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AND ASIAN SECURITY

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CONTENTS

Executive Summary	ii
Introduction	1
I. Basic Characteristics of International Relations in Asia in the Late 1970s and the Early 1980s	
1. Bipolar Nature	2
2. Military Dimensions of Bipolarization	6
3. Soviet Reaction: 1980-1986	12
II. New Emerging Factors in the Late 1980s	
1. Need for a New Framework	15
2. General Characteristics of Gorbachev's Foreign Policy	16
3. Gorbachev's Asian Policy	20
(a) Gorbachev's Vladivostok Speech	21
(b) Changes after the Vladivostok Speech	27
(c) Problems in Implementing Gorbachev's Asian Objectives	
(1) Asian Security	30
(2) Japanese-Soviet Relations	34
(3) Economic Difficulty	36
(4) Conflict between Past Commitments and New Initiative	39
4. New Dynamics of International Relations in Asia	42
5. Sino-Soviet Relations	42
6. US-Japanese Relations	48
7. Asian NICs and Developing Countries	50
8. Socialist Countries	53
III. How to React to Gorbachev's Asian Policy	
1. Long-Term Objectives vs Short-Term Gains in Soviet Policy	54
2. Bipolar Vision vs Regional Vision	55
3. Arms Control Vision	55
(a) Settlement of Regional Conflicts	56
(b) Crisis Management and CBM	57
(c) Restrictions on Naval Activities	57
(d) Denuclearization	58
(e) The Base Issue	59
(f) Reasonable Sufficiency	60
4. US-Japanese Relations	61
5. Soviet Policy toward Asian NICs and Developing Countries	65
6. Socialist Countries	68
IV. Conclusion	69
Notes	70

Executive Summary

GORBACHEV'S ASIAN INITIATIVE AND ASIAN SECURITY

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa

Gorbachev's Asian initiative has injected a new element in the dynamics of Asian international politics. Unlike Brezhnev's policy, Gorbachev's objectives are to reduce the role of the military factor in Soviet policy and to expand the Soviet Union's political and economic role in the Asia-Pacific region.

To respond to Gorbachev's initiative and create a stable Asian security system, the US should consider adopting the following policies:

(1) having its own arms control policy in Asia that will address itself to such problems as confidence-building measures (CBMs), reduction of the arms race in the Far East, reexamination of the maritime strategy, arms control of SLCMs and ALCMs;

(2) creating a mechanism through which to resolve economic frictions with Japan in an orderly manner;

(3) separating security issues from economic issues in dealing with Japan, and designing a comprehensive framework to approach Japan by resolving schizophrenic perceptions between Japan as a trusted ally and Japan as the most serious economic enemy;

(4) coordinating with Japan its policy toward the Soviet

Union in arms control, solution of regional conflicts, and expansion of economic and technological cooperation;

(5) continuing cooperation with China, not based on the illusion that China is "tilted" to the West, but based on the realization that China's modernization and Sino-Soviet rapprochement will ultimately contribute to stability of the region;

(6) working together with Japan to create a comprehensive economic and foreign aid program in order to ensure continuing economic stability in the Asian NICs and developing countries;

(7) designing a policy that would contribute to the stabilization of the Aquino government, while sending the Soviets a clear message that their interference in the political process will exact a high price;

(8) continuing the effort to reduce the tensions in the Korean Peninsula by encouraging increasing interactions between China and South Korea and between the Soviet Union and South Korea, and continuing to explore the ways to draw North Korea out of dangerous isolation;

(9) continuing to support ASEAN efforts to resolve the conflict in Indochina; and

(10) welcoming Soviet participation in Asian economic organizations.

The above recommendations are based on the conclusion, derived from this research, that Gorbachev's Asian initiative has serious implications when it is interpreted in the context of the fundamental transformation that the Asia-Pacific region is

undergoing and that is likely to accelerate in the years to come. In addition to Gorbachev's new policy itself, the following can be considered to be crucial factors that make the present situation qualitatively different from the previous decade: (a) Sino-Soviet rapprochement, (b) US-Japan economic frictions, (c) political change in the Asian NICs and other developing countries, and (d) pressure for economic reform in the Asian socialist countries.

Brezhnev's Asian policy was perversely military and perversely negative. It provoked strong reactions from the US and neighboring countries. The resulting US military buildup, closer US-Japanese military cooperation, formation of anti-Soviet coalitions among the US, Japan, and China, and ASEAN's opposition to Vietnam and the Soviet Union increased the security threat to the Soviet Union and contributed to its isolation in Asia. Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech manifested his intention to make a clean break with this past policy. It signalled his intention to lower the importance of the military factor in Soviet policy and to expand Soviet influence in the economic and political areas in this region.

Since the Vladivostok speech there have been changes in personnel and organizations in the Soviet foreign policy mechanism, and active efforts to cultivate relations with Japan and ASEAN countries as well as to join international organizations such as the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC). The most significant change, however, is taking place in Sino-Soviet relations. Despite the unresolved "three obstacles", such sig-

nificant progress has been made in trade, cultural and science-technology exchanges, political consultations, and border negotiations that normalization of relations has for all practical purposes taken place. Although the geostrategic differences between the two countries preclude any possibility of restoring the kind of alliance that existed in the 1950s, we can no longer assume that China is "tilted" to the West in its political allegiance. Moreover, the three obstacles themselves have a good possibility of being removed in the near future. Thus the bipolarity that existed in the Far East during the previous decade has to a significant degree dissipated. We are better advised to approach the new Asian power configuration in terms of multipolarity rather than bipolarity.

Gorbachev's long-term objectives envisaged in the Vladivostok speech, however, will be difficult to implement. There are basically four reasons for this. First, the Asian security system Gorbachev is proposing is difficult to achieve, partly because it ignores Asian complexities and partly because the one-sided nature of his proposal--which does not take into account the asymmetry between the US and Soviet geostrategic positions--is not likely to elicit serious reactions from the US. Second, Soviet-Japanese relations are not likely to improve drastically, because the solution of the northern territorial issue will be even more difficult than the three obstacles in Sino-Soviet relations. Furthermore, there are no discernible signs among the Japanese foreign policy elite of recognizing a need to reexamine Japan's

policy toward the Soviet Union. Third, Soviet expansion of influence in the Asia-Pacific region will ultimately depend on the success of Soviet economic reform, particularly on the economic viability of Eastern Siberia and the Soviet Far East. The prospect of Gorbachev's economic reform is in serious doubt, while the possibility of economic development of Eastern Siberia and the Soviet Far East is even less likely in the foreseeable future. Finally, Gorbachev will face the problem of balancing his priorities between old commitments to his allies and the need for new initiatives.

Thus, when we see Gorbachev's long-term objectives in the narrow bipolar vision, his new Asian initiative offers little reason for us to exercise a fundamental reexamination of our approach to Asian security. It poses a serious challenge, however, when it is put in the context of the broader transformation that the Asia-Pacific region is undergoing now and that is likely to accelerate in the near future. Factors that contribute to the changing dynamics of Asian international relations include changing Sino-Soviet relations mentioned above, the approaching crisis of US-Japanese relations, the problem of inevitable change in the political process in the Asian NICs and developing countries, and the pressure for economic reform and the resulting pressure for pluralism in the political process in the Asian socialist countries.

The crisis of US-Japanese relations should be interpreted also in light of the overall strategy of the Soviet Union toward

Asia. Trade frictions between the US and Japan are more likely to intensify, while the conflict will have a tendency to spill over into security issues. The Japanese government will accommodate itself to US demands on security issues in order to diffuse tensions in trade conflicts. In the short term, this will satisfy US security concerns with regard to Japan, but this approach conceals a danger in the long run of a backlash that might disrupt the security arrangement that has been attained over the years.

Trade frictions are already generating nationalism among Japanese. The Japanese government's concessions to US demands in security matters are bound to cause, at some point, a change in popular perception of the US and the Soviet Union, particularly if the crisis of US-Japanese relations is coupled with arms control momentum on the global scale (the successful conclusion of the START agreement, a compromise on SDI, reduction of troops along the Sino-Soviet border, and solution of the regional conflicts in Afghanistan and Indochina). Given the lack of consensus on the northern territorial issue and the absence in the Japanese government of a comprehensive policy toward the Soviet Union that goes beyond the territorial issue, Gorbachev's well-timed proposal to return one or two islands in return for some kind of arms control measures would have a danger of dividing Japanese public opinion.

The US and Japanese reaction to the Soviet military buildup in the Far East has been to match it with our own buildup. Reliance on this measure alone will not suffice in the future,

since a further unregulated arms race would endanger our own security and this method alone will no longer satisfy other Asian powers (China and ASEAN countries) and public opinion in Asia. Our strength should be combined also with our flexibility to create a security system beneficial to creating stable Asian security.

Continuing economic growth and political stability in the Asian NICs and developing countries are an essential precondition for Asian security. In the years ahead, the political process of these countries will undergo inevitable, significant changes. These changes are, however, not necessarily compatible with political stability. The ways that the Philippines made its transition from the authoritarian Marcos regime to democracy and that South Korea is making its difficult transition from the military regime to democracy will have a profound impact on the political transitions in other countries.

The political transformations of these countries are not likely to be accompanied by a cataclysmic social revolution, thus providing little chance for the Soviet Union to intervene. No Asian countries are likely to become Leninist socialist states. The Soviet Union will, however, find opportunities to advance its influence at the expense of US influence, if such political transitions result in political instability coupled with US blunders. Such instability will provide the Soviet Union with short-term gains, even if it may conflict with the overall Soviet objective of establishing a stable international environment. We

must keep in mind that although the new thinking is genuine, and merits our serious attention, the Soviet Union is quite capable of playing a hard-nosed game in zero-sum power politics in Asia.

The Philippines is the one Asian country where a change in the political process might be accompanied by a social revolution. New democracy under the Aquino regime has the difficulty of carrying out social reform while the New Peoples' Army is gaining influence in the countryside. Since any scenario of political change involves the question of the American bases, its outcome will have profound consequences in the Asian power balance. The Soviet Union is unlikely to be directly involved in supporting the NPA or in the internal political process itself, but it will wait in the wings hoping to see a favorable situation unfold. The US should design a program, together with Japan and other ASEAN countries, to strengthen the Aquino regime and support its effort to carry out social reforms, while sending the Soviet Union a clear message that Soviet interference in the internal process of the Philippines will exact a high price:

Economic reforms in the Soviet Union and China will facilitate similar reforms in other socialist countries in Asia. There is a universal recognition that the old Stalinist system with its emphasis on closed autarchy has outlived its usefulness. As their economic reforms get under way, two tendencies will become inevitable. First, the Asian socialist countries will seek more open interactions with the outside world, and second, there will

be a pluralistic tendency in the political process. These tendencies will ultimately contribute to stability of the region.

The prospect of Asian security in the years to come warrants cautious optimism. In order to establish a stable security system in Asia, we should combine our determination to protect our interests with flexibility to integrate the Soviet Union into the Asian community as a constructive member. Gorbachev's Asian initiative thus offers us both challenge and opportunity.

Introduction

The original proposal for this project, entitled "Soviet Military Buildup in the Far East," was designed to examine what role the Soviet military buildup in the Far East plays in overall Soviet military doctrine and what implications it has for security in Asia, particularly for the alliance between Japan and the United States. The events that have taken place over the past two years, coinciding with the duration of this research contract, have necessitated expansion of the scope of the research, to examine the significance of Gorbachev's new foreign and military policy as it applies to Asia and its implications for Asian security. The project's findings indicate that fundamental changes are taking place in the basic characteristics of international relations in Asia, and that those assumptions which were applicable to situations in the late 1970s and early 1980s are no longer appropriate to cope with the new reality.

This report describes the basic characteristics that prevailed in international relations in Asia during the decade of the late 1970s and early 1980s (Section I), identifies some of the basic features that have emerged as important characteristics which make the present situation qualitatively different from the previous decade (Section II), and makes specific policy recommendations (Section III). It argues that Gorbachev's new Asian policy is one of the important elements contributing to the dynamic change in Asian international relations. But a new Soviet policy toward Asia is by no means the only factor that is causing

a fundamental shift in the Asian power balance; there are other factors, some only indirectly related to the change in Soviet policy and others completely independent of Soviet policy. This report takes the position that Gorbachev's Asian policy should not be viewed only in the context of the superpower competition in Asia, but that it must be understood in the context of the broader changes that Asia is experiencing now and that are likely to accelerate in the next five to ten years.

I. Basic Characteristics of International Relations in Asia in the Late 1970s and the Early 1980s

1. Bipolar Nature

The most important characteristic of international relations in Asia in the late 1970s and the early 1980s was that the global bipolar conflict which characterized international politics elsewhere became also the predominant feature of international relations in Asia as well. It is true that bipolarity had predominated in Asia since the outset of the Cold War, but previously its basic content had been the conflict between the anti-Communist alliances led by the US and Chinese Communism backed by the Soviet Union. It is important to note that in this conflict the U.S. and the Soviet Union did not directly confront each other militarily as they did in Europe. Two factors drastically changed this situation. The first was the Sino-Soviet

conflict, and the second was the global arms competition between the US and the USSR, in which the USSR achieved the status of strategic parity with the US. The uniqueness of the bipolarity that existed in Asia in the late 1970s and the early 1980s lay precisely in the fact that for the first time since World War II the US and the USSR came to face each other in direct confrontation in Asia.¹ The global conflict between the US and the USSR found its first and foremost expression in Asia in the strategic arms competition in the Far East. The Sino-Soviet conflict tended to be absorbed into the predominant bipolar conflict, as the US and Japan increased their political, economic, and technological cooperation with China.

Brezhnev's activist policy in the Third World provided another element driving the bipolarization of Asian international relations. The Soviet Union's activities in Indochina and its military buildup in the Far East were inevitably perceived by Asian nations as part of Soviet global expansionism, spreading all the way from the Horn of Africa, through the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Strait of Malacca, and Indochina, to the Far East. The perception of "Soviet military threat" was shared almost universally in Asia. The Soviet expansion, which coincided with the US withdrawal from commitment to Asia after defeat in the Vietnam war and humiliation in the Iranian hostage affair, provoked an acute sense of crisis in the Asian nations as well as in the US. The Soviet activist policy prompted the US to launch a vigorous attempt at military modernization and to reassert its

influence globally as well as in Asia. It also contributed to the precipitous decline in Soviet popularity in Japanese public perception, which was in turn translated into Japanese acceptance of the legitimacy of the Japanese Self-Defense Force and the US-Japanese Security Treaty.² Japanese military capability steadily grew, as did Japan's military cooperation with the U.S. As the Soviet actions in Afghanistan and Vietnam as well as the military buildup in the Far East all directly threatened China's geopolitical interests, China came to view "Soviet hegemonism" as the most dangerous threat to its own security.

Thus, the stage was set for the US, Japan, and China to draw together in an anti-Soviet collaboration. The Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed in August, 1978, which included an anti-hegemony clause, and US-PRC normalization of diplomatic relations in January, 1979, heightened Soviet concern over possible Washington-Tokyo-Beijing collusion against the Soviet Union. China announced in April, 1979, its intention to abrogate the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship Alliance and Mutual Aid. Furthermore, China's support for the existing US-Japan Security Treaty and the increasing military capability of the US and Japan to counter Soviet "hegemonism" fueled the Soviet fear of being encircled by a military alliance among the US, Japan, and China. The Soviet Union, in turn, concluded the Soviet-Vietnam Friendship and Cooperation Treaty in November, 1978, which presumably granted the Soviet Union the right to use the military bases in Cam Ranh Bay and DaNang. For the first time the Soviet

Union acquired a foothold in Asia beyond its own border, in a geostrategically important position that could threaten both US global strategy and China's security. Soviet support of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, however, crystallized the political unity of the ASEAN countries against Vietnam and the Soviet Union, thus naturally drawing ASEAN into the influence of US-led anti-Soviet coalitions. Thus, it can be said that the bipolarity that existed in Asian polities in the late 1970s was above all characterized by Soviet isolation from the rest of the Asian powers except Vietnam.

Soviet isolation in Asia was further magnified by the fact that the Soviet Union totally excluded itself from what is arguably the most important change in Asia in the 1970s--its economic growth. The Asia-Pacific region experienced during the decade from the late 1970s to the early 1980s the highest economic growth rate in the world. While Japan acquired an unquestionable economic superpower status, Asian NICs emerged as competent economic powers with their unprecedented economic growth. ASEAN proved to be an economically viable organization. US trade with East Asia rose four-fold to \$170 billion compared with the previous decade, surpassing that with Western Europe.³ While the United States was an important and integral link with the economic vitality of this region, the Soviet Union had nothing whatever to do with it. Despite its claim to be an Asian power, the Soviet Union played no economic role in Asia, a factor that fatally hindered its political role as well. This in turn made the

primacy of the military factor in Soviet Asian policy even more conspicuous.

2. Military Dimension of Bipolarization

The most important feature of bipolarization in Asia in the late 1970s was that military competition and confrontation came to the fore. The Soviet military buildup in the Far East in the 1970s was prompted by three factors: the Chinese threat, strategic competition with the US, and support for Third World revolutions.⁴ Of these three factors, during the late 1970s first priority was given to the Chinese threat. During the 15 years between 1965 and 1980 the number of Soviet divisions along the Sino-Soviet border more than doubled, while the number of tactical fixed-wing aircraft more than tripled.⁵ In 1965, Soviet troops along the border numbered only 17 divisions, but they increased to 21 divisions in 1969, when the border clashes took place. From then on they steadily increased throughout the 1970s. Troop strength expanded to 45 divisions in 1973-74; although it decreased somewhat to 43 divisions in 1975-77, it climbed again thereafter, to 44 divisions in 1978, and 46 divisions in 1979-82, undoubtedly reflecting the Soviet perception of Chinese threat.⁶ Nevertheless, judging from the rate of mobilization of these forces (only 15% of troops were in Category 1) as well as the composition (predominantly motorized divisions rather than tank divisions), the Soviet buildup along the Sino-Soviet border was primarily intended to be for defensive and deterrent purposes.⁷

It should be noted also that the Soviets began targeting a part of their strategic and theater nuclear forces against China. A part of their SS-11s and SS-19s are presumed to be targeted against China, while the first deployment of the SS-20s in Asia was reported in the late 1970s.⁸

Another impetus for the Soviet military buildup came from the strategic competition with the US. In the late 1970s the Soviets began deploying Delta-class SSBNs in the Far East. Unlike the previous Yankee-class SSBNs, which had to sail near the U.S. coast to launch a nuclear attack on the United States, Deltas could cover two thirds of the US homeland from the Sea of Okhotsk. As the Soviet Union increasingly became concerned with the survivability of its strategic forces, the bastion strategy by which the Soviets would make the Sea of Okhotsk a sanctuary for its SSBN force, became operative. By 1980, the Soviets deployed 11 Delta class SSBNs, roughly 30% of its Delta force, in the Far East.⁹ The deployment of the SSBNs in the Far East and the resulting increasing importance of the Sea of Okhotsk in the overall strategic plan of the Soviet military lay behind the Soviet military buildup in the Far East in its supporting air and naval capability to protect its SSBN force. By 1981 the Pacific Fleet with 720 ships and 420 aircraft in naval aviation became the largest of the four fleets.¹⁰ The deployment of modern fighters and a division of troops in the northern territories that are contested by Japan is surely connected with the increased value of the Sea of Okhotsk. To prevent US ASW activities in the Sea of

Okhotsk, the control of the sea and the airspace is crucial, and hence the military value of the northern islands increased. In addition to establishing naval superiority in the Sea of Okhotsk and the Sea of Japan, along the Kurile islands, and off the Kamchatka Peninsula, the Soviet navy has a mission to conduct operations against enemy sea-based strategic platforms, and to interdict enemy sea lines of communications.¹¹

The third cause that lay behind the Soviet military buildup in the Far East was the support of Third World revolutions. Missions to counter the sustained US naval presence in the Indian Ocean following the Iranian hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and to demonstrate support for Vietnam after the Chinese punitive attack in 1979, may also have contributed to the large scale naval buildup in the Far East.¹²

It seems that the Soviet military buildup in the Far East in the 1970s was closely connected with the military thinking of the Soviet leadership that in the contingency of world war, the Asian theater would have to hold its own against a combined military attack from the US, Japan, and China. The establishment of the Far Eastern TVD (theater of military operation) was first recognized by Western specialists as early as 1978.¹³

The Soviet military buildup in the 1970s, however, invited inevitable military and political reactions from Soviet adversaries in the region. The US launched a vigorous military modernization program. At the global level, the US embarked upon strategic modernization programs that included the MX, the

Midgetman, the Trident H D5 missiles, the B-1, and Stealth Bombers at the strategic level. It decided to deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. In addition, President Reagan launched the Strategic Defense Initiative in 1983. In 1982, President Reagan launched a program which aimed at adding two nuclear-powered carriers to the existing fleet of 14 and establishing a 600 ship navy by 1989. His intention was to attain clear naval superiority over the Soviet Union. Secretary of the Navy John Lehman stated: "Maritime superiority is a national objective, a security imperative without which there can no national strategy." In the Pacific theater, the US equipped its Seventh Fleet with Tomahawk cruise missiles, while a nuclear-powered attack carrier, the Carl Vinson, and the battleship New Jersey were added to the Pacific Fleet. In addition, two squadrons of F-16s were deployed in Misawa, from which they acquired the capability to launch a limited nuclear attack on Soviet territory.¹⁴

Moreover, a shift of US strategy added another dimension threatening to Soviet security. The trend in US strategy revealed in PD-59 and Defense Secretary Weinberger's Defense Guideline indicated that the US was moving to acquire warfighting capability in protracted nuclear war. At the regional level, in the Defense Posture Statement presented by Weinberger in 1982, the United States revealed the notion of horizontal escalation, which meant that the US might choose in the contingency of war in the Middle East or Europe to open up a new front in the Far East in order to "pin down" the Soviet forces.¹⁵ Furthermore, US maritime strategy

shifted to an offensive mode, intended to launch an attack on Soviet nuclear forces at the conventional stage of conflict.¹⁶ The new US strategy, coupled with the vigorous naval and air buildup in the Far East, particularly in its theater nuclear forces, must have been alarming to the Soviets.

Japan's active effort to increase its military capability from the late 1970s onwards would have been inconceivable without the Soviet military buildup. The "Soviet threat" resulted in a significant shift in public opinion with regard to defense issues, contributing to the removal of a number of taboos that could not have been raised previously.¹⁷ Japan's defense budget was steadily increased at a time of overall budgetary retrenchment. The National Defense Program Outline, which was established during the heyday of detente in 1976, changed its character in 1981, when Premier Suzuki accepted Japan's responsibility to defend 1,000 nautical miles of sealanes.¹⁸ The Mid-Term Defense Program adopted in 1981 emphasized air-defense, ASW, electronic warfare, and sustainability.¹⁹ The next five year plan, drafted in 1985, emphasized the improvement of air defense capability as well as the capability to defend the sealanes, while it planned the acquisition of Patriot missiles and the buildup of F-15s as well as P3Cs, and other surface ships and submarines.²⁰

More important was the increasing military cooperation between the United States and Japan. In 1978 the Guideline of US-Japan Defense Cooperation was signed.²¹ From then on, both countries have conducted joint studies on cooperation in informa-

tion, logistical support, joint operations and sealane defense.²² US-Japan military cooperation was expanded to military technology, when the Japanese government decided in 1983 to allow technology transfer for military use to the United States.²³ US-Japan joint military exercises have been conducted routinely, involving all services.²⁴

Another alarming development in Soviet eyes is the increasing cooperation among the US, Japan, and South Korea. South Korea acquired from the US 36 F-15s, Stinger SAMs, and M-55 light tanks, while the US-South Korean joint military exercises, Team Spirit, expanded in scope and duration, their nature changing since 1983 from passive-defensive to active-counteroffensive. In the US-Japan joint exercise conducted in 1986, US fighter aircraft stationed in South Korea participated.²⁵

Sino-American military cooperation also provided a cause for concern to the Soviet Union. China launched four modernization programs, one of which was devoted to military modernization. The focus of military modernization was placed on weapons modernization and the introduction of science and technology in military affairs.²⁶ US restrictions on technology transfer to China were drastically reduced. In 1983 the US changed the Chinese status in export control to the same as that of the NATO countries and Japan. Simultaneously, the COCOM regulations against China were greatly relaxed.²⁷ In addition, US Defense Secretary Weinberger and other important military leaders visited China, while Chinese counterparts paid return visits to the US. Since 1984 China has

purchased from the US such purely military technology for "defensive purposes" as artillery production facilities, electronic navigation systems for F-8 fighters, anti-submarine mines, ground combat warning radar, anti-tank and surface-to-air missiles.²⁸

3. Soviet Reaction: 1980-1986

The shift of US military strategy and the US military modernization program alarmed the Soviet Union. By 1981 the Soviet leadership seems to have drawn two conclusions: first, that US military strategy had changed to adopt a nuclear first-strike counterforce strategy, and second, that the US was determined to intervene in regional conflicts, even if it might lead to escalation to a military confrontation between the superpowers.²⁹ The possibility of a military coalition against the Soviet Union, and even more the real danger of direct military confrontations with the US in the Far East became perceived as a part of this global US offensive against the Soviet Union. This situation forced the Soviet leadership to reexamine its options. The June plenum of the Central Committee in 1980 was a turning point, at which the Soviet Union revised its previous policy.³⁰

As a result of this reexamination, the Soviet leadership seems to have taken four steps. The first step was a further military buildup to counter the US threat. The patterns of the US buildup as well as the change in US strategic thinking must have led the Soviet military leaders to take the danger of military confrontation in the Far East seriously. While the first priority

in the Soviet military buildup in the late 1970s was aimed at China, the buildup in the early 1980s was clearly directed against the US. Thus, in the early 1980s superpower conflict in Asia became more pronounced than in the late 1970s. The Delta SSBNs in the Far East came to occupy 40% of the total Delta force by 1984.³¹ The quantitative build up as well as qualitative modernization of Soviet forces in the Far East, including further deployments of SS-20s, and Backfires both in the navy and in the air force, must have been carried out for the purpose of meeting the challenge of horizontal escalation by the US and a resulting military conflict that might involve Japan and China on the other side. It should also be noted that Soviet divisions in Asia increased from 46 in 1982 to 52 in 1983. Since Sino-Soviet tension gradually improved during this period, this increase must have been related to strategic competition with the US rather than intended against China.

It should be noted, however, that the purpose of the Soviet military buildup in the 1980s was reactive and defensive rather than offensive and provocative, as the buildup in the 1970s had been. This can be seen from the second new direction taken by the Soviet leadership in the early 1980s. Previously, the Soviet military was actively utilized as an important instrument to aid Third World revolutions. But since 1980 the Soviet leadership toned down the role of the military for this purpose. This followed from their fear that regional conflicts came to be

fraught with the danger of escalation to a military superpower conflict.³²

While the Soviet Union stepped up its military buildup, it also actively sought measures, as the third new direction, to reduce military tensions in the region by proposing Asian CBMs.³³

The last, probably most important step taken by the Soviet Union was its initiative to improve relations with China. With the advent of the Reagan Administration, Sino-US relations showed signs of strain over US weapons sales to Taiwan.³⁴ At this juncture, Brezhnev made overtures to China in his Tashkent speech in March, 1982, to begin discussions for improvement of Sino-Soviet relations. Apparently having reexamined the implications of the mounting military tension in the Far East that would not create favorable conditions for its own domestic reform, China decided in 1982 to adopt a new independent foreign policy distancing itself from the West and seeking limited rapprochement with the Soviet Union. China's new direction was not immediately clear, as she imposed the three obstacles on the Soviet Union for normalization of relations--withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Sino-Soviet border and from Mongolia, withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, and suspension of Soviet support of the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia.

Thus, it is important to recognize that the power balance in Asia in the early 1980s gradually changed under the surface of seemingly intensified bipolarity.

II. New Emerging Factors in the Late 1980s

1. Need for a New Framework

The assumptions that were valid in the late 1970s and the early 1980s can no longer be taken for granted, as new factors have emerged in international relations in Asia in the late 1980s, interjecting complexities that did not exist in the earlier decade. These factors are likely to accelerate into the 1990s and beyond, but we are intellectually unprepared to comprehend the new emerging reality. The old habit of seeing the complex Asian reality in bipolar vision persists, and this framework, in my opinion, no longer serves as an adequate basis for scholarly analysis and policy formulation.

The following can be considered crucial factors that make the present situation qualitatively different from the previous decade:

- (a) Gorbachev's new foreign policy initiative;
- (b) Sino-Soviet rapprochement;
- (c) US-Japan economic frictions;
- (d) political change in key Asian NICs and other developing countries; and
- (e) pressure for economic reform in Asian socialist countries.

The list shows nothing new, as each feature has been discussed widely. The difficulty we face, however, is that all these

factors are mutually interrelated, but no one has attempted to see the interrelationships among these factors. For instance, numerous articles and books have been written on Gorbachev's Asian initiative as well as on US-Japan economic frictions; but no one, as far as I know, has discussed how US-Japanese economic frictions will affect Gorbachev's Asian policy and vice versa. It is important, therefore, to design a new framework with which to be able to measure the interrelationships of these factors in the overall dynamics of international relations in Asia.

2. General Characteristics of Gorbachev's Foreign Policy

With regard to Gorbachev's foreign policy in general, two aspects should be emphasized. First, Gorbachev's foreign policy is "a direct outgrowth of his domestic priorities."³⁵ Gorbachev considers his domestic reforms the most urgent task, as he has said on many occasions that without carrying out the reforms the Soviet Union would lose all characteristics worthy of a great power. It is important to stress that the two are closely connected. Reform is not only the key to domestic revitalization, but it is essential to sustain the Soviet Union's international role. While Gorbachev needs a conducive international environment to ensure success in his domestic reform,³⁶ he has to create such an environment without jeopardizing the major strategic gains of the past. There are inherent tensions between the two objectives, and hence an important source of internal conflict.

In general, Gorbachev's policy aims to establish stability in the international environment. It wishes to prevent a further arms race by concluding arms control agreements with the US. It will be interested in reducing tensions and conflicts that might lead to diversion of Soviet resources away from domestic priorities. It will more actively seek rapprochement with more established members of the international community rather than flirt with revolutionary regimes bent on disrupting the status quo.³⁷ In the Third World, Gorbachev's policy will be characterized by constriction, avoiding expansionism.³⁸ In these respects, Gorbachev's foreign policy will offer us an opportunity to establish a stable international environment, with the prospect of a reduced level of military competition and an increased level of East-West dialogue.

The "new thinking" that has emerged in Gorbachev's foreign policy should not be dismissed simply as a cosmetic change or mere rhetoric. In a nutshell, the new thinking is reduced to two concepts: interdependence and mutual security.³⁹ We must recognize that the new thinking is closely connected with a profound transformation of broader intellectual ferment. In the background of the new thinking, there is a new awareness that the traditional framework offered by the Stalinist legacy has outlived its usefulness, and therefore a new approach must be created. The new thinking emphasizes the existence of the world community that transcends the differences of social systems.⁴⁰ It also rejects the traditional essentialist approach that emphasizes the malevol-

ent nature of imperialism.⁴¹ The new thinking, therefore, represents more than a tactical and cosmetic change in Soviet foreign policy.

In order to assess the significance of Gorbachev's foreign policy, it might be useful to think of the changes in priorities in Soviet foreign policy objectives in the framework of the objective tree as employed by Michael MccGwire.⁴² The main objectives of Soviet foreign policy can be summarized as follows: (1) avoid world war; (2) protect the national security of the Soviet Union; (3) protect the security of its allies; (4) expand Soviet world influence; (5) reduce influence of the West in the world; (6) increase trade; (7) establish stability in the world order; (8) support international communist and national liberation movements; and (9) remove Chinese influence in international communist and national liberation movements. Some of these objectives obviously conflict with each other, and the Soviet Union has adjusted its priorities, selecting some of the objectives as top priorities and relegating others to subordinate status.

It should be recognized that some of the objectives--such as avoiding world war, increasing trade, and establishing stability--can coincide with our foreign policy objectives, while others are in obvious conflict. It can be said that, although Brezhnev's foreign policy promoted avoidance of world war as the top priority in US-Soviet relations, while pursuing an increase in trade with the West and the establishment of stability in Europe through its

detente policy, its major objectives in other areas were basically in conflict with the objectives of the Western capitalist countries.

Gorbachev's new thinking represents a major rearrangement of these objectives. Avoidance of world war has become the supreme objective in Gorbachev's foreign policy to which other objectives are subordinated. For this purpose, establishment of stability is given a more prominent place, while such objectives as removing Western influence and support of international communist and national liberation movements are relegated to a lower status. Also competition with China in the hegemony of international revolutionary movements has diminished in importance to a negligible level. The necessity for domestic economic reform, however, gives impetus to move trade with capitalist countries to a prominent place, while this objective also helps to serve the higher objectives of the avoidance of world war and the establishment of stability.

Nevertheless, it would be naive to think that the Russian polar bear has suddenly become a teddy bear that rolls over and says: scratch my tummy. Sources of conflict and competition between East and West will continue to persist. The Soviet Union will continue to protect the gains made in the past. It will continue to play a hard-nosed game in Realpolitik with the cold calculation of cost and benefits, designed to split the Western alliance, weaken western influence in the Third World, and expand its influence. Nor can we expect that the new thinking will

become a solid basis for actual implementation of Soviet foreign policy. Until the new thinking is solidly anchored as the basis of Soviet foreign policy, we can expect fierce internal struggles waged between its supporters and opponents. There are some indications that at least some in the military are voicing opposition to the new thinking.⁴³ Furthermore, even if it is accepted in theory, more struggles and conflicts will be waged in the process of its implementation into actual policies. Each policy issue has its unique antecedents, while reactions and policies the Soviet Union faces from its adversaries are different in each case. Thus, we must expect Soviet foreign policy in the next five to ten years to be full of dynamic changes and zigzags, and the implications of these changes are likely to be different from one another. Our challenge is to understand the domestic source of these changes, while discerning carefully the implications of each and every change. This task will be much more difficult than the task we faced during the Brezhnev era.

3. Gorbachev's Asian Policy

While some aspects of Gorbachev's Asian policy can be viewed as a continuation and expansion of Soviet policy that began in 1980 under Brezhnev, other aspects represent a completely new departure from Brezhnev's policy. Gorbachev's attempt at rapprochement with China and his search for a comprehensive security system in Asia may belong to the first category, while his attempts to reduce the role of the military factor in Soviet

foreign policy and to seek more active economic and political relations with major powers in the region are new elements. Although his policies toward China as well as toward Asian security may be an extension of Brezhnev's policy, the extent to which Gorbachev has moved the original position of these policies is so far-reaching that even in these policies Gorbachev can be said to have opened up new ground. On the whole, Gorbachev's Asian policy is radically different from that pursued by Brezhnev.

(a) Gorbachev's Vladivostok Speech

Gorbachev delivered a speech in Vladivostok on July 28, 1986, in which he laid down a basic outline of new Soviet policy toward Asia.⁴⁴

The Vladivostok speech began with an explanation of economic reform. Moving on then to the importance of the Soviet Far East in economic reform, Gorbachev in unflattering language criticized the inadequacies of the Soviet Far East in fulfilling its share. His message was clear: Do not rely on Moscow, develop on your own by taking advantage of rich natural resources, fish and other ocean resources, and access to wide open foreign markets. He emphasized the need to design new approaches to increase foreign trade so that Vladivostok would become the window to the Pacific, and specifically mentioned such possibilities as establishing production cooperatives, joint ventures, and a special export base, and opening Vladivostok to foreigners. It is important to

note that his Asian policy began thus with its domestic root to develop the economic base of the Soviet Far East.

Gorbachev then moved on to foreign policy. Before he began the part devoted specifically to Asian policy, he made a few comments on Soviet foreign policy in general, in which he emphasized the concepts of interdependence and mutual security. It is interesting to note that the concept of a world community, and the notion that the military-industrial complex is not all-powerful in imperialism, were already visible in this speech. In this sense, it is possible to say that the Vladivostok speech was the application of the "new thinking" to Asian policy.

As for the part devoted to the Asia-Pacific region, he first affirmed that the Soviet Union is also an Asian nation with its territory stretching from the Urals to the Far East. He then recognized the importance of Asia as the most vital part of the world with a great potential for progress. He stated that the fate of the world would depend on what form the future socio-economic and political development of this region would take and how the process of international relations in this region would develop.

The portion of the speech devoted to the Asia-Pacific region was divided into two parts: references to specific countries and regions, and a part dealing with Asian security. As for the specific countries, it is obvious that China occupied the most important place in the speech. Gorbachev identified China as one of the socialist countries, and stated that the Soviet people

viewed with understanding and respect the modernization attempts being carried out by the Chinese Communist Party, and that due to common interests in the reforms, the countries could cooperate with each other, particularly in economic spheres. He proposed joint development of the Amur, and declared that the official border of the river could be established along the main navigational channel, thus accepting the argument insisted on by the Chinese. Furthermore, he supported the Chinese proposal for construction of the Urumqi-Kazakhstan railroad, and proposed a joint space program, in which Chinese cosmonauts could be trained.

The most important part of his speech, however, consisted of his reference to the three obstacles. As for the troops in Mongolia, he affirmed that the Soviet and Mongolian governments were negotiating for the withdrawal of a substantial number of Soviet troops from Mongolia. With regard to Afghanistan, Gorbachev officially declared that the Soviet Union would withdraw six divisions from Afghanistan by the end of 1986. But when it came to the Cambodian question, he dismissed it as a problem of normalization of relations between the two sovereign countries of Vietnam and China, and limited himself to rather pale remarks that he wished that these two socialist countries could restore peace and resume dialogue, and that there were no obstacles for establishing mutually acceptable relations between Indochina and ASEAN. This is the first concrete reference ever made by a Soviet leader to the three obstacles. Although Gorbachev's speech did not offer solutions, at least it showed a step in the right

direction. The immediate reaction of the Chinese was to dismiss it as a sham, since it did not address itself to what they considered to be the most crucial question of the three--Soviet support of the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. The subsequent development of Sino-Soviet relations indicates, however, that the Vladivostok speech was a turning point for a rapid movement toward rapprochement between the two countries.

It is also important to note that Gorbachev was flexible enough to accept at least some of the border claims that had been insisted on by the Chinese. This disproves the view widely put by Western and Japanese specialists that the Soviet Union will never agree to return even a square inch of the territories that it took from other nations for fear that such a concession would inevitably result in irredentist demands from all directions.

As for Japan, Gorbachev's speech became more general and less specific than it had been in the part devoted to China. He referred to Japan as the "power of supreme significance that accomplished in a short span of time incredible achievements in industry, trade, education, science and technology." Japan's non-nuclear policy is highly evaluated. Japan was the first victim of atomic weapons, and officially adopts three non-nuclear principles, although these principles, together with the peaceful constitution, have a clear tendency to be ignored in recent years. Gorbachev stated that Japanese-Soviet relations were moving in a better direction, and even promised that "the exchange of visits at a higher level" than the foreign ministerial level would take

place in the future. He stated that better cooperation would be needed "on a healthy, realistic basis in a quiet atmosphere, not burdened by the problems of the past." While he faced the most sensitive issues with regard to China, when dealing with Japan he avoided the northern territorial issue, which was the most important issue between the two countries at least from the Japanese point of view. This shows that either the Soviet Union had not changed its view on the northern territorial issue, or that it had not resolved internal differences on this issue. At any rate, in view of the space allotted in the speech as well as the lack of concrete proposals to improve relations, the Vladivostok speech demonstrated that Japan was placed below China in the order of priorities of Soviet policy.

Even the US was given more space than Japan in Gorbachev's speech. He recognized that the US was a bona fide Pacific power with legitimate economic and political interests in the region, without whom it would be impossible to resolve problems of security and cooperation in the region. In Gorbachev's opinion, however, the US was reinforcing its military power under the myth of "Soviet threat," while demonstrating no willingness to talk about such important issues. As for accusations about the Soviet military buildup in Asia, Gorbachev declared: "We are not doing nor will we do anything more than respond by the minimal requirement of our defense, and the defense of our friends and allies, particularly in view of American activities near our borders and the borders of our allies." Further, he stated that the Soviet

Union would support abolition of all military alliances and withdrawal of all foreign military bases from Asia and the Pacific Ocean.

The Vladivostok speech devoted small space to ASEAN. Praising its economic viability, Gorbachev affirmed a Soviet desire to expand cooperation with the ASEAN countries. Also he referred to the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, and expressed his willingness to cooperate with the organization. Compared to the Soviet Government's statement on Measures to Expand Economic Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region issued in April, 1986, in which the Pacific Rim Community was denounced as an organization likely to develop into a military bloc, the Vladivostok speech represented a significant change in the direction of accepting economic cooperation with international organizations such as the PECC.⁴⁵

Socialist countries such as Mongolia, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cambodia were the first countries to be mentioned in the speech, but the cursory remarks given to them indicated a lack of importance at least in the context of this particular speech.

The last part of his speech was devoted to measures to ensure Asian security. First, Gorbachev proposed that a Pacific security conference similar to the Helsinki conference, be held in Hiroshima. This was a repetition of a proposal he had originally announced when Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi visited Moscow in March, 1985. But in the Vladivostok speech, Gorbachev went on to explain his approach to regional security in detail, dividing it

into the following five issues: (1) solving regional conflicts, specifically, the conflicts in Afghanistan, Indochina, and the Korean Peninsula; (2) denuclearization and creation of nuclear free zones in the Asia Pacific region; (3) restricting fleet activities and ASW activities in the Pacific Ocean; (4) reducing conventional forces in Asia to the level of reasonable sufficiency; and (5) adopting confidence building measures, including the policy of no use of force in the region, and preventing international terrorism.⁴⁶

All in all the Vladivostok speech provided the basic framework for Soviet policy toward Asia.

(b) Changes after the Vladivostok Speech

It is one thing to declare one's intentions, but it is another matter to implement one's intentions into actual policies. Despite high ideals enunciated in the Vladivostok speech, tangible results in real policies have so far been limited.

But changes have occurred, and it is important to recognize them. First, there have been personnel changes in foreign policy decision making bodies. At the center Gromyko was replaced by Shevardnadze as Foreign Minister; Dobrynin was put in charge of the International Department of the Central Committee; and Yakovlev, as a member of both the Politburo and the secretariat, plays an important part in foreign policy. A series of important ambassadorial replacements took place, including China and Japan. In general, those who support the new thinking are in ascendancy,

while the champions of the old thinking such as Kapitsa and Rakhmanin are gone, although the notorious symbol of Soviet intransigence toward Japan, Ivan Kovalenko, still retains his position as deputy director of the International Department.⁴⁷ As for specialists on the Third World, hard-liner Rostislav Ul'yanovsky is gone, and Karen Brutents' influence is rising in the International Department.⁴⁸

As in personnel, there have been changes in the foreign policy mechanism, particularly in the foreign ministry. New organizational arrangements have been streamlined to fit the changing realities of the Asia-Pacific regions.⁴⁹ Academics and foreign policy experts have been brought in to advise the policy-makers more closely; a permanent advisory body consisting of such experts is said to have been created directly under the minister of foreign affairs.⁵⁰

In substantive policies, the single most important policy change is an attempt to achieve rapprochement with China. This process has not been completed, but such remarkable progress has taken place that the dynamics of international relations in Asia have been significantly altered. This is an important factor worth discussing separately below.

Beyond Sino-Soviet relations, more active efforts by the Soviet Union than ever recognized in the past have been discernible in the attempt to establish political and economic relations with the region. Shevardnadze visited Japan in January, 1986, the first Soviet foreign minister to set foot in Japan for ten years.

Japanese Foreign Minister Abe visited Moscow in April. Since then the foreign ministerial conference between Japan and the Soviet Union, which had been suspended since 1978, has been resumed.⁵¹ There has been an upsurge in bilateral visits between Soviet officials and their counterparts in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand.⁵² Shevardnadze also visited Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Thailand, and Australia, in March, 1987.⁵³

The Soviet Union is showing interest in joining international economic organizations. Notably, it has requested admission to the PECC (Pacific Economic Cooperation Council). Soviet representatives were allowed to participate in PECC's 1987 Vancouver conference as observers, and will be invited with guest status, which is higher than observer status, in the forthcoming Osaka conference in May, 1988. Soviet observers have also attended a conference of the ADB (Asian Development Bank), although they decided not to join as a regular member for the time being. They are also actively seeking bilateral trade agreements with various countries in the region.

Another important aspect of Gorbachev's policy is to strengthen existing ties with North Korea and Vietnam. Economic as well as military cooperation with North Korea is expanding. As for Vietnam, the Soviets are increasing their financial assistance to prop up the Vietnamese economy, as their military capability at Cam Ranh Bay and Danang is being reinforced. The balance between commitment to their socialist allies and the need to expand their

influence in the region is posing a difficult dilemma to the Soviet leadership, a topic to which we shall return later.

(c) Problems in Implementation of Gorbachev's Asian Objectives

Despite these changes, however, Gorbachev's Asian policy has not changed substantially, with the exception of his policy toward China. Many specialists conclude that changes have occurred only in style or that changes are merely cosmetic rather than substantial. I would argue that Gorbachev's intentions are real, but that problems in implementing them are difficult and perhaps intractable. I would like to examine here four reasons that will impede successful implementation of Gorbachev's intentions.

(1) Asian Security

One of Gorbachev's objectives in Asia is to seek some form of security system in Asia, whereby to reduce the level of the arms race in Asia and lower the possibility of military confrontations. There are a number of difficulties in achieving this objective.

The first difficulty is that although the Vladivostok speech showed some sign that the Soviets were taking a more realistic approach to Asian reality, Gorbachev is still basically applying to Asia the security formulae that were developed in Europe.⁵⁴ This can be seen from his proposal to hold a Helsinki-type security conference in Asia as well as his ideas on Asian INF and conventional arms control. Soviet commentators have recently voiced their concern with NATOization of the US-Japan-South Korean

military alliances, and this perception is reflected in Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech as well. Although the US and Japan, and the US and South Korea have increased military cooperation, defense cooperation among these three countries is far from a military alliance similar to NATO. This misperception may in turn explain Soviet proclivity to apply the arms control formula developed in Europe to Asia without much thought. As Hiroshi Kimura argues, the "political, diplomatic, and military picture in Asia and the Pacific is far more complicated than it is in Europe," and security interests of Asian nations "converge, conflict, and sometimes clash" in complicated ways even among those nations in opposition to the Soviet Union.⁵⁵ Convening such a security conference as proposed by Gorbachev would not solve immediate dangers that confront Asia at present. It may be, as some conclude, that "Asia is better off without any form of collective organization on the security issue."⁵⁶

The arms control regime as expressed in the form of the SALT and INF agreements will be difficult to agree on in Asia. Arms control between the US and the USSR that affects Asia will be integrally connected with arms control not only in strategic systems but also conventional arms. It would be impossible to separate Asia from the process of arms control negotiations in overall systems, and arms control in Asia is not likely to be achieved before agreements on strategic arms and on conventional arms in Europe are concluded. The first arms control agreement most likely to be concluded will be strategic arms control. Even

if a 50% reduction of strategic nuclear arms is agreed upon by the US and the USSR, however, it may not directly lead to the relaxation of military tensions in the Far East. Such reduction will inevitably increase the importance of the SLBM force of each side. On the Soviet side, the relative value of the Petropavlovsk-based SLBM force will be increased. So will be the necessity of ensuring its survivability. Thus strategic arms control agreement could actually increase military tensions in the Far East. As for conventional arms control, it is unlikely to be concluded in the immediate future even in Europe. Thus, as long as one sees Asian security through the prism of the security system developed in Europe, the establishment of a security system in Asia will remain elusive.⁵⁷

Gorbachev himself seems to be aware of the complexities of the Asian situation, as he referred to "diversities" and "complexities" of the Asia-Pacific region in his Vladivostok speech.⁵⁸ The division of security matters into five different issues in the Vladivostok speech may be interpreted as a step in search of a security system that fits the Asian situation. The first agenda given by Gorbachev is to solve regional conflicts in Afghanistan, Cambodia, and the Korean Peninsula. The first two questions directly involve the Soviet Union. As long as these conflicts persist, the Soviet call for Asian security will continue to lack persuasiveness. Thus, it is imperative for the Soviet Union to solve these conflicts in order to move further to create the kind of Asian security system it desires. Nevertheless, there are

still a number of difficulties ahead for the ultimate solution of these conflicts.

Denuclearization, restriction of naval activities, and conventional arms control are Gorbachev's second, third, and fourth agenda items in Asian security. Difficulties in achieving these objectives stem from the asymmetrical military positions and global strategies of the US and the USSR. The US takes the forward deployment strategy with its superior naval force in the Pacific, while the landlocked Soviet Union is basically confined within its narrow defense perimeters near its own territory. For the Soviet Union to seek equality and parity in the Asian theater is to ask the US to give up its superiority in the region, a demand that the U.S. will never accept willingly. The Soviet Union will have to force the US to negotiate to gain concessions in all these three areas. There are basically two ways of achieving this. First, the Soviet Union could put pressure on the US by increasing its military power to match the US capability. For instance, the Soviet Union could deploy SLCMs in its surface ships and submarines, or catch up with the US in ASW technology. But this method is counter to the basic ideas of the new thinking, while it is more likely to intensify the arms race, and unlikely to win friends among the Soviet Union's Asian neighbors. Another method is to use political pressure by isolating the US from other Asian nations and by appealing to public opinion in the region. In any case, in these three areas conflict and competition between the US and the USSR will be unavoidable.

Thus, it would be easier for the Soviet Union to reduce the level of the arms race with China than with the US and Japan. The reduction of Soviet troops along the Sino-Soviet border and from Mongolia will contribute to lowering the level of conventional forces, and it will serve as pressure on the US and Japan for arms control.

The most likely area where the Soviet Union and other Asia-Pacific nations including the US could find a common ground will be Gorbachev's fifth agenda item of CBMs and crisis management. In order to create momentum for arms control in Asia, the Soviet Union is expected to concentrate on this area in the near future.

In any case, Gorbachev's objective to establish an Asian security system will be difficult to achieve. Despite its professed goal of lowering its military power to the level of reasonable sufficiency, the Soviet Union will find it necessary to continue its buildup if only to respond to the perceived threat from the US and its allies.

(2) Japanese-Soviet Relations

Significant improvement in Japanese-Soviet relations is fundamental if the Soviet Union wishes to make substantial inroads in Asian international politics. Substantial improvement in relations between the two countries is unlikely, however. There are a number of reasons for this pessimism.

First, if China has three obstacles for normalization of Sino-Soviet relations, Japan has imposed four obstacles: the four

northern islands. It is unlikely that the northern territorial issue will be resolved to the satisfaction of both countries.⁵⁹ Given the military significance of the islands, it would be difficult for the Soviet Union to agree to return all the islands. The maximum concession one could expect from the Soviet Union would be the return of the two islands Habomais and Shikotan, but it is doubtful that this solution would satisfy the Japanese or that it would result in marked improvement in Japanese-Soviet relations.

Second, there are no discernible signs that the Japanese foreign policy elite that they recognize the need to reexamine Japanese-Soviet relations fundamentally. In fact, Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union has been held hostage to the northern territorial issue, and there is little likelihood that Japanese policy-makers will substantially change this situation. Thus, no initiatives on the part of the Soviet Union short of drastic concessions on the territorial issue are likely to be effective in changing Japanese intransigence.

Third, the more serious economic frictions between the US and Japan become, the more likely Japan is to accommodate itself with US desires in areas where her vital interests are not involved, and Japanese-Soviet relations are one such area in which Japan can well afford to subordinate to her more vital interests in maintaining and managing her alliance with the US.

Japan will be forced to change its position toward the Soviet Union only when the cost of continuing the present policy becomes

higher than its benefit. Thus, the most effective Soviet policy would be to isolate Japan internationally by achieving rapprochement with China and improving relations with the US. But the attempt to isolate Japan would not mean a return to a policy of counterproductive intransigence and high-handedness reminiscent of Gromyko-Kovalenko days. The Soviet Union will continue to seek opportunities for incremental improvement with correctness, making no substantial concessions and without expecting drastic change of policy from the Japanese government, but hoping that such patience will eventually sway public opinion in its favor.

(3) Economic Difficulty

The fact that Brezhnev's Asian policy was "perversely negative, and perversely military," as it was described at a recent conference, was in a way not a matter of choice. There was no other means available to the Soviet Union except for the military means.

This assertion is perhaps best understood by contrast with Soviet-West German relations. Soviet dealings with Western Europe have a long history going back to tsarist Russia. Soviet economic strength almost exclusively concentrates on European Russia, and the Soviet Union is drawn into European political and economic activities by virtue of holding East European countries in its sphere of influence.

Russia's involvement in Asian affairs, however, has always had a distinct military overtone. To the Chinese Russia has been,

even during the Soviet period, primarily an imperialist power bent on annexation of Chinese territory. Russia and Japan have been involved in four major wars in this century. For the past two centuries there have been only brief periods in which Russia maintained peace with either China or Japan. Moreover, despite the claim that the Soviet Union is an Asian power, this is true only because the European-dominated state includes within it a vast but relatively insignificant territory in its Asian part. To be sure, natural resources buried under the permafrost are rich, but the economic costs of exploring and obtaining these resources are extremely high.⁶⁰ The brain and heart of the Soviet Union are European, and Siberia (except West Siberia, which is closely linked to European Russia in its economic structure and geographical location) and the Soviet Far East still remain an appendage to the European part of the Soviet Union from which they drain precious resources.⁶¹

Soviet hopes for increased power in Asia depend on whether the Soviet Union can expect to play an active economic role in Asia. In 1985 the Asian countries east of Burma occupied only 6.7% of the total volume of Soviet trade, and more than half of this (4.1% of total trade) was occupied by trade with the Asian socialist countries. Trade with capitalist-oriented Asian countries thus represents only 2.6%, while the share of trade with ASEAN countries occupied merely 0.6%. The structure of the trade also presents a problem: while the capitalist-oriented countries in Asia occupy respectively 1.3% and 3.9% of the total volume of

Soviet export and import, the comparable figures with the socialist countries are 5.3% and 2.8%.⁶² With this negligible economic performance, the Soviet Union cannot expect to be a major player in non-military international relations in Asia. Whether it will succeed in increasing its economic role in this region will depend on the outcome of Gorbachev's economic reform. This outcome will not become clear until the next century, and most Western specialists on the Soviet economy are skeptical about the possibility of success even well into the next century.

For Soviet policy toward Asia, the most crucial aspect of the economic reform is its drive for economic development of Eastern Siberia and the Soviet Far East. In fact, Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech devotes much of its space to the importance of autonomous development of these regions. If the success of Gorbachev's overall economic reform is in doubt, the possibility of significant economic development in Eastern Siberia and the Soviet Far East is even more remote, since it is unlikely that with competing demands for resource allocations the development of Eastern Siberia and the Far East will be placed among the top priorities. Moreover, unless local regions acquire semi-complete autonomy in how to develop their own regions--including joint ventures, acceptance of foreign capital, establishment of a foreign trade zone, and foreign trade itself--without approval from Moscow, development of the Soviet Far East will be impossible. The slowness with which Moscow recognizes local autonomy can be illustrated by the fact that Gorbachev's promise of opening

Vladivostok to foreigners has not been fulfilled to this day. It is more likely that the Soviet Far East will continue to be a miserable appendage to European Russia, being drained of national resources, rather than a window to Asia attracting foreign investment for economic development in the region.

(4) Conflict between Past Commitments and New Initiative

Another problem confronting the Gorbachev regime in implementing the new Asian initiative is a conflict between past commitments and the new initiative. Korea and Vietnam are cases in point.

It seems clear that the Soviet Union is interested in preserving peace in the Korean peninsula and expanding its trade relations with South Korea. It has to pursue these objectives without alienating North Korea, lest North Korea should lean too heavily toward China, or the erratic North Korean leadership should take dangerous actions that might lead to military confrontations of the major powers. Since Kim Il Sung's visit to Moscow in April, 1984, there have been disturbing signs of increasing military cooperation between North Korea and the Soviet Union. Visits of high officials have become frequent, including Aliev's visit in August, 1985, and Shevardnadze's visit to Pyongyang in January, 1986. Kim Il Sung visited Moscow again in October, 1986, and met with Gorbachev.⁶³ As mutual visits became frequent, the volume of Soviet denunciations against the Washington-Tokyo-Seoul military alliance was also raised. North Korea succeeded in

acquiring modern Soviet weapons including more than 40 MiG-23 fighters, SA3 SAM missiles, Scud missiles, and Mi2 helicopters, presumably to counter the deployment of F-16s in South Korea.⁶⁴ In return the Soviets were granted overflight rights over North Korean airspace and fleet access to North Korean ports, including Nampo on the West Coast.⁶⁵ Since 1984, Soviet-North Korean economic cooperation has significantly strengthened as well. The Soviet Union is North Korea's main supplier of industrial equipment and raw materials, and is aiding construction of eight major projects.⁶⁶

Closer ties with North Korea, however, present problems for other priorities in Soviet Asian policy. Soviet-North Korean military cooperation will not contribute to the professed Soviet objective of lowering tensions in the Korean Peninsula. Besides, it fans the Chinese suspicion of Soviet "hegemonism" precisely at the time when the Soviet Union is trying to mend fences with China. In fact, presumably to counter the Soviet fleet's access to the West coast port in North Korea, China for the first time invited the US fleet to Tsing-tao in November, 1986, and a small-scale Sino-US joint naval exercise was conducted in the South China Sea in January, 1986.⁶⁷

Increasing ties with North Korea, particularly military cooperation, are also at cross purposes with the Soviet desire to cultivate relations with South Korea. The Soviet Union decided to participate in the Seoul Olympics, despite North Korea's boycott. Newly elected South Korean President Roh Tae Woo has made clear

his intention to improve relations with both China and the Soviet Union, and the economic benefits which could be derived from increasing ties with South Korea are obvious to the Soviet Union. Moreover, the recent bizarre revelation of the North Korean terrorists who acted on the instructions of Kim Jong-Il to bomb the KAL passenger plane is bound to isolate North Korea from the world community. It is also embarrassing for the Soviet Union, which denounces international terrorism, to support North Korea. How the Soviet Union will deal with the erratic leadership of North Korea and how it will balance the conflicting priorities involved will pose difficult choices for the Soviet leadership.

The conflict in Indochina is no less intractable. It is obvious that the Soviet Union is vitally interested in the solution of the conflict, since the continuing presence of Vietnamese troops in Cambodia poses a major stumbling block to the improvement of relations with China and the ASEAN nations. The Soviet Union has increasing contacts with Indonesia, which is the initiator of the so-called cocktail formula of negotiations. A quiet behind-the-scene manoeuvre by Moscow to induce the Hen Samrin government to sit at the negotiating table with Prince Sihanouk in Paris can also be surmised.⁶⁸ But Soviet interest in solution of the conflict must be weighed against its wish for continued access to the valuable real property in Cam Ranh Bay and Danang. The desperate condition of the Vietnamese economy, which totally depends on Soviet financial assistance, together with the emergence of a new leadership in Vietnam may give the impression

that Soviet leverage in Vietnam might be increasing.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the Vietnamese are proud people, who harbor under the surface resentment and hostility against the European Soviets. Already Vietnamese overtures to capitalist countries for financial and technological help are visible. Thus, the Soviet Union has to tread carefully on the tightrope between moving cautiously toward solution of the Cambodian conflict and maintaining the fragile trust of Vietnam.

4. New Dynamics of International Relations in Asia

Gorbachev's foreign policy has injected a new element in the dynamics of international relations in Asia. As I have discussed above, although tangible results are not yet visible, the direction in which the Soviet Union is beginning to move in Asian policies has significant implications for at least two reasons. First, it seeks to reduce the military dimension of Soviet policy toward Asia, and second, it aims to establish closer political and economic interactions with the Asian community. The significance of this direction cannot be adequately appreciated, as long as we continue to view the Soviet role in Asia only in the bipolar vision of the superpower conflict. It must be understood also in the context of the new dynamics of international relations in Asia.

5. Sino-Soviet Relations

For Gorbachev's new Asian initiative, China is a crucial

element. Sino-Soviet relations under Gorbachev represent thus far both success and failure. To many observers, it is a failure since Gorbachev has not succeeded in solving the three obstacles set by the Chinese as preconditions for normalization of relations. It is clear that behind these three obstacles there exist profound political and geostrategic differences and conflict between China and the Soviet Union. I would argue that even if the obstacles are resolved, these differences will not disappear, and that the PRC and the Soviet Union will continue to view each other as a primary security threat, even if they no longer fear an imminent military attack. It is this inherent political and geostrategic conflict between the two countries, not the three obstacles themselves, that precludes the possibility of such a Sino-Soviet alliance as existed in the 1950s.

It is hard to believe, therefore, that Gorbachev's objective is to establish a Sino-Soviet alliance which aims to draw China from the Western orbit into its own sphere of influence. The most realistic objectives for Gorbachev's China policy are to restore relations to the normal level expected of two neighboring states, reduce tensions between the two countries, and separate China from the anti-Soviet encirclement formed in the late 1970s among the US, Japan, and China. In this respect, Gorbachev's policy has been fairly successful. I would argue that Sino-Soviet rapprochement has already gone far enough to change qualitatively the dynamics of international relations in Asia.

In retrospect, in the 1970s it was not the United States and Japan that took advantage of the "China card" to contain the Soviet Union, but rather China that took advantage of the inflated perception of the Soviet threat by the United States and Japan in propelling her own status to a place in the sun in international politics.⁷⁰ In the 1980s, Sino-Soviet rapprochement has progressed rapidly behind the facade of the three obstacles. The process of rapprochement can be divided into two stages. The first stage was a quiet, slow probing process from 1982 to 1986. It is important to point out that Sino-Soviet rapprochement did not suddenly begin with Gorbachev but had already begun under Brezhnev. The first initiative was taken by Brezhnev in his Tashkent speech in March, 1982, in which he recognized that China was a socialist country and proclaimed Soviet willingness to begin discussions to improve relations with China. The two countries began political consultations in August of that year. The 12th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party made an important decision to depart from the previous Chinese foreign policy that had leaned heavily toward the West. It decided to improve China's relations with the Soviet Union, while setting the three obstacles to normalization. The second stage began in 1986, as the tempo of rapprochement suddenly quickened after Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech.⁷¹ As the Soviet Union is moving towards solving the three obstacles, we may begin to see a third stage of rapprochement in the near future.

Since 1982 both countries have slowly improved relations

through four routes: economic relations, cultural exchange, political consultations, and border negotiations. Trade and economic relations have expanded steadily over the past several years. In 1985 Sino-Soviet trade expanded to \$1.9 billion, a tenfold increase from the 1981 level. In 1986, it further increased to 2.6 billion.⁷² Although the share of Sino-Soviet trade in the total trade of each country is still small, it has great potential, since the trade structure is mutually compatible in contrast to Sino-Japanese and Soviet-Japanese trade. Moreover, it is a barter trade that requires no foreign currency. Particularly attractive will be border trade, which has expanded tremendously in the past several years. Expansion is also expected in joint projects involving Chinese northeastern regions and the Soviet Far East.⁷³ By 1990 Sino-Soviet trade is projected to grow to \$6 billion, somewhat less than Chinese-US trade in 1985.⁷⁴ It is important also to point out that the two countries have concluded a series of economic and technological cooperation agreements that will be in effect for the next five to ten years. Thus, Sino-Soviet economic cooperation already has a long-term framework solidly in place.⁷⁵

In the cultural sphere, more than 200 Chinese exchange students are staying in the Soviet Union, and various forms of cultural cooperation are taking place. In terms of state-to-state relations, the number of high-level contacts between the two countries has increased substantially, as vice-foreign ministerial conferences have been institutionalized. These political consul-

tations have undergone a qualitative change since the Vladivostok speech, as the Soviet side agreed for the first time to place the Cambodian issue on the agenda, and it has agreed also to open negotiations on the border issue.⁷⁶ China in turn has clarified its position on the Cambodian issue, stating that the obstacle is Soviet support of the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, and that Soviet access to the bases in Vietnam is a bilateral issue between Vietnam and the Soviet Union that does not constitute an obstacle. Sino-Soviet border negotiations began in 1987. Although a final settlement still seems remote, a basic understanding was already reached at the second meeting in August, 1987.⁷⁷

We should have a clear understanding of the meaning of the three obstacles. While they certainly represent the real and basic geostrategic differences between China and the Soviet Union, they also serve as a diplomatic instrument for China to assuage the fears of the US and Japan and also to extract concessions from the Soviet Union by demonstrating China's leaning toward the West.⁷⁸

In the next five to ten years the three obstacles themselves might have a chance of being removed. There is a definite movement toward Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, while the Cambodian quagmire might be finally moving toward a settlement. The reduction of Soviet troops along the Chinese border to the level that was maintained in the 1960s may be an acceptable solution to the Soviet Union.⁷⁹ Such definite movements toward

solution of the three obstacles will undoubtedly facilitate the process of Sino-Soviet rapprochement.

There are some in Japan and the United States who believe that despite Sino-Soviet rapprochement China is still "tilted" toward the West.⁸⁰ In terms of the number of students China sends abroad, economic relations, and technological and military cooperation, China is certainly "tilted" to the West rather than to the Soviet Union. But this "tilt" should not be confused with a political "tilt" of China toward the West. China has its own foreign policy agenda, and devises its diplomacy skillfully to suit its objectives, which may not coincide with ours.

Moreover, we should be cognizant of the obvious signs of cracks that are appearing in what once seemed to be a solid anti-Soviet coalition among the United States, Japan, and China. Despite the three obstacles, it would be a mistake to believe that China continues to share the same perception of the Soviet threat as the US and Japan do. In fact, China now shares with the Soviet Union the same interest in reducing military tensions in Asia. Moreover, there are signs of increasing tensions between the PRC and Japan and to a lesser degree between the PRC and the US. The PRC now recognizes that the US is another hegemonic power, and voices criticisms of a number of US policies. In particular, China takes a strong stand against SDI. China's relationship with Japan has been rife with even more severe tensions in the past few years, as seen from such issues as China's increasing complaints of trade imbalance, the textbook controversy, the Yasukuni Shrine

issue, and the Japanese government's decision to raise its defense budget beyond the level of one percent of GNP. While in the late 1970s the PRC gave its full-fledged support to the US-Japanese security arrangements, it has now come to view them with suspicion, if not outward criticism. It is also important to note that China and the Soviet Union see each other as belonging to the same socialist system distinct from capitalism. They also increasingly share a mutual affinity stemming from the fundamental domestic reforms on which both countries have embarked.⁸¹

Sino-Soviet rapprochement is producing a profound effect on the dynamics of international relations in Asia. The assumptions that we took for granted in the late 1970s are no longer valid, and we should begin careful reexamination of these assumptions in the new reality of complex multipolarity.

(6) US-Japanese Relations

Another important feature that did not exist in the 1970s is the emergence of US-Japanese economic frictions. These frictions are intractable problems that cannot be quickly solved, because they are rooted in the structural problems of each economy and are deeply connected with domestic politics in each country. The export-oriented Japanese economy recorded a trade surplus of \$101 billion for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987, while the American trade deficit registered an all time high of \$167 billion, of which one third (\$58 billion) was with Japan.⁸² Neither country will allow these frictions to go beyond a certain

critical point, since the degree of interdependence has reached such a point that economic relations between the two countries may aptly be called economic "mutual assured destruction" in which unmanageable economic war would destroy both countries and hence the world economy. Japanese businessmen know how important the US market is, while their US counterparts realize that Japanese capital investment is crucial for the US economy. Nevertheless, within certain limits frictions will assuredly persist and expand.

The most disturbing tendency in recent years is that economic frictions have a distinct tendency to spill over into security areas. There is no reason to expect that this tendency will disappear in the years ahead. In fact, given the increasing political pressure to reduce military spending within the United States, this pressure will surely increase.

There is little possibility of Japan's playing the Soviet card in bargaining with the United States to solve economic frictions. If anything, the Japanese government will accommodate itself as best it can to US pressure in security areas in order to diffuse American demands in the economic sphere. The Toshiba affair and the FSX issue are cases in point.⁸³ Nevertheless, increasing US pressure and Japanese acquiescence might ultimately lead to a significant change in Japanese perceptions of the US and of the US military role in Japan. Various polls indicate a precipitous decline in US popularity among Japanese.⁸⁴ Jiji public opinion polls indicate that since 1985 US popularity has dropped sharply (43% in 1985, 42% in 1986, and 38% in 1987), and

that in 1987 for the first time since the Vietnam War, Switzerland became the most favorite country among Japanese, replacing the U.S. It is interesting to compare this trend with that of the unpopularity of the Soviet Union. Soviet unpopularity peaked in 1984 in the aftermath of the KAL incident (59%), but since then the rate of unpopularity has declined to 55% in 1985, 52% in 1986, and 51% in 1987.⁸⁵

Various polls taken in the US also indicate that a growing number of people regard Japan as a threat to US economic security.⁸⁶ George Packard argues that the US is increasingly adopting a schizophrenic approach to Japan: Japan is simultaneously perceived as a trusted ally and an economic enemy.⁸⁷ The problem is that there exists no integral approach to reconcile these two perceptions.

US-Japanese economic frictions have thus far been discussed as a bilateral economic problem. It is necessary, however, to discuss this issue in the context of the overall dynamics of international relations in Asia, especially in connection with the changing Soviet role.

(7) Asian NICs and Developing Countries

The economic prosperity of Asian NICs and developing countries was one of the most important dynamic factors that contributed to the shift of the world economic balance from Europe to Asia in the 1970s. The challenge in the years ahead is whether

they will be able to maintain political stability while sustaining further economic viability.⁸⁸

In the late 1970s and the early 1980s the Asian NICs and developing countries in ASEAN were either closely aligned with the US or took an anti-Communist stand. Although there were a number of problems, they never reached the point at which the basic bipolarity of international relations would be undermined. But the problems we face in the next decade with regard to the Asian NICs and developing countries are bound to inject a new element into the dynamics of international relations in Asia. The most important problem that these countries face is a period of inevitable political transition. This process has already begun in South Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan, while the problem of succession will become inevitable soon in Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia, perhaps even in Thailand. Several important characteristics of this transition may be pointed out. (a) There is a distinct pattern of change away from authoritarianism and toward democratization of the political process. (b) This process is inevitable, since economic progress has given the newly emerging, ambitious middle class the desire to be a part of the political process. (c) A sense of new nationalism, distinct from the nationalism that swept Asia in the period of anti-colonialism, is discernible. Confident in their economic and political power, the emerging new leaders will be less amenable to what they perceive as unwarranted foreign pressures. (d) The process of democratization may not necessarily lead to political stability. In fact,

it is bound to create some degree of political instability, since all political, socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious issues that have been suppressed under authoritarianism are likely to be openly contested. The mechanism through which to solve these contested issues is still fragile. (e) The process of transition must be left up to the people of the respective countries. There is little that the outside powers could do to affect the substantive contents of this process. Given the strength of nationalism, such interference would provoke an outburst of national resentment. (f) The Asian NICs' ability to sustain the momentum of economic growth in a time of world-wide recession is a precondition for a successful political transition, although it alone does not assure its success.⁸⁹

Two specific countries that are going through this transition should be briefly mentioned here. A cautious optimism is warranted for South Korea, which went through the birth pain of democracy from the June 29 concession to the demands of the opposition to the presidential election in December, 1987. Newly elected Roh Tae Woo seems to have adopted a policy of reconciliation, wooing the support of at least Kim Yon Sam's faction of the opposition. Given the support of the emerging South Korean middle class, hopeless division of the opposition, and national dedication to work for the success of the Olympics, Roh Tae Woo has a fair chance to succeed in creating a stable democracy in South Korea, despite the existence of some negative factors such as student radicalism and the unpredictability of North Korea's behavior.

The prospect for survival of democracy in the Philippines does not warrant such optimism. The political prestige of Mrs. Aquino seems to be still high, but social reforms, particularly the land reform, which are urgently needed as a precondition for stability, are stalled, while the New Peoples' Army is expanding its influence. The country seems to have begun the process of polarization again, while military allegiance to the Aquino regime no longer solid. As political stability is being undermined, opposition to the American bases will be intensified.⁹⁰

(8) Socialist Countries

Gorbachev's perestroika is not an isolated attempt to revitalize the Soviet Union. It should be understood as a broader phenomenon throughout the socialist countries, including the Asian socialist countries. There is a universal recognition that the Stalinist totalitarian system outlived its usefulness, and that in order to survive in the modern world, these countries must look for a totally new approach. Although there are differences in degree, there will be double pressure for openness to the outside world and for pluralism in the political process. The socialist countries are also faced with the problem of leadership succession. This process is already under way in China, Mongolia and Vietnam, and will face North Korea in the immediate future. Fierce power struggles for political succession, which will necessarily be connected with policy alternatives, will be in-

evitable, and one factor, although it may not be decisive, that determines the outcome of these struggles may be foreign policy.

III. How to React to Gorbachev's Asian Policy?

1. Long-Term Objectives vs Short-Term Gains in Soviet Policy

How are we to interpret Gorbachev's new Asian initiative in the changing dynamics of Asian international politics?

First, we must begin from the changing priorities of Gorbachev's foreign policy, and examine how these changes will affect US and Japanese foreign policy objectives. If the top priority of Soviet foreign policy under Gorbachev is to avoid world war, it coincides with our objective. Moreover, if Gorbachev chooses arms control rather than unilateral military buildup as the means to avoid world war, as appears if one were to judge from the new thinking, this is also in accordance with our objective. But beyond this, all the objectives that we would share with the Soviet Union--such as establishing stability by reducing military tensions and increasing participation in the Asian community--are not likely to be achieved in the immediate future for the reasons discussed above. Emergence of new factors in Asian politics, however, indicate that the Soviet Union will be given ample opportunities to exploit to score short-term gains at the expense of the US and/or Japan. It is likely that Soviet policy will have both cooperative and conflictual elements. Even

in Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech these two elements are present side by side. It is, therefore, important to discern carefully what objectives the Soviet Union will pursue in the years ahead, welcome its contribution to stability of the region, while making it clear to the Soviets that we would be determined to reject and resist Soviet intrusion in the region at the expense of our interests.

2. Bipolar Vision vs Regional Vision

The complexity in Asian political relations consists of the fact that here the East-West conflict exists side by side with uniquely Asian regional problems. Moreover, they often conflict with each other. In the years ahead, these conflicts will emerge more sharply. The East-West conflict that infiltrates into Asia can be solved only in the Asian context, while an element of superpower conflict will also continue to persist. Excessive regionalism will carry the danger of destroying a major prop that has sustained Asian stability. To find a balance between globalism and regionalism will be a difficult task that future leaders must undertake with skill and imagination.

3. Arms Control Vision

Soviet desire to avoid world war and reduce the arms race is genuine; so is their desire to establish a stable security system in the Asia-Pacific region. But the difficulties involved in establishing such a system to the satisfaction of all parties are

almost insurmountable. For one thing the Soviet approach to security in Asia is not always altruistic, and contains a design to take an upper hand in the zero-sum game. In addition, as already discussed, Asian political reality makes security arrangements extremely complicated.

Nonetheless, the Soviet approach to Asian security is already on the table. The INF Treaty has already been signed, and after the US and the USSR successfully conclude the START Agreement, Soviet attention will be turned to Asia. The US and Japan can no longer respond to the Soviet threat in Asia only by piling up military hardware and spending more for defense without coming up with our own vision of arms control and security in Asia. Otherwise, the resulting unregulated arms race in the Far East will create a dangerous situation without any increase in our own security, while military burdens will break the back of our already weakening economy. Moreover, insensitivity to arms control will create a serious problem in popular perception.

(a) Settlement of Regional Conflicts

Gorbachev's first agenda for Asian security is to solve regional conflicts. Solution of conflicts in Afghanistan, Indochina, and the Korean Peninsula would undoubtedly contribute to regional stability. We should insist that solutions to the conflicts in Afghanistan and Indochina, where the Soviet Union is directly involved, are a precondition for comprehensive security in Asia. In Korea, we should strive to lower the military element

of the conflict, while encouraging Soviet restraining influence on North Korea.

(b) Crisis Management and CBM

Negotiations on crisis management and some form of confidence building measures might be a good place to start as a first step toward comprehensive security in Asia. In the aftermath of the KAL 007 incident, Japan, the US, and the USSR concluded an agreement to insure safety of passenger planes. Incidents abound of accidental collisions and near-misses of naval ships and military aircraft and accidental or intentional violations of Japanese airspace. Military exercises intended to test the nerves of the other side have been practiced in recent years in increasing numbers. Prevention of accidents and resulting crises would be in everyone's interest.

(c) Restrictions of Naval Activities

Beyond this, the Soviets will concentrate their efforts to restrict certain naval activities in the Far East; particularly they will be interested in measures to assure the survivability of the Soviet SLBM force against the superior American ASW. In this connection, I question the wisdom of the so-called Lehman-Watkins maritime strategy, in which the United States would attack Soviet nuclear targets including SLBMs at the conventional stage of a global conflict. If the US seeks to drive the Soviet Union to the sea by insisting on the elimination of the destabilizing ICBM

force, the Lehman-Watkins strategy would be contradictory to US arms control policy, and would not contribute to strategic stability.⁹¹

The argument against restrictions on ASW activities targetted on SSBNs are three-fold. First, the Soviet Union is far inferior in ASW. While American Poseidons and Tridents can hide anywhere, the Deltas confined in the Sea of Okhotsk would be relatively easily located. Thus, to accept a ban or limitation on US ASW activities would aid only the Soviet Union. Another argument is that it is better to tie down all Soviet forces to protect their SLBM force rather than releasing them to fulfill other missions. But the most difficult factor might be technological. There simply may not be any feasible way of distinguishing an ASW activity against the SSBN from ASW in general. Despite all difficulties, however, we should devise a response to the expected Soviet proposal for restricting ASW activities against SSBNs.

(d) Denuclearization

Military concepts developed in the context of the East-West conflict in Europe are often uncritically applied to Asia. Nuclear deterrence was born out of perceived Soviet conventional superiority. In Asia, the Soviet Union lacks this superiority. Facing China, the US and Japan, Soviet conventional inferiority is obvious. Logic dictates, therefore, that it is the Soviet Union that needs nuclear deterrence.

Denuclearization of Asia, if it includes nuclear weapons in Soviet Asia, might be to our advantage. The utility of nuclear weapons in the Asian theater is not as significant as in the European theater. In addition, when the Soviet Union begins deploying its SS-NX-21 SLCMs, which could be launched from standard tubes on most classes of Soviet submarines, and the SS-NX-24 supersonic cruise missiles in the Pacific Fleet, the danger of nuclear confrontation in the Far East will rise, particularly when the nuclear or conventional nature of a warhead launched from dual capable SLCMs would not be known until it detonates.⁹² We should realize that the reasons which justified the deployment of Tomahawk SLCMs will be used against us by the Soviets once they begin deploying their own SLCMs.⁹³ Unregulated arms competition in SLCMs will not benefit either side; and hence there should be some control on them.⁹⁴ Our willingness to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in Asia would also have a positive effect on popular perceptions of our defense policies.

(e) Base Issue

Whether or not the Aquino regime succeeds in establishing political stability in the Philippines, the issue of the American bases will persist. The presence of US forces in Asia has served, and will serve, as a crucial factor in Asian stability, and for that purpose, the US naval base and the Clark Air Base in the Philippines are crucial for all of Asia. This argument, however, does not have persuasive force among the people in the Philippines

who question why they alone have to carry the burden for the global military objectives of the US and other Asians. The bases were established originally to defend the Philippines from Chinese expansion, and this original purpose, of course, has lost its justification.

To solve this problem, those countries which directly benefit from the maintenance of the American bases in the Philippines, particularly Japan, should be more forthcoming in economic aid. If the will of the Filipino people is to remove the bases, we will have no other choice but to honor this request. We should make it clear, however, that we would not tolerate any meddling by the Soviet Union on this matter, sending them a clear message that the cost of Soviet interference will be exceedingly high. In fact, we should convey to the Soviets that we consider the Philippines as a testing ground for the sincerity of the new thinking.

(f) Reasonable Sufficiency

One of the interesting concepts in the new thinking is that of "reasonable sufficiency," which is defined as the level of military force and structure not sufficient to conduct offensive, but sufficient for defensive action.⁹⁵ This was originally applied to the strategic level, but is now being extended to the conventional level in the European theater. The same concept is also applied to Asia in Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech. What this really means in the Asian theater is not clear, however. This notion is theoretically opposed to the concepts of parity and

equality that the Soviet Union insisted on before. The level of sufficiency will be difficult to determine in Asia where the Soviet Union faces the US, Japan, and China. Nevertheless, this notion could be used for substantial reduction of Soviet troops along the Sino-Soviet border.

4. US-Japanese Relations.

The management of economic frictions between Japan and the US is vitally important for the future of Japan-US security cooperation. Emotionalism and hysterical rhetoric must be avoided, while a mechanism should be devised to address the conflicts in an orderly, constructive manner. A Wisemen's Committee proposed by George Packard is worth considering.⁹⁶

The Soviet Union under Gorbachev is now too sophisticated to meddle directly in US-Japan economic frictions. But what it could do is to come up with concrete proposals for arms control in Asia, as discussed above. The INF Agreement has already started the arms control momentum. Thus, if these proposals were to be preceded by a successful agreement on strategic weapons and a compromise on SDI, or possibly by the reduction of troop levels along the Sino-Soviet border, the arms control momentum will be difficult to resist in Asia. At least at the level of popular perception, such proposals will have a significant impact that will become an effective force opposed to increased military spending by Japan. In view of the low level of security debate in Japan, compared with public opinion in Western Europe, emotional-

ism rather than rational strategic argument may determine the course of events. For this reason as well, it is important for both Japan and the US seriously to seek some form of realistic arms control measures to reduce tensions in the Far East.

US pressure on Japan to increase its military spending without justifiable military reasons that could be clearly understood by the Japanese public will encounter strong resistance, particularly when the US is decreasing its military spending, and when such pressure is perceived as economic in nature. We should realize that the Japanese defense consensus is still fragile, and that it would not take a major political crisis to destroy the steady military cooperation that has been built carefully over the decades. It is important not to confuse security matters with economic issues.

Another potentially dangerous conflict that has a bearing on security is competition between Japan and the US in high tech areas. While the US is showing a protectionist tendency, closing out the Japanese from US high tech research in the name of industrial security, young Japanese scientists and engineers are acquiring an attitude best described as "technonationalism." The ongoing negotiations on the US-Japanese Science and Technology Agreement are running into trouble precisely on the issue of industrial security.⁹⁷ How this friction will manifest itself in the Japan-US security framework remains uncertain, but surely its outcome will not create a favorable climate.

5. Japanese-Soviet Relations

It is expected that future Soviet policy toward Japan will be more sophisticated than in the past, paying sufficient attention to changes in domestic public opinion. Japanese public opinion is almost unanimous in its desire to regain possession of the lost islands. But behind this seeming unanimity, there are deep divisions as to how to get the islands back to Japan.⁹⁸ If Gorbachev judges that the time is ripe, he might drop a bombshell by "proposing," not actually deciding on, the return of the two islands or even one island. Given the lack of consensus in Japan on this issue, he would surely divide Japanese public opinion. Besides, it is likely that the Soviets would insist on some kind of arms control in the Far East as a precondition for the return of the islands. The Japanese government has taken the position until now that as long as the Soviet Union does not return the four islands, it will not discuss other substantive matters. Whether it will be able to continue to take this position will depend on the international situation in which Japan finds itself, and changes in Japanese public opinion. If Sino-Soviet rapprochement proceeds at a rapid pace, US-Soviet relations improve significantly, and the momentum for arms control continues to move in a positive direction, Japan will face international isolation and pressure from public opinion to change its Soviet policy. In such an eventuality, the northern territorial issue that has served as a convenient excuse not to seek rapprochement with the Soviet Union will come to haunt the Japanese government as a difficult obstacle to change policy. Japanese intransigence and a

lack of a more comprehensive view on the long-term objectives of Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union that goes beyond the northern territorial issue might therefore conceal germs of political instability.

Behind the intransigence of Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union, there is a judgement that the Soviet Union needs Japan, particularly in the area of economic and technological cooperation, more than Japan needs the Soviet Union.⁹⁹ Technology and economic cooperation, however, cannot be a Japanese monopoly, and the Soviet Union will seek what it needs elsewhere if it does not come from Japan. If rapprochement with the Soviet Union is a major trend in the US, Europe, and Asia, it might turn out to be Japan that would need cooperation with the Soviet Union more than the other way around.

US-Japan economic frictions should also be viewed in this context. In the development of recent popular perceptions in Japan, the most remarkable trends are a sharp decline in U.S. popularity, and a gradual decrease in Soviet unpopularity. While West Europeans and Americans have often differed in their approach to the Soviet Union, Japan has been a model student of the US in its policy toward the USSR. As long as the northern territorial issue persists, the US has been able to take it for granted that Japan will not actively seek drastic improvement in relations with the Soviet Union. This assumption may not be valid in the future.

There will be conflicting pressures on Japan. Continuing US

budgetary constraints will lead to more pressure on Japan to share the defense burden, while at the same time the US will seek rapprochement with the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, adversarial relations between Japan and the US will increase in economic spheres. This will contribute further to the demand for Japan to increase its share of defense. At the same time more pressure will be exerted on Japan to adhere to COCOM regulations while the US moves vigorously to pursue economic cooperation with USSR. In other words, while the US cuts its defense spending and expands trade with the Soviet Union, it will put pressure on Japan to increase defense spending and constrain trade with the Soviet Union. In a way these conflicting pressures are the inevitable result of the unresolved contradictions in the US approaches to Japan. The Japanese government will continue to accommodate itself to these conflicting pressures, since it is the best way to diffuse tensions stemming from US-Japan trade frictions. The danger will arrive when it invites a backlash against the US and the still fragile consensus on national defense. The outcome of such a backlash would be difficult to predict. But US-Japanese relations will then reach a most serious crisis.

5. Soviet Policy toward Asian NICs and Developing Countries

The transition that Asian NICs and developing countries are to experience is a political process unlikely to be accompanied by cataclysmic social revolutions. None of the NICs and developing countries in Asia are likely to be transformed into a Leninist

socialist state. Thus, there is very little that the Soviet Union can exploit to its advantage, even if it wishes to do so.

Opportunities for Soviet political gains will more likely be created either as a result of political upheavals in which the Soviets may take the side of one faction in a contest, thus exacerbating instability, or as a result of US blunders. The former is less likely, since at this point the Soviet Union may not be interested in destabilizing political situations in Asia, and also since their experiences in the 1970s have made them aware that exploiting political instability did not result in long-term gains, but rather in costly political and economic burdens. It can be surmised that the Soviet Union is on the whole interested in political stability in Asia.

There is one notable exception in the above analysis--the Philippines. There are a variety of scenarios for political change in the Philippines: consolidation of stable democracy, political fragmentation, establishment of a military regime, and the NPA's victory. Here is the only country in Asia where a political change might be accompanied by a drastic social change. The issue of the American bases will be an important issue in any of these scenarios, and hence the outcome of political change will have a profound impact on the power balance in Asia.

What would the Soviet Union do, given a chance by political instability in the Philippines, to weaken US military power and its influence and prestige in Asia? It is unlikely that the Soviet Union will commit itself directly to the NPA, although,

depending on its strength and the degree of US involvement against the insurgents, it might aid the NPA with arms shipments. The Soviet Union will be more likely to wait in the wings to see if a favorable outcome unfolds without its interference, while it will continue to advocate abolition of all foreign bases from Asia, and even attempt to bargain Soviet withdrawal from Cam Ranh Bay for US withdrawal from the Philippines.

The US and Japan would be well advised to support the Aquino government and endorse its effort to undertake long-overdue social reforms. Our generous financial aid should be channelled in such a way as to generate Philippine economic vitality. Beyond this, our policy should be directed at insulating the political process from the East-West conflict. To let the base issue dictate our policy toward the Philippines may be counterproductive; rather we should let the domestic political process run its course. At the same time, we should convey to the Soviets a clear message that their interference in the Philippines will gravely affect East-West relations.

In economic relations with the Asian NICs and developing countries, the Soviet role is unlikely to increase in the years ahead. The area of economic compatibility between the Soviet Union and the Asian NICs is limited. Their economic interaction should be encouraged, not looked at with suspicion. The Soviet Union has also expressed interest in joining the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council. This should be recognized as a positive measure, as the Council's founder, Saburo Okita, argues.¹⁰⁰ On

the whole, we should not exclude the Soviet Union from Asia, but encourage it to join in the Asian community as a constructive member, expecting it to observe the rules of the game of the community. The more we move in this direction, the less likely the Soviet Union would be to exploit political opportunities at the expense of Asian political stability.

6. Socialist Countries

As I explained above, changes are in the air in the socialist countries. Here, too, we realize that the old simple dichotomy between "the Free World" and "the totalitarian regimes" is no longer sufficient. It is important to assess accurately what implications these changes have in the dynamics of international relations in Asia as well as in the political stability of this region.

We should address ourselves to two specific questions. First, there is a question of the Korean peninsula. After the Seoul Olympics, North Korea's isolation will be a cause for concern. Japan and the U.S. should address the problem of how to help North Korea come out of this dangerous isolation and join in a constructive way to diffuse tensions in the peninsula. The Soviet Union and China could play a constructive role in this effort.

Another trouble spot is in Southeast Asia. The resolution of the Cambodian conflict is a precondition for any cooperative venture between Vietnam and the outside world. Here, too, China

and the Soviet Union could play a crucial role in establishing stability in the region.

IV. Conclusion

Two fundamental changes--Gorbachev's Asian initiative and endogenous changes in Asia--will pose a challenging task for the US and Japan in the years ahead. We must be steadfast in maintaining our mutual interests, imaginative and flexible in the changing circumstances, and patient and wise in overcoming our differences. In the 1970s the Soviet Union was a disruptive force that threatened stability in the region. The resulting bipolarity led us to concentrate on the common task of how to exclude the Soviet Union from the region. The new dynamics that are emerging in Asia no longer allow us to look at the new reality only through bipolar vision. We can no longer create a stable world order in the Asia-Pacific region by excluding the Soviet Union from it. The time has come for us to begin to think what kind of Soviet behavior would be acceptable and welcome to help establish political stability and assuring continued economic prosperity in the region.

NOTES

1. See Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "Ajia ni okeru Beiso Kankei," in Shiro Shimamura, et al., Saishin Soren Kyokuto Soran (Tokyo: Enterprise, 1987), pp. 77-108.
2. See Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "Japanese Perceptions of the Soviet Union, 1960-1985," Acta Slavica Iaponica, 5 (1987), pp. 37-70.
3. Donald S. Zagoria, "The U.S.-Soviet Rivalry in East Asia," in Kinya Niiseki, ed., The Soviet Union in Transition (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p. 173.
4. Kuniko Miyauchi, "Ajia-Taiheiyo Shomen eno Soren no Gunjiteki Kanshin," in Dai27kai Totaikaigo ni okeru Soren no Ajia Seisaku (Tokyo: Nihon Kokusai Mondai Kenkyujo, 1987), p. 48.
5. Soviet Military Power (1983) (Washington, DC: USGPO, 1983), p. 51.
6. These figures are taken from annual publications of Military Balance (London: IISS) from 1961 through 1982.
7. Michael McGwire, Military Objectives in Soviet Foreign Policy (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1987), pp. 174-175; the rate of mobilization comes from Soviet Military Power (1981).
8. Asian Security 1980 (Tokyo: Research Institute for Peace and Security, 1980), pp. 37-38; Asian Security 1981 (Tokyo: Research Institute for Peace and Security, 1981), pp. 84-85; Robert P. Berman and John C. Baker, Soviet Strategic Forces; Requirements and Responses (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1982), pp. 30, 60-61.
9. Asian Security 1981, p. 84.
10. Soviet Military Power (1981).
11. Soviet Military Power (1986), p. 63.
12. McGwire, p. 175; Miyauchi, "Ajia Taiheiyo," pp. 48-49.
13. McGwire, p. 161.

14. See annual publications of Asian Security, Boeihakusho from 1980 to 1987; Zagoria, p. 17; Leszek Buszynski, Soviet Foreign Policy and Southeast Asia (London & Sydney: Croom Helm, 1986), p. 249.
15. Kuniko Miyauchi, "Gorubachofu no Zen-Ajia Foramu Koso: Gunbikanri no Sokumen," Soren Kenkyu, No. 3 (October, 1986), p. 53. For criticism of horizontal escalation, see MccGwire, pp. 176-78.
16. For the official Navy view of the Maritime Strategy, see Adm. James D. Watkins, "The Maritime Strategy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, special supplement, January, 1986.
17. See Mike Mochizuki, "Japan's Search for Strategy," International Security, 8, No. 3 (Winter, 1983-84), pp. 152-179; Kenneth Pyle, "Changing Perceptions of Japan's International Role," mimeo.
18. Ajia no Anzenhosho (1983) (Tokyo: Research Institute on Peace and Security, 1983), pp. 272-276.
19. Tomohisa Sakanaka, "Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation and the Force Structure of the JSDF," Paper Presented at the Conference on Japan-US Comprehensive Security, East-West Center, Honolulu, February 1988, pp. 2-3.
20. Ibid., p. 4.
21. Asian Security 1981, p. 189.
22. Ibid., p. 190.
23. Asian Security 1983 pp. 271-172.
24. Sakanaka, p. 3.
25. Masao Okonogi, "Chuso no Hokuto-Ajia Gaiko to Nihon," Kokusai Mondai, No. 324 (March, 1987), p. 64.
26. Asian Security 1981, pp. 92-93.
27. Seiichiro Takagi, "Kodo Gijyutsu no Iten to Beichu Kankei," Kokusai Mondai, No. 323 (February 1987), pp. 26-44.
28. Yomiuri Shimbun, December 14, 1986, quoted in Okonogi, p. 57.
29. Miyauchi, "Ajia-Taiheiyo," p. 49.
30. Ibid.
31. MccGwire, p. 175.

64. Okonogi, p. 62; Uda, p. 93.
65. Okonogi, p. 59; Joseph M. Ha, "Soviet Policy in the Asian-Pacific Region: Primary and Secondary Relationship," Acta Slavica Iaponica, 5 (1987), p. 99.
66. Ha, p. 100.
67. Okonogi, p. 60.
68. See Susumu Yamakage, "The Future of Southeast Asia and its Implications to U.S.-Japan Relations," Paper Presented at the Conference on Japan-US Comprehensive Security, East-West Center, Honolulu, February 1988; Yutaka Akino, "Gorubachofu no Ajia-seisaku no Kichou," Kokusai Mondai, No. 325 (April 1987), pp. 28-46; Buszynski, pp. 242-266.
69. See Thayer.
70. See Raymond L. Garthoff, "Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan" (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1985).
71. For the process of Sino-Soviet rapprochement, see Kazuko Mori, "Chuso Detanto wa dokomade susumuka," Sekai, February, 1988, pp. 102-109; Stephen Levine, "Sino-Soviet Relations in the Late 1980s: An End to Estrangement," A Paper Presented at the Second Conference on Asian Perceptions of the Soviet Union, East-West Center, Honolulu, March 1987.
72. Mori, p. 104.
73. Gaye Christoffersen, "The Economic Reforms in Northeast China: Domestic Determinants of the Region's Open Door Policy," mimeo.
74. Mori, p. 104.
75. Ibid., pp. 104-105.
76. Ibid., p. 105.
77. Ibid., p. 106.
78. Kimura, "Soviet Focus on the Pacific," p. 6; Okonogi, p. 56; for a detailed discussion, see Levine.
79. A Soviet specialist working on the military affairs in the Far East expressed his personal opinion to this effect.

80. Zagoria, p. 168; Kimura, "Soviet Focus on the Pacific," p. 7. Zagoria's otherwise excellent article is marred, in my view, by his bipolar vision.
81. Gilbert Rozman, "Chinese Comparison of Socialism: A New Agenda for Research and New Perceptions of Convergence in Socialist Reforms," Acta Slavica Iaponica, 5 (1987), pp. 21-36; Lu Nan-guan, "Nekotorye voprosy ekonomicheskikh reform v sotsialisticheskikh stranakh," Acta Slavica Iaponica, 6 (1988), forthcoming.
82. George R. Packard, "The Coming U.S.-Japan Crisis," Foreign Affairs, Winter, 1987-88, p. 35.
83. Ibid., p. 356. For the Toshiba issue, see Takehiko Yamamoto, "The Toshiba Machine Incident and Strengthening the COCOM Regulations: From the Standpoint of Technological Security," a Paper Presented at the Conference on Japan-US Comprehensive Security, East-West Center, Honolulu, February 1988.
84. Packard, p. 353.
85. This is based on the analysis of the data given in monthly results of the Jiji surveys. See Jiji Yoron Chosa Geppo.
86. Packard, p. 353.
87. Ibid., p. 363.
88. See Robert A. Scalapino, "Asia's Future," Foreign Affairs, Fall 1987, 71-108.
89. See Yamakage.
90. Ibid.
91. For criticism of Watkin's maritime strategy, see Francis Fukuyama, "Asia in Global War," Comparative Strategy, 6, No. 4 (1987), pp. 387-413. For Soviet approach to naval arms control, see Nikolai Shaskalsky, "Curbing the Naval Arms Race," International Peace and Disarmament, Ways to Security, Issue 2 (Moscow, Nauka, 1987), pp. 66-90.
92. See Rose E. Gottemoeller, "Land-Attack Cruise Missiles," Adelphi Papers, No. 226, pp. 11-12.
93. Ibid., pp. 26-27.
94. Ibid., pp. 31-44.
95. Hasegawa, "Gorbachev and the New Thinking," forthcoming.

96. Packard, p. 362.
97. Asahi Shimbun, February 16, 1988.
98. Hasegawa, "Japanese Perceptions and Policies," forthcoming.
99. Kimura, "Soviet Focus on the Pacific," pp. 7, 10.
100. "Ajia-Taiheiyo Kyoryoku to Chugoku," Kokusai Mondai, No. 323 (February 1987), pp. 8-10.