SULIT

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MENGENAI

'REGIONAL TRENDS AND THE ROLE OF DIPLOMACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IN THE 80's'

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INSTITIUT TADBIRAN AWAM NEGARA, MALAYSIA

SESSION NUMBER: 2 DATE: 3rd November 1979 TIME: 0830 – 1030 Hours

ZOPFAN DYNAMICS IN THE 80's

I. **Theme** ... Impact and Influence of Superpower Rivalry and Conflict in Southeast Asia and its Implications on Regional Peace and Security.

II. **Chairman** ... YB Datuk Hashim Sultan.

III. **The Panelists** ...
1. YB Datuk Ahmad Yusof (Jabatan Perdana Menteri)
2. Encik K. Tharmaratnam (Wisma Putra)
3. Encik Mohd. Khatib Abdul Hamid (Wisma Putra)
4. Dr. Zakaria Ahmad (Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia)

IV. **Background Paper:** The Major Powers and Southeast Asia (Encik Mohamed bin Haron, Wisma Putra)

V. **The Rapporteurs:** Encik Fadil Azim bin Abbas (INTAN)
Cik Lily Zachariah (INTAN)

VI. **Secretary:** Encik Hamzah bin Mohd. Sor (Wisma Putra)

VII. REPORT OF SESSION II

Panelists Presentation

4. **Encik Mohd. Khatib Abdul Hamid**

(a) **Definition of a Superpower:** A superpower need not necessarily be a country with military might. One should bear in mind that a country with economic might can also influence and determine world events and should therefore be regarded as a superpower also. Based on this definition, Japan would qualify as a superpower. China too can be regarded as a superpower because of her huge population. Therefore, the superpowers in the Asia-Pacific Region would be the U.S., the USSR, Japan and China.

(b) Southeast Asia would continue to be the centre of superpower rivalry in the 80's because of its strategic position, its resources and its huge population.

(c) New patterns of alignment created by superpower interests in the region are manifested by the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Friendship and Amity, the Sino-US Joint Declaration on normalisation of their relations, and the USSR-Vietnam Treaty of Friendship. Another manifestation of their interests was displayed by the numerous visits made by great power leaders to the region.

(d) **The Superpowers and Their Interests in the Region**

(i) **China**

The main objective of China's foreign policy of late has been to thwart Soviet hegemonism.

To China, Southeast Asia has always been important not merely for geographical reasons but also for political ones. China, accordingly, has been apprehensive of the intensions of Vietnam and the Soviet Union. It is possible that China's recent military action against Vietnam could have been motivated by her fear of Soviet encirclement. Relatedly she has also attempted to influence the non-communist Southeast Asian states against Soviet-Vietnam influence in the region.

However, the non-communist Southeast Asian states are apprehensive of China's overtures, because of the existance of:—

i) overseas Chinese in their midst, and
ii) communist insurgency movements in their countries.

(ii) U.S.S.R.

Historically, Southeast Asia has not been a high priority area to the Russians but it has recently been significant in the context of Russian-Chinese rivalry.

The Soviet-backed military victories in Indochina have expanded Soviet influence in mainland Southeast Asia at the expense of China.

(iii) U.S.A.

The U.S.A. has similar strategic interests in Southeast Asia as that of Japan and China. In spite of U.S. setbacks in Vietnam, she will continue to maintain a presence in Southeast Asia as evidenced by her treaty engagements with countries in the region e.g. Thailand and Philippines. She has also expressed strong support for ASEAN.

(iv) Japan

Japan's relations with the U.S. has been the cornerstone of her foreign policy. But at the same time, she has relations with China and Russia on the principle of equidistance. Lately, Japan has shown greater interest in the Southeast Asian region, as evidenced by Fukuda's visit in early 1977 and her assistance to ASEAN. It is in the interests of Japan to see a safe and stable Southeast Asia owing to her position as the third ranking industrial power and the fact that Southeast Asia is the major market for Japanese products, and an important source of raw material for her industries.

For the 80's, it is predicted that the same scenario will prevail.

4.1 YB Datuk Ahmad Yusof

(a) The speaker pointed out that in effect there are only two superpowers — the Soviet Union and the USA, as they are the only power capable of disrupting world equilibrium.

(b) Southeast Asia is not an entity in itself but is part and parcel of the overall global and strategic plan of the superpowers.

(c) The focus of the superpowers has always been Europe, as evidenced by the

existence of NATO and Warsaw Pact. However, the USSR has been trying to establish bases other than in Europe. She already has bases in the Baltic and the Pacific and the continent of Africa, while her Pacific fleet is the second largest in her Navy.

(d) **Relation of Superpowers with Southeast Asia:** Both the superpowers consider Southeast Asia as important. In fact, Soviet interest in the region goes as far back as 1919. As for the US, their interests in Southeast Asia has always been tied up with the Dullesian policy of "rolling back Communism". Thus the establishment of NATO, CENTO and SEATO. In pursuit of this policy, the US became embroiled in a massive land war in Vietnam. After their defeat in Vietnam they withdrew their forces, but their presence is still felt in Asia, especially in Japan, the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand, in spite of the Guam Doctrine.

China and Japan are considered as major and not superpowers. China is not capable of conducting a nuclear war notwithstanding her nuclear capability as it is vastly inferior to Soviet nuclear might.

China has always regarded Southeast Asia as her sphere of influence. It is interesting to note that almost all of the insurgency movements in Southeast Asia are China-orientated. Thus China is still capable of creating mischief in Southeast Asia. On top of that, America could, in her own interests, be tempted to regard Southeast Asia as China's sphere of influence and thus sell out Southeast Asia. However, on the other side of the equation it has to be noted that the overseas Chinese component of Southeast Asian countries form the more affluant group and as such are less likely to embrace Communism.

Japan will always be an economic power in Southeast Asia and will remain closely allied to the United States.

(e) **Southeast Asia:** Thailand poses a major problem as economically it is not doing very well, and her front-line position vis-a-vis the IndoChinese states, makes her vulnerable to attack.

4.2 **Dr. Zakaria Ahmad**

(a) Japan should be considered as a superpower even though she has no military strength because with her economic power she is capable of playing a pivotal role in the security and stability of the region.

(b) Vietnam is not likely to become the puppet of the USSR as they have a reputation of being fierce nationalists.

(c) Internal developments within the superpowers could change the nature of relationships with the rest of the world and among themselves.

(d) ASEAN solidarity may face challenges with the emergence of second generation elites.

(e) Malaysian foreign policy makers need to study the dynamics of how to exploit rather than be wary of superpower rivalry.

(f) There is a need to institutionalise a think-tank and a high-level research unit to be part of the Malaysian foreign policy-making process.

4.3 **Encik K. T. Tharmaratnam**

The major-power rivalry in the region is based on the rivalry to secure sea lanes. For the US, Southeast Asia is important for trade and strategic reasons while USSR has global and strategic interests in the region.

In the context of ZOPFAN, the contest should be confined to the offshore areas, but this is unlikely as the US has bases in the Philippines. It is probable that the Soviet Union could exert its pressure on Vietnam, to secure bases. However, Vietnamese nationalism might make a permanent Soviet presence unacceptable.

The Chinese do not wish to see a strong and united Indochina under Soviet influence. Japan on the other hand might be induced to go nuclear in the event of a Soviet build-up in Vietnam.

Three solutions are offered for this dilemma:

(a) ZOPFAN as an acceptable alternative to the current instability in the region;

(b) a political solution to the Kampuchean problem – but two points will have to be borne in mind:–

  (i) the solution must be acceptable and worthwhile to all parties concerned;

  (ii) withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea with a guarantee that Kampuchea would not align itself with China.

  (iii) quiet diplomacy – based on ASEAN efforts to pursue negotiations on a bilateral level with all parties concerned.

4.4' Discussion of the Colloquium

(1) Some participants felt that the "superpower" definition should be attributed only to the US and the USSR, on the basis of their military might; others felt that the definition should include China and Japan for economic and demographic reasons.

(2) US presence in Southeast Asia, while important for maintaining stability in the region, could also work against it as it could attract Soviet counter-poise.

(3) ASEAN should be recognised as a political grouping if superpower rivalry were to be avoided. But this was seen as being incompatible with Soviet interests as they would rather see the establishment of an Asian Collective Security System as advocated by them.

(4) There is a need to establish a think-tank and a high-level research unit to analyse and develop foreign policies and strategies. However, think-tanks and research units by themselves may not guarantee quality unless policy analysis and formulation take into account national, regional and global factors and their varied and complex interrelationships.

APPENDIX IV

ARMED INSURGENCY AND NATIONAL POLITICAL STABILITY OF ASEAN STATES

BY

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"Armed Insurgency and National Political Stability in the Southeast Asia States"

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read at INTAN Colloquium "Regional Trends and role of Diplomacy in Southeast Asia in the 80s"
Fraser's Hill, November 2 – 4, 1979

ARMED INSURGENCY AND NATIONAL POLITICAL STABILITY OF SOUTHEAST ASIA*

It may not appear curious that the issue of national political stability of Southeast Asia states should be viewed in relation to armed insurgency or vice versa. However, if we are allowed to indulge in references to histofy, it may be noted that an outstanding characteristic of the Malayan Emergency (1948 – 60) period in Malay(si)a's travails was that throughout the thick and thin of such a violent phase the government **continued to govern,** indicating that there could be stability even during an upheaval. Going to the other polar extreme, should it be assumed that a polity is stable just because it is experiencing a period of peace and calm? Just as the problem at hand is challenging and not necessarily speculative (since we are supposed to include an analysis of the next decade), it is also disheartening to note that modern political science has yet to agree to accepted criteria for the measurement of national political stability; in this regard, it is provoking that Pye (1957) noted some twenty-two years ago of the ignorance and neglect in modern military and political science about insurrections – a state-of-the-art which even today has yet to achieve theoretical completeness and universality. As a prima facie consideration, then, insurgency and national political stability could be discussed in perfect isolation from one another.

Posers

It may also be faulty analysis on our part if we consider only the two issues together. Let me raise some posers. First, are we indicating that national political stability denotes an ability to control armed insurgency? Second, are we to regard national political stability as unaffected by international events? Third, should we see insurgency only as an armed uprising and thereby disregard the subtle but insidious and important forms of insurgency such as communist subversion? Fourth, can we agree on our conceptualizations about stability and insurgency?

A different set of problems arise even when the two issues are juxtaposed in perspective. For example, it is not obviously clear if we could or should use a general format in assessing the two problems in the countries of Southeast Asia either collectively or individually. This is especially so when we realize that strategies used in promoting or countering insurrections are successful in one situation but irrelevant to another. In this matter, it is illuminating that the methods of counter-insurgency, so successfully tried out in Malaya were found to be inapplicable in the Vietnamese context during the period of high American involvement, although of course the situations were not isomorphic[1]. Also, against the diverse social, historical, economic and political backgrounds of the Southeast Asia states, can we achieve a common framework for analysis? Furthermore, it is not entirely clear that extrapolations into the future based on contemporary, situational, analyses are reliable. And, besides, it may even be dangerous to assume that solutions achieved in a single country are replicable over time. In short, we should be most guarded in our observations.

The Approach

The foregoing issues and caveats notwithstanding, our approach to the subject may be assisted by some of Pye's (1957) observations about insurgencies. He notes:

> "First, there is the matter of the organization of the general society in which the insurrection occurs, and in particular the extent to which its political and social spheres are integrated. Secondly, the organizational form of the insurrectionary movement is a major factor determining the pattern of the struggle. Thirdly, there is the question of the

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*To facilitate discussion, this paper has been prepared with a minimal use of footnotes.

characteristics of the government against which the insurrection is aimed".

Pye further observes that the possibility of an insurrectionary movement arising and employing organized violence depends upon the existence of (a) sharp divisions within the society created by regional, ethnic, linguistic, class, religious or other communal differences which can provide the necessary social and geographic basis for supporting the movement, and (b) a central authority which is unable to maintain uniform and consistent administrative controls over the entire country. Also, Pye notes that such situations are likely to arise in essentially agrarian societies or in countries in which there are extreme differences between the pattern of life of the urban and industrialized segment of the population and that of the rural elements.

I do not wish to imply that Pye's conceptualizations, however parsimonious and germane, is the only approach available to us but they do function as a useful device – if not as a policy primer, then at least heuristically – for our analysis. Pye's format is also selected because of its concern with stability. Here, we are avoiding much of the debate revolving around the issue of political stability; instead, we focus more on the **capability**[2] of a government to perform the various functions of a modern nation-state. More concretely, we are concerned with the administrative capacity of a national government. Although this implies a lesser emphasis with the **political** realm of a nation-state, nonetheless the focus on the more mundane and administrative aspects of a national political system bear directly on the question of capability to deal with insurgencies.

The above considerations, then will be used as a guide to our discussion.

The Southeast Asian 'Environment'

On the eve of the new decade of the 1980, there appears to be a spectre of a Vietnamese invasion of Southeast Asia... if not immediately, then the probability is that it will occur in about five years' time[3]. The danger of an armed, international conflict in Southeast Asia affecting all its constituent parts is reflected in the present situation in Cambodia where Vietnamese troops are seriously engaged in battle with remnants of the regime that the Vietnamese have helped to oust. The Cambodian situation's danger points are that i) some of that conflict will "spill-over" into Thailand and thereby lead to Thai-Vietnamese clashes, and ii) that China may intervene by incursions into North Vietnam as they had done in the early part of 1979. The repercussions of the Indo-China conflict may be manifested in three ways: one, that the conflict may escalate and lead to actual involvement of other actors within and without the region; two, even a containment of the conflict may affect the stability of the rest of Southeast Asia; or three, that local insurrectionary movements in the non-Communist Southeast Asia may feel compelled to be more active so as to be in "harmony" with other communist movements.

The above picture of the Southeast Asian environment is of course a cursorily brief one but is presented here because it is a salient one. The situation of course is quite fluid but I think it is quite clear that a 2-bloc system in Southeast Asia is here to stay – on the one hand comprising the ASEAN states of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines, and on the other the Communist bloc of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Although ASEAN will display cohesion, what remains unclear is the unification of Communist Indochina. That is to say, it is uncertain if Cambodia will still exist or be part of Vietnam. Two other countries, namely Brunei and Burma will continue to be as they are (albeit Brunei will achieve independence) but they are marginal to our discussion.

The relations between Communist and non-Communist Southeast Asia, as we have indicated, affect both stability and security of the individual units of both blocs. At the present time, communist insurgencies exist in all the ASEAN states; Singapore, though not experiencing

an "armed insurgency" is faced with the more subtle form of communist subversion and "united front" activities. Indonesia, though also not faced with a communist insurgency movement has to keep very close tabs over the possibility of a communist insurrection because of the peculiar conditions of that country. Apart from communist insurgencies, there are also other types of rebellions, of which the most serious one is that encountered by the Philippine government in its southern territory, namely the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). In Thailand, apart from the activities of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT), the government is also faced with the irredentist demands of the Patani Independence Movement. In Malaysia, there is an insurgency in both its Peninsular section and Sarawak, but the nature of the communist anti-government force in the former region is a splintered one.

It is not conventionally thought that insurgencies take place in communist countries but this is not exactly true in Southeast Asia. In certain areas of former South Vietnam, remnants of the anti-communist forces of the pre-1975 era are known to be operating against the government. Such occurrences are however, hardly reported. In Laos, information is lacking but there are probably quite a few groupings that are challenging the government in the more remote areas. In Cambodia, it might be said the forces of the previous regime are conducting an "insurgency" although the problem is more accurately a battle between two contending sides; there is also some evidence that new elements, such as the Khmer Seri, are emerging to contest the present two major forces (that is, the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese-assisted forces of Heng Samrin).

Given the current situation as presented in overview form here, what situations likely to take place in the next few years? We shall attempt this by reference to the approach we have already selected.

Insurgency/Stability profile: Indochina

For the next few years, it is not expected that the state of Laos and Vietnam will be weakened by the existence of insurgent groups. Although much economic reconstruction will need to be done, the governments of these two states will continue or maintain the political consolidation of their regimes by this is meant that their administrative apparatuses will probably be enhanced to meet the demands and objectives of the national government.

The party's control of the bureaucracy will continue to be paramount and inexorable. Whilst it is true that there have been frequent cases of petty corruption and inefficiency, especially among lower-level cadres, the dictates of a mobilization-type regime will be the spur of bureaucratic centralization and administrative effectiveness. It might be asked if the regime can continue to act on a war footing... as had been done since 1945... but to do otherwise will only spell disaster for the regime. Thus, whatever turnover and ethnic problems the party's organization may occasionally suffer from, it is not likely that these will affect the party's direction of the national goals. At the same time, of course, tremendous costs have to be paid – not only in just financial terms but also in the human, psychological, political and economic spheres – for the fulfilment of the national objectives. In short, however, the regulative and extractive capabilities of the regime may be expected to be high.

It is not expected that any dissident group in these two states will be cohesive enough to mount an insurgency on a scale that prejudices the situation of government. As it is, whatever dissident groups there are lack unity, organization and leadership, and importantly, have no clear objective about forming a government to replace the Communists. It is possible that some peripheral groups will be able to exist almost autonomously of the government but these will be allowed only for those that are in more inaccessible areas and who pose no real challenge to the legitimate government – most likely, these will be the alienated, ethnic minority groups.

As has been indicated, the situation in Cambodia presents enormous dangers to the security and stability of the general Southeast Asian arena. It is very uncertain as to how the denouement of the Cambodian tragedy will unravel itself. There is no question of an armed insurgency here because what we have are warring factions engaged in vanquishing each other. There is also no utility of discussing national political stability because there is no government possessing the capabilities necessary for it to function. The present government exists only as a body propped up by the Vietnamese but it hardly exercises its administrative chores except for the necessary war-related ones. As long as the Vietnamese find it imperative to maintain their political and military presence in Cambodia, there is only futility in discussing the issue of a legitimate government in that country.

Insurgency/Stability Profile: ASEAN

In general, there has been some talk of the need to strengthen national resilience so as to promote the cohesiveness of ASEAN, but this must also be interpreted to mean the strengthening of state institutions in each political system.

Probably the most stable of the ASEAN states is Singapore in that there is tight control over the public sector apparatus not only to be efficient and effective in terms of extractive, regulative and distributive capabilities but also in the other areas of social and political life. Singapore's major problems will be the question of its Chinese majority, especially the issue of English-educated versus Chinese-educated elements and that of dialect versus Mandarin usage, and the capacity of the leadership to exhibit dynamism after Lee Kuan Yew's departure from the scene (the so-called "second generation elite" issue). The second problem seems less salient because of the present efforts to oversee it.

The first, however, is linked somewhat to the problem of insurgency. Although we have mentioned only the Chinese element of the population, the minority groups, namely the Malays and Indians, are also salient. In terms of insurgency, Singapore's urban situation renders it difficult to wage a rebellion based on extent guerilla doctrine; the possibilities of urban terrorism are somewhat restricted because of the tight political controls that are present. Several urban terrorist groups, essentially comprising extremist Malay racial elements, have been quickly nipped in the bud by the ever-vigilant police.

The problem of a Chinese insurgency group cannot be divorced from the machinations of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM). (The CPM still regards Singapore as part of Malaya). There does not seem to be any likely future variance from this set-up. However, the opportunities for success are limited because of the high capabilities of the police and its Special Branch (and who work closely with their Malaysian counterparts). What is more dangerous from a security viewpoint is the subversive activities of the MCP, and the sympathy and support it receives from the general population. One of the features of Singapore's problem-situation is that there will always be a number of disaffected individuals who take on an anti-government stripe. It is this lot which furnishes the manpower for the subversive and insurgent movement. The sympathy and support that is possible is generally a result of public apathy, and perhaps also in combination with an amount of silent anti-gober government sentiment. The question of insidious communist activities also arises out of complacency commitant with a better and more comfortable standard of living.

Given the "tight" controls exercised by the PAP government and strong governmental institutions — some say an 'administrative state' — we can expect a high degree of national political stability in Singapore as well as strict curbs over any possibility of an eruption of armed insurgency.

The situation in the Philippines has recently been described as a "powder-keg". To an extent this is justified because of a rising, societal despair and incapability of the government to overcome the tremendous problem of poverty, and more importantly, there is enough frustration in the people to provide support for groups out to wage an insurrection. As has been indicated, the Philippines is also facing an insurgency waged by the MNLF in the southern flank of the country. In some sense, then, it might be said that the lessening of general lawlessness achieved by the imposition of martial law may now backfire upon the Marcos regime.

Although the Philippine case may be portrayed as a classic example of a "revolutionary situation" and where an insurgent movement will find a large following, there is some reason to believe that the present political regime will be viable in the coming years. Apart from poverty, Pye's construct seems to be well illustrated: a large 'division' between the urban and rural elements, stark disparities between the rich and poor, the government's lack of authority in certain parts of the country, and weaknesses in the public sector apparatus such as a high incidence of corruption. In addition, there appears to be a strong political opposition with a substantial following. However, it is also true that the Philippine political culture will not accept a socialist or communist type of government, and the police is efficient enough to keep track of insurgent movements and activities.

It is not likely that the militant arm of the communist movement, the New People's Army (NPA) will be able to achieve any more than it has at the present time for the coming years. The NPA and the other functional groups of the communist movement suffer organizational weaknesses and are not cohesive enough to mount an effective armed insurgency.

As for the MNLF, their present insurgency will not achieve any objective unless their outside support (mainly Arab money) is increased. Although the insurgents have had some spectacular successes, their major weakness is poor organization and that this is a sectarian, separatist movement. The pivotal factor is which side will outlast the other in such a protracted situation but government will usually ensure that secessionist attempts are abortive.

One other point about the Philippine situation is salient and this is the question of the role of the Church which seems to have adopted an anti-Marcos stand. However, in the final analysis it is not likely that the Church will throw in its lots with the communists.

The capacity of the present Philippine government to survive is not because of its high capability but that its system's capability is more a result of the functioning of the system which somewhat ensures resilience.

Turning to the Thai case, we find a system that is also likely to be resilient in the coming decade. Analysts have concluded that the question of political stability in Thailand is not concerning politics (attempts at party politics have been dismal failures) but rather about the bureaucratic in-fighting and the role of the army. Another factor of importance is loyalty to King and Country.

The insurgent challenge to the regime emanates from the activities of the CPT which operates in Southern Thailand and the North-east. However, the CPT has not been able to achieve any real support from the population and indeed is active only in the more inaccessible parts of the country. Of late, there has been an emergence of leftist and communist interest among students and which significantly resulted in a student demonstration but which was violently crushed. The trials of the student leaders who were arrested were something of a cause celebre but such intellectual leaders are not likely to achieve a mass following; it is also doubtful that those students who managed to join the communists in the jungle will be able to achieve much.

One issue that is linked to student involvement in politics is that of the lack of opportunities. Social advancement is accelerating much faster than the government's ability to satisfy demands. It is not clear how potentially destabilizing student activism is, but it is certainly not mitigated by the known excesses of corrupt leaders in power. This is a sphere that is certainly worth paying attention to in the next decade.

Apart from the CPT, the Patani Independence Movement in Southern Thailand may manifest itself as a major problem in the future. Nonetheless, it is not likely that the Thais will allow a break-away movement to succeed, and all indications are that the area is rapidly being 'assimilated' and being given emphasis by rural development teams. Although there is that degree of "formalism" (Riggs, 1966) in government operations, the capability of the government is not a question of capabilities but that of factionalism (the rivalry between cliques) and how united and cohesive the army is. National political stability, however, is expected since the major question for Thailand is not its domestic situation but rather how it responds to the conflict engulfing Indochina.

The picture that emerges from the Indonesian situation is the inexorable attempt by the Army to consolidate its political supremacy. In this it is also committed to prevent a resurgence of communist activity and influence. However, in assessing the future performance of the system, two factors stand out: (a) the inescapable linkage of societal groupings (the "alirans") with communist and noncommunist affinities, and (b) the peculiar style or functioning of the public sector apparatus which tends to debilitate itself.

The latter point may be the ultimate, deciding factor in determining the regime's capability to maintain itself and/or to overcome any insurgency. This is what Ann Ruth Willner (1970: 242–306) so persuasively argued in analyzing the administrative style of the Indonesians in which it was shown the inherent incapacity of its modern bureaucrats; it is also related to the way the Indonesians reacted to the Madiun uprising and the PRRI revolt (that is, it did not go "all out" to crush the insurgents). It is true that GESTAPU was an indication of decisiveness to stem the communist influence but such a case may not repeat itself, especially when communism may manifest itself because of the societal cleavages. On a different plane, the continuing factor of bureaucratic ineptness (for example, gross and blatant mismanagement) says little for the future capabilities of the regime.

Nonetheless, I do not forsee in the near future the possibility of a communist uprising, and as long as the army remains cohesive, Indonesia will be a stable polity. There is a possibility, however, that the insurgent group in East Timor may be successful; but information is lacking and therefore it is dangerous to forecast the possibility.

Of all the ASEAN states, Malaysia stands out as the country that beat a communist insurrection, that is the communist challenge during the 1948–60 Malayan Emergency. Malaysia also stands out as a country that achieved independence in a rather 'peaceful' manner. Other distinguishing characteristics are a stable and functioning party democracy, a good civil service (some say one of the most highly qualified), and well-managed natural resources.

But, that which tends to tear it apart is the fact of a plural society a result of which ethnic issues tend to be read into every other issue. For that matter, however, class divisions have not emerged to become an issue. Race, also, is the lynchpin which makes difficult the efforts of the CPM to wage a successful challenge against the government. Because the CPM is so much identified as a Chinese and therefore 'alien' movement, there is little legitimacy it can garner in its struggles.

Although the CPM has been active, its performance has been lacklustre because of (a) its own organizational weaknesses, and (b) the very strong efforts of the government to crush it. Organizationally, the CPM has splintered into three factions which tries to outdo each other in terms of its revolutionary and insurgency efforts. This lack of coordination, however, is a weakness. A more greater danger of the CPM is its (usually Chinese) public support and the sympathy it receives. The CPM has also, in the twilight years it hibernated in the jungles after the First Emergency, achieved a following among the Orang Asli. Although there is some evidence of communist influence among Malays, this is less a security issue and more a political problem. As long as there is grievance and dissatisfaction in nonMalay elements in a country led by a Malay-dominant government, there is bound to be support for the CPM.

Over in Sarawak, the CPM is nonexistent but in its stead there is the clandestine communist organization. This movement is also heavily Chinese. The Sarawak communist challenge is also 'racial' in character but the movement has found little appeal among the Ibans and who largely constitute the government forces. Like the appeal of the CPM, the issue in Sarawak is also one of opportunities and frustration.

By and large, however, the government has been able to perform well in its regulative, distributive and extractive capabilities and hence insurgent groups face only limited success in its efforts. The style of the Malaysian authorities is also "administrative" and there is a high premium placed on law and order (Zakaria, 1977). Whatever the prophecies of doom because of the racial cauldron, the future for Malaysia is likely to be of a stable political order and ability to contain attempts at insurgency. At the same time, however, there is no room for complacency and there must be continued vigilance.

In this section, I have attempted contextual analyses of the security and stability situations of the ASEAN countries by emphasizing the domestic variables. Although the picture that emerges is optimistic, there is clearly a need to relate the analysis to other variables such as the foreign environment. Nonetheless, there does appear a concerted effort to attain national political stability in the coming decade in the ASEAN states.

Concluding Remarks

It has only been possible to present here a brief overview of the present and future political stability situations for the Southeast Asian states, and an assessment of the challenge of armed insurgency. The approach has been to be informative as well as to raise questions on the two issues; but as has been elaborated at the beginning there are many other problems that require our attention. Another step that needs to be taken is prescription based on successful strategies so as to sustain stability in Southeast Asia.

It has been remarked that armed insurgency as a problem should also be seen in perspective, as other forms such as clandestine and subversive activities are equally important. "Stability" has been seen largely in terms of the strength of governmental institutions to perform but clearly this neglects other critical question such as democratic performance. A central issue might be seen as the question of theoretical conceptualization but this will require a separate paper. Nonetheless, our purview as restricted to our chosen parameters should satisfactorily achieve our first step at analysis.

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[1] See Tilman (1966)

[2] "Capability" of a system is defined as the way it performs as a unit in its environment. There are four types of capabilities, namely, extractive, regulative, distributive, and responsive. See Almond and Powel (1966: 28–29).

[3] There seems to be a currency of this view in various high circles in ASEAN. Officially, however, it is a view that is rejected principally because of its potentially alarming consequences.

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