

## SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

Address to the Pacific Democrat Union  
by the Rt Hon B.E. Talboys\*  
December 1982

There are so many facets to the idea of security for a nation and its people - secure sources for the provision of food, all that is now embraced in the Law of the Sea - rights to marine and mineral resources, and freedom of navigation - communications, trade and security from both external aggression and internal subversion. It is with these latter that I thought to deal.

But before attempting a New Zealand perception of security in the Pacific it might be useful to recall that for generations of New Zealanders the Pacific was limited to the routes of vessels of the Union Steamship Company - to Vancouver and other ports of the western seaboard of North America - and the Matson Line to San Pedro and San Francisco; it was limited to Hawaii and the more immediate island countries of the South Pacific. New Zealand was a British farm - assured of its place in the world through the British connection. In that there was political, economic and cultural sustenance. We managed to ignore Asia and South America; they were not relevant, and the concept of the Pacific Basin had not arrived.

Perhaps in the late nineteenth century it had been that ignorance which helped fuel speculation about threats that Asia represented. Certainly the political rhetoric of the time was occasionally splashed with references to the great mass of people that might flood out of Asia down to Australia and New Zealand. Mind you it also featured the threat of Russian invasion, for the Russians were on, if not in the Pacific long before New Zealand was colonised. And one of the Cook Islands - Suvarrow - in the Central Pacific was discovered as early as 1814 from the Russian vessel Suvarov. Of course none of it made much sense - nor did it matter really. The Maoris felt no affinity with Asia and the European colonists remote in these islands enjoyed that special relationship with Britain and Europe.

And so it was for generations of New Zealanders. It was the fall of Singapore that smashed the mirror. Suddenly the fears of the nineteenth century had substance. And within

---

\* formerly New Zealand Foreign Minister

a few months New Zealand had opened an Embassy in Washington.

It was inevitable after the Second World War that any picture the average New Zealander had of Asia should have strong colouring from security and defence issues; and that association of ideas was given further force by New Zealand troops engaged in the Korean War, in battles with the terrorists during the Malayan Emergency, and later yet by participation in the War in Vietnam. With newspapers and television presenting in stark reality the war in Indochina and its impact on the people of neighbouring lands - violence, corruption, coups and social and political turmoil all put their imprint on the Asia picture. But whatever else it achieved it forced a realisation that Asia is part of the world we live in - that Asia's problems could have a direct bearing on what happened to the lives of New Zealanders - that the Soviet Union is not only beyond the European Plain, it is also in North East Asia - that Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang are closer to Wellington than is Los Angeles, that as Europe becomes more inward looking the Asia-Pacific area becomes ever more important in our trading relationships. This is the geographic, the political, the economic reality that will increasingly inform policy-making. In our relationship with the region problems of security and defence are still important, but so rapid have been the changes that now it is difficult to remember just how precarious its security seemed to be. The emergence of China from isolation, the China-Soviet stand-off, the relationships between China, the United States and Japan have constructed a political framework which has lessened the immediate threat to security from external aggression.

The remarkable achievement of the five nations of ASEAN in over-turning their history of mutual suspicion and hostility in favour of the realities of geography - and politics - has contributed immeasurably to the stability of the region. Is there a lesson for all the world in the way the five have been prepared to submerge national differences of approach to preserve their hard-won independence from outside interference?

While we can acknowledge the contribution that the balance of relationships between China and the Soviets, between China, the United States and Japan has made to stability in the region, we cannot foresee the consequences of China's new-found interest in dealing with the Soviet Union. To read that Huang Hua has said 'Peace and friendship between the two countries completely conform to the interests not only of the two countries and the two peoples,

but also of peace in Asia and the world as a whole' - to read that he hopes the Soviet Union would continue to make progress in improving its domestic situation and that the unity of the multinational Soviet state will be more consolidated contrasts dramatically with the powerful denunciation of the Soviets and all their works that official visitors to Peking have heard.

At the same time there is an indication, according to the Far Eastern Economic Review that the U.S. 'is signalling Hanoi that there is a real opportunity to improve the atmosphere of U.S.-Vietnamese relations'. If that is the message, if the signals are received and understood one can contemplate the possibility of western world assistance in the reconstruction of the Vietnamese economy, and then ponder the effect that could have on growth and stability in the region.

In this connection it is intriguing to read in his 'World Economic Development' Herman Kahn's provocative idea that the neo-Confucian cultures of Asia are actually better at economic development than the traditional Western cultures - the modern Confucian ethos is superbly designed to create and foster loyalty, dedication, responsibility and commitment and to intensify identification with the organisation and one's role in the organisation'.

The focus of world attention has swung to the Asia-Pacific region largely because of the prodigious economic performance first of Japan, then South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore and now of other South-east Asian countries. That performance has transformed that prospect of the area, not least because it has helped to contain another potential threat to security - subversion and internal upheaval.

We all know something of the tensions experienced in developed democracies when organised groups within society compete for larger slices of an economic cake which has been reduced in size by falling commodity prices, by the closure of export markets and through the impact of inflation. The real safeguard - the security in times of heightened social and economic tension lies in the fact that the practice, the rules governing political activity are hallowed by almost universal acceptance, and at least the change of government can be brought about by constitutional methods. For so many developing countries there is not the same inherited tradition of political participation. Experience has taught that in periods of social and economic stress societies divided by both race and religion are in danger of exploitation by outside support for so-called wars

of liberation. China's continuing, even though limited support for local communist parties keeps the fear alive. The systems evolving in South-east Asia - the results being achieved stand out from the rest of the developing world as the best hope for continuing progress and stability. The results are there for the world to compare with the economic wrecks of eastern Europe and whatever limitations there are on democratic freedoms are as nothing compared with Prague and Pyongyang.

Nations of the region had the choice of following the socialist road of the Soviet Union or entering the market economy. Experience told them the best they could expect from the Soviets was supplies of weapons and simple observation persuaded them that by plugging into the free world trading system by giving their people a chance to take a chance in private enterprise, they were more likely to create the opportunity to realise the expectations of a better life heldout during the years of struggle for independence.

The economic records of all the member countries of the PDU remind us - if that is necessary - that we have all shared the benefits from this enlargement of the free world trading system and it seems to me that is a powerful argument for doing our utmost to make sure the opportunity is expanded for all of us. The economic and the political facets of security are inseparable; if there is no major conflict to force change in the pattern of development, the battle of ideas will in a very real sense be fought in the market place. And the challenge then is to persuade people to accept the adjustment that will allow the market to yield up its full potential of opportunities, rewards and satisfactions for people throughout the region. That's what interdependence is about.

In the trans-Tasman relationship the political exercise of persuading people to accept the need for change involved in CER is an integral part of the greater challenge.

Some speeches, some statements about the Asia-Pacific regions suggest that there are people in the north who have difficulty seeing over the horizon - who tend to forget that the region extends beyond the Equator. The Pacific embraces many peoples and those who live in the island nations of the South Pacific seek the same opportunity for full development.

For the larger nations discussion of the market economy has real meaning - they share the same concerns about investment, growth, shipping and markets - they share the same concern about freedom and independence. But we must

also recognise that there are smaller nations whose economic resources are limited to sandy soils and the harvest of the sea. They need now and will continue to need support from their friends and neighbours. Independence has yet to come to all the French Territories of the region. As it does it will be the common concern that transition should be peaceful. But until that is accomplished it would be folly to ignore the possibility of strife and the opportunity that would create for outside interference. By whatever means achieved - by invitation, or as the price tag for economic assistance to any island nation - a Soviet presence in the South Pacific would alter everyone's perception of the region - whether it is viewed from Washington, Ottawa, Tokyo or Wellington.

The Soviet Union already has a record that establishes it as a nation traditionally fishing in the waters of the South Pacific and in the Southern Ocean; the Soviets play an active role in the negotiations surrounding the development within the Antarctic Treaty of a region covering mineral resources, as they have in the Conference on the Law of the Sea. These facts - this expression of national interest - suggest that the possibility of harbour facilities closer to the scene of activity - closer than either Vladivostok or even Cam Ranh Bay - might be highly desirable.

Looming large as a background to all these considerations - to all the ingredients of security in the Pacific - is the build-up of the naval strength creating a blue water navy - the larger of four - and the air and missile strike capability of the Soviet Union.

The availability of Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang to those forces as forward bases extends their reach far into the Pacific - there are Soviet forces about three thousand miles closer to this part of the world than ever before - and those bases allow ships to spend greatly increased time on station in the Pacific or Indian Oceans. In the north Pacific flights over the Sea of Japan, east of Okinawa and south over the Pacific have made the Japanese people increasingly aware of the presence and the range of Soviet forces based in Vladivostok and the Kuriles. The build-up of missile strength, of submarines, of surface ships and aircraft by the Soviets in the Pacific is an established fact. We know the dependence of the nations of the region on sea-borne trade. The vital supplies of oil flowing from the Arabian Gulf through the Indian Ocean and into the Pacific highlight the potential for harassment. It may be that we shall become increasingly aware of the Malacca Straits, the Sunda, the Lombok, the Wetar and the Torres strait. The alter-

native route between the two Oceans is the long way round the Southern Ocean to the south of Australia.

Oil is a vital cargo, but then so are all our exports and imports whether it be the minerals - the coal, the iron, aluminium, the nickel that feeds Japan's industry, or the exports from that industry. The whole region is vulnerable - whatever the intentions of the Soviets, it requires no great exercise of imagination to see what they are capable of doing - placing trade at risk.

When faced with an identifiable threat it behoves friends to consult closely to achieve a common approach. And finally I quote from Samuel Pisar's 'Of Blood and Hoe' - our real enemy is the inability to recognise that life is not an uninterrupted feast, but a permanent, painful, precarious struggle for survival.

#### DER STREIK DER ZHONGGUO RENMIN UNIVERSITÄT IM OKTOBER 1979: EIN GESELLSCHAFTLICHER KONFLIKT IN DER VOLKSREPUBLIK CHINA

Uwe Richter

Am 10. Oktober 1979 traten 4.000 Studenten, Lehrer und Angestellte der Zhongguo Renmin Universität in den Streik. Mit einer Demonstration durch die Innenstadt trugen sie ihren Protest gegen die fortdauernde Präsenz der Volksbefreiungsarmee (VBA) auf dem Universitätsgelände an die Öffentlichkeit.

Die Universität konnte ihre Forderungen nicht durchsetzen, allein der Vorgang, der geschlossene Streik einer chinesischen Universität gegen die VBA ist ein Markstein in der chinesischen Studentenbewegung. Der Streik verdeutlichte das wachsende Selbstbewußtsein der Intellektuellen in einer Phase der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung, in der ihnen erneut die Hauptrolle bei der Modernisierung des Landes übertragen wurde, eine Rolle, die elf Jahre zuvor die Armee übernommen hatte. Die Vorgänge an der Renmin Universität warfen auch Licht auf Spannungen im Verhältnis zwischen Zivilbevölkerung und Armee, eine Hypothek der Kulturrevolution.

In der Kulturrevolution hatte man die Intellektuellen als "Stinkende Neunte Kategorie" (chou lao jiu) beschimpft und