early 1960's. The Russians, in effect, are saying: "You want confrontation; we'll give it to you. We won't remove a man or a weapon; we'll make no unilateral concessions to you; but if you're interested in some degree of accommodation, we're ready; the door is open."

The Russians hope that after Mao, certain Chinese leaders will walk through that door. They look toward limited detente as a possibility in the future. They speak privately of a relationship resembling that between themselves and Yugoslavia, a relationship based on some degree of normalization, some identity, but far short of the old alliance. There is reason to believe, moreover, that some Chinese leaders—perhaps including elements of the military—would be happier with such a development. Whatever the policy

differences and the deep emotional feelings that now separate the Chinese and the Russians, the costs and risks of the current levels of hostility are extraordinarily high, especially for Peking. Moreover, to the extent that current Chinese policy has been based upon balance of power considerations, recent US policies must raise grave doubts concerning American credibility in Asia—abetting the arguments of those who would try accommodation.

On the other hand, we must be cognizant of the fact that on almost every front today, the Chinese and the Russians are in some degree of confrontation. That is true in Northeast Asia, where China is trying hard and, thus far, successfully to keep Japan away from the Soviet Union. The main problem here is with Russian intransigency. To date, Moscow has been unwilling to make any concessions regarding the four islands to the north that would enable Soviet-Japanese normalization. Thus, China has been very successful in keeping Japan from reestablishing normal relations with Russia, and also isolating it from Taiwan, at least politically. Indeed, none of Japan's relations with Northeast Asia are truly satisfactory at present—including those with China itself.

In South Asia, on the other hand, the Russians are doing reasonably well in containing the Chinese, and in Southeast Asia we are only beginning to see a new kind of competition, with the Russians leaning toward Hanoi and the Chinese seeking to check Hanoi by closer ties with the Khmer Rouge and, if possible, the Pathet Lao. Southeast Asia is becoming a cockpit of increasing rivalry, at least in the preliminary post-Vietnam stages.

We thus see a high level of hostile polemics between China and Russia at present, accompanied by confrontation throughout Asia. China's response to this situation is quite understandable. It is now taking the public position that a war between the United States and the Soviet Union is inevitable, with the main theater of confrontation to be in Europe and adjacent areas. Nor are the Chinese adverse to encouraging this confrontation. China is advocating a strong

NATO, and increased American military as well as political commitments to Europe. It has even whispered recently that it sees every reason for the United States to use Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. This effort to promote a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union is for obvious reasons. China hopes to alleviate pressures upon itself, and ultimately to develop Asia as a sphere of its influence while the giants confront each other in less immediate parts of the world.

Thus, the Soviet containment policy is being met by Peking through an effort to align itself with forces around the world that are potentially or actually anti-Soviet. In these terms, Peking worries lest Washington be unwilling or unable to play its role. It is now clear that the Chinese are bewildered—and worried—by various signs that the United States has lost its will to be a major power.

Does this mean that the PRC desires a strong American presence throughout Asia as well as in Europe and such regions as South Asia? The answer to this question is both crucial and complex—more complex than many of our policymakers and scholars yet realize. China currently wants American presence in *some* parts of East Asia. The prospect of a precipitous American withdrawal from the entire region is not an attractive one for the Chinese at this point. But Peking distinguishes between those places where an American presence is temporarily desirable and those where it is undesirable. When trends are studied, it would appear that the PRC is groping its way toward a continental policy that differs from its attitudes toward the great islands off the Asian mainland, with Taiwan representing an important exception.

Let us look at the specifics, starting with Korea. After Kim Il-Sung of North Korea visited China in April 1975, a communique was issued. Not only did China proclaim officially that North Korea was the sole legitimate sovereign state of the Korean peninsula, and totally underwrite Kim's own proposals for reunification (plans,

incidentally, that bear a close resemblance to the Communists' Vietnam formula); it also coupled Taiwan with the Korean problem, saying that these were two areas that demanded liberation. Wishful thinkers in this country grasped at the phrase "peaceful reunification," and sought to suggest that Peking had forced this upon an unwilling Kim. But this phrase has been used by Kim for years, and he is perfectly willing—indeed, eager—to interpret his present strategy as peaceful. In sum, the PRC line on Korea has hardened, and there is no reason to believe that Chinese leaders will be of assistance in resolving this problem—painful although this realization is to some who had hoped otherwise.

The situation with respect to Japan remains somewhat different. Peking does not intend to campaign actively against the Mutual Security Treaty (MST) and, privately, it professes to see certain advantages in a defense agreement between Washington and Tokyo *for the time being*. Such a tie retards any move toward Japanese Gaullism and offsets a possible Soviet involvement of greater proportions.

At the same time, even here, Peking is keeping its options open. In the joint communique signed with the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP) delegation in May 1975, Peking's leaders reiterated their approval of Socialist efforts to abrogate to the MST, taking such a position formally for the first time since 1971. Thus, while the PRC remains interested in an American presence in Japan, it would not object to a political change of major proportions that would bring the pro-Peking JSP to power and, with the prospect of some political changes at least, China now rides several horses here.

In Southeast Asia, the picture is more murky. The visits of Prime Minister Kukrit and President Marcos resulted in various accounts of Chinese views, the essence of which was that while the wolf (the US) was being expelled from the front gate, the presence of the tiger (the USSR) at the back door should not be ignored. Unquestionably, this position was put forcefully and

repeatedly; in the aftermath of the Indochina debacle, Peking appears paranoid over possible Russian inroads into this area.

Even in this region, however, there may be some important differentiations. For example, the private position of the Chinese with respect to the Philippines and defense ties would appear to be very similar to that held with respect to Japan. The position regarding Thailand is less clear, and there seems little doubt that no American presence is desired in Indochina—where China is currently engaged in an extraordinarily complex struggle for influence.

Closely tied to the Chinese view of the American role in Asia is the omnipresent issue of relations with the Soviet Union. For those Chinese who harbor doubts about Mao's policies toward the USSR, the reasoning can be set forth as follows:

The United States is a distant, mercurial power. The Soviet Union is both close and very credible. The costs and risks of the present levels of tension are too great for China to bear over a prolonged period of time. China can reach a limited accommodation with the Russians without either loving or trusting them. If it moves in this direction, moreover, it acquires more flexibility in its overall foreign policies. An ideal position is that of equidistance between Washington and Moscow, together with a capacity to play one off against the other—or ideally, to sit on the mountain top and watch two tigers fight.

We know these arguments have been advanced, because the Chinese have told us so in their own Aesopian language. We know that the dissenters have come from diverse elements, but we believe that they have come primarily from the military. One can also reason that the American defeat in Vietnam strengthens the argument of those with doubts, because it raises additional questions about the American credibility and presence in Asia, and therefore underlines the thesis that they really have to deal with the Russians, not the Americans, in the long run.

Let me therefore suggest two possible trends that warrant regular monitoring. First, while neither war nor alliance with the Soviet Union is likely, the middle range options with respect to Sino-Soviet relations cannot be said to have been determined at this point, despite the violent antagonisms of the present. It is the question of policies toward the Soviet Union, moreover, that constitutes the critical variable in relations with the United States—not Taiwan or any other issue. Sino-Soviet relations, finally, can and almost certainly will be strongly influenced by American policies—and, particularly, by the degree to which America maintains both its credibility and presence in Asia on the one hand, and its flexibility with respect to the two major Communist states on the other.

A second trend that should be watched closely is the possibility that in the midst of doubts about the United States, China has stepped up its time table for a more independent and forward policy in Asia, one that runs sharply counter to US interests in some areas. To be sure, this would not represent a wholly new development, as events with respect to Indochina so clearly indicate. The central question, however, is this: Is China now likely to accelerate efforts to acquire a sphere of influence in Asia, employing a wide range of tactics?

Let us now turn briefly to two other Asian states, important to the region as a whole, India and Indonesia. Currently, Indonesia stands at crossroads with the possibility of increasing political difficulties not to be ruled out. There is a growing unhappiness in Indonesia with the sizable corruption that involves the government, and more broadly with the development program that is now being pursued. The elan of the immediate post-1965 era has diminished. Meanwhile, the current development plan is one which is widening the gap between the urban and rural areas. Moreover, no effective population control program yet exists, nor policies attuned to agrarian modernization.

Indonesia has some excellent technicians and some dedicated military men, but the mix is presently a very uncertain and unsteady

one. The next few years will be of critical importance in determining whether Indonesia can successfully mount a dynamic developmental program aimed also at the social and political realities. This could be an increasingly important issue for the United States because Indonesia is a very critical area with respect to Southeast Asia. The Indonesians will not play the same kind of regional role in Southeast Asia as the Indians are playing in South Asia. Indonesia does not have the power. More important, Southeast Asia is not susceptible to the same type of influence or control. But, if Indonesian stability can be maintained, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is certainly a possible vehicle for the development of some form of "neutralization," one in which each part of Southeast Asia would play a different role. For example, balance in the Indochina area would relate primarily to its various connections and commitments to the major Communist states, although Japan—and ultimately the United States—might play peripheral roles. Optimally, Thailand and Malaysia would become buffer zones, and thus a type of tiered relationship among the Southeast Asia states might exist, one that in turn would hinge upon an agreement by the major external powers to allow some kind of equilibrium and independence.

From the US standpoint, that is optimal. The alternative in the long run is a very heavy Chinese shadow over this area. It is difficult to see the Russians as serious competitors for primary influence and power in Southeast Asia. They are too foreign, too distant, too separated in their stages of development, needs, and interests. Their first priorities will be elsewhere.

India is also a country under extreme pressures, as events make all too clear. In all probability, however, India will continue its alliance with the Soviet Union for the foreseeable future. The United States is not going to maintain a high presence in that area. It is secondary to US interests and vastly too complex for an American involvement of any depth. The Chinese are not capable of

doing so. The Indians have acquired a sizable degree of hegemony in South Asia. Now their problem is very similar to that of the British of the 19th Century. They must decide to what extent they need to intervene on their peripheries to control a situation that relates to the heartland. Just as the British more or less involuntarily went into areas like Afghanistan, Tibet, and Ceylon to protect their stake in India, so the Indians have intervened in Sikkim and Bangladesh, and will do so elsewhere on the subcontinent if the internal situation seems to threaten their own stability and interests.

Meanwhile, on the domestic front, India's internal stability is at least as precarious today as at any point in the recent past. Nevertheless, I see no fundamental changes in India in the near future. The Congress, in one form or another, will continue to dominate Indian politics, partly because of the divisions and disparities both to its left and right. Intervention by the Indian military cannot be ruled out completely, but it does not lie on the immediate horizon for complex reasons.

Let us now return to the basic American alternatives with respect to the Asian-Pacific region. First, a word about our own internal situation is in order. For some decades the United States has borne dual burdens only half appreciated by the American people. In many respects, America is the most revolutionary of all societies in the contemporary world. If one defines revolution as changes in values, attitudes, and life styles, I know of no society that has undergone more rapid change in the last four or five decades than the American society. The differences between generations, the extraordinary increases in mobility, the rise in standards of living—even at the mass levels, the changes in values towards religion, family, and many other institutions mark this as a society that has undergone a far more fundamental transition than most of the self-proclaimed revolutionary societies of our time.

The Soviet Union, in fact, is a very conservative society in most respects. In China, the tremendous changes that have

taken place recently have affected the elites far more than the peasant masses at this writing. The momentum of change is not yet sufficient to really alter the masses with respect to values or lifestyle. Indeed, it is precisely this fact that deeply worries Mao and his principal followers. And certainly that is true of most of the so-called third world.

How to cope with the new American revolution, and at the same time maintain a commitment and responsibility for the international order, has been the central American problem for decades, and it has been a growing problem in the 1960's. Everyone draws lessons from Vietnam, and without exception, they are lessons formed to fit the preconceptions of the person drawing them. Thus, there are as many lessons as there are opinions. My own lessons, put very simply, are first, that the United States cannot in the future fight a protracted limited war. It is incompatible with the nature of our society. One may draw such conclusions from that as one wishes. Second, defeat is always costly, but it is extremely costly to a major power. Senator Fulbright and others were quite wrong when they argued that we were big enough to take defeat. It is precisely our bigness and our importance that has made defeat so costly. Third, the Indochina debacle has raised some very critical questions about the American tempo. America is, after all, a nation that developed its own culture out of a high propensity for total commitment, and for massive involvement or none at all. Now, some critical questions must be raised regarding the all or nothing syndrome. As a very wise Vietnamese said to me last summer when the dimensions of the Vietnam debacle were still not totally clear, but Vietnamese morale was terribly low as a result of Congressional attitudes, "The problem is that you came in so fast and so massively we couldn't adjust, and now you're going out the same way." This problem, as it was reflected in the over-Americanization of the conflict and the erroneous conception of the war itself, warrants careful thought with respect to the future.

What are America's basic alternatives now? The first is the adoption of the thesis that it is

a Pacific power, not Asian, and the resultant withdrawal of all strategic commitments from Asia. It is my view that withdrawal in the middle and long run would have catastrophic effects, not least of all because we are in an era of intense protracted negotiations. Negotiations with both the Russians and the Chinese are of critical importance with respect to issues like arms control, economic relations, and the shape of the future international order itself. To withdraw from one vital area of the world would almost certainly create an imbalance in the negotiatory process, particularly since both the Soviets and the Chinese are so intimately involved in Asia. Certainly the signals from both Peking and Moscow on this score are unmistakable. Already, I have sketched one reason why this would be highly dangerous, namely, the extent to which it might abet a new detente between China and Russia by giving the Chinese no alternative. But there are many other respects in which it could affect US global relations. This policy of withdrawal to strategic regionalism bears all of the immaturity of the isolationism of the 1920's and 1930's. In a certain sense it is attuned to American public opinion, because our people are weary, disillusioned, and even cynical. It is also attuned in a certain sense to American culture; if you do not have total involvement, then opt for total disengagement. But it bears no relationship to the realities of the late 20th century world.

An enclave policy is totally unrealistic. Some Americans really want to remove Japan from Asia. They would move it physically into the Atlantic. They do not believe it is an Asian power; at least they do not think it should be an Asian power. This is because we are a Europocentric people and, with the bulk of intellectual and political influence lying along the Eastern seaboard, we have always had stronger proclivities toward Europe than Asia, proclivities reinforced by our own culture. But the fact is that Japan is inextricably an Asian state, and becoming more so in some respects. Any thesis based on the premise that you can hinge a credible Japanese policy to isolationism or noninvolvement strategically in the rest of

Asia is based upon a misunderstanding of both Japan and Asia. The enclave theory is popular primarily because it seems to limit US responsibilities and to tie it to nations whose stages of development are similar to its own. But the linkages that tie Japan politically as well as economically to other parts of Asia are just as powerful as those that tie Japan to America, and any one who believes that we can break these linkages and remain credible with Japan is mistaken.

Thus we are left with some type of selective internationalism, and the question becomes: what is a meaningful, realistic selective internationalism?

Let us start with the question of the Sino-Soviet American triangle. In the recent past, consciously or unconsciously, the United States has tilted rather consistently toward China in Asia. Currently, the pressures to increase that tilt are growing. The argument is based upon the thesis that the Soviet Union is the only country that can do us real damage militarily, and it is also a global power with which we are in confrontation in many regions. Thus, to weaken Russia in Asia and to build up China is, in fact, to create a political and strategic situation more beneficial to the United States. There may be some merit in this argument, but it has fatal flaws.

In Asia, the Soviet Union *is* a rising power. There can be little doubt that over the next ten years, the Soviet Union *is* going to increase its military and strategic presence by developing its own central Asian and Siberian regions. This is an area of critical importance to the Russians, and they most certainly will develop it. They are also going to expand their conventional forces, and this may mean increasing penetrations into the Indian Ocean, and even the Pacific.

But, on the other hand, the Soviet Union shows signs of increasingly becoming a status quo power in Asia. There are very few changes that the Russians see which would benefit them. Does the Soviet Union want a unified Korea under Kim Il-Sung? They neither trust nor like the North Korean dictator. More important, they do not believe

that under present or foreseeable circumstances, a unified Communist Korea would tilt toward them—they suspect that it would tilt toward China. Nor do they want Taiwan annexed by China. In Southeast Asia also, the primary Soviet interest relates to the containment of China. Its own capacities for hegemony are strictly limited. These facts certainly do not argue for a uniform American tilt toward Moscow, but they suggest the importance of selective, varied tilts, depending upon the issue and the circumstances.

The Korean situation, as indicated earlier, is a serious one. The North Korean Communists were greatly stimulated by Vietnam. Kim is not going to strike in the fashion of the Korean War, moving his army across the 38th parallel, but he is going to try to develop a Vietnam formula for the South, seeking to induce a rising degree of internal subversion that will be fed and nurtured through some infiltration process. This poses very serious problems both for South Korea and for the United States, particularly in view of our waning credibility and the mistakes which Park Chung Hee has made politically. In my opinion, however, the Korean situation is containable, and the first step is to engage in intensive, insistent, and prolonged negotiations with the Russians and the Chinese, making absolutely clear US commitments in this situation.

Taiwan poses a more complex problem. Here America probably has four alternatives: first, that of accepting the Chinese position as voiced by Peking and allowing Taiwan to be annexed one way or another. It is not clear, of course, that the United States could execute such a policy effectively even if it wanted to do so. Moreover, this policy would raise additional questions about its commitments and its credibility. The desertion of another people so soon after Vietnam, especially a people of 16 million who clearly do not want to join the Chinese mainland at this point, would seriously undermine the United States with all allies—and with others as well. Its sole advantage would be the removal of the final barrier to normalization of US-PRC relations.

Another alternative would be to try to exact from the Chinese a commitment against the use of force in exchange for which the United States would allow the Mutual Security Treaty to lapse and accept a lower profile in Taiwan, while establishing full diplomatic relations with China. This formula, however, is unacceptable to Peking, as has been made abundantly clear. Having found this course to be unrealistic, some advocates of normalization now argue that the United States should unilaterally declare its understanding or desire that force not be used, proceed to normalize relations with Peking, but continue to sell arms to Taiwan in addition to having economic, cultural, and political relations with the island. This appears to have the advantages of having one's cake and eating it too. In fact, however, it ignores political realities. How long could the

sale of arms be justified—in the United States and elsewhere—to a non-country? What would be the repercussions in Japan, and in Taiwan itself?

A third position would be to do nothing. Since both the mainland and Taiwan are in uncertain transition at this point, the United States could stand by its current commitments, making no changes. In the light of the available alternatives, this is the wisest policy in my opinion—but it tests American patience and the willingness to live with an unsettled issue.

A fourth alternative would be to actively support an independent Taiwan. My political sympathies lie in that direction, but this is not an opportune time for a formal policy of this type, given the transitional character of the Peking and Taipei governments and the uncertain nature of broader trends in Asia.

In summary, an American strategic commitment that is feasible in Asia should revolve around the effort to get a balance within Southeast Asia, with some continued American commitments to Indonesia and the Philippines, a commitment to Japan linked to these efforts, and an intensified negotiatory process with both China and the Soviet Union, with the premium upon reciprocity and accountability. All three of these efforts are crucial and must be advanced together, because alone none will work. All involve a selective internationalism that plays in varying degree upon military, economic, and political components. Such a policy envisages a much lower commitment in South Asia, where the United States can best allow the Chinese and the Russians to work out their own equilibrium, at least for the duration of Mrs. Gandhi's tenure in office.

Selective internationalism is the only realistic approach to the current world. The problem for the current administration in Washington is to make that palatable to the American people and this will involve first, a resolution of internal economic problems; and second, in a much more complicated fashion, the reassertion of a balance between governmental authority and freedom. The present situation in America, curiously, is one in which the government is often besieged by overpowering private interests weaker than them—the media, business, labor, and others. A besieged government, and one whose authority has been seriously impaired, finds great difficulty in sustaining any foreign policy. The efforts of Congress, moreover, to step into that vacuum, in my opinion, have been disastrous in the last 15 months. The reassertion of authority at the Executive level, coupled with a serious and sustained attack upon the economic problems that now command the priority of American attention, are thus necessary precursors to a realistic and successful foreign policy.

