DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN ASIA: THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

MUTHIAH ALAGAPPA

Many in the West are heralding a worldwide trend toward democracy—and governments are promoting it as a goal of their foreign policies. But many Asian leaders contest the universality of the democratic system of governance and are resisting Western pressure; some see democracy as a threat, especially to economic development. How will these conflicting perceptions combine to foster or inhibit democratic transition in East and Southeast Asia?

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SUMMARY

Many in the West interpret the demise of communism and authoritarianism in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and Latin America as evidence of the superiority and universality of the ideals of democracy. Looking to Asia, Western nations see the transitions to democracy in the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan, and the pro-democracy uprisings in Burma, China, and Thailand as reflections of a worldwide trend. Based on the premise that democracy promotes economic development and peaceful relations among nations, the United States and Western Europe are seeking to encourage its adoption through their foreign policies.

In contrast, the leaders of many Asian nations see democracy as a hindrance to economic development, a threat to national and regional stability, and unsuited to Asia's political culture and traditions. Western attempts to motivate and pressure East and Southeast Asian countries to adopt democracy are meeting with little success. And the growing sense of a regional identity is creating solidarity among Asian countries, which makes it difficult for the West to isolate or effectively pressure any single country.

Nonetheless, governments in Asia are coming to recognize that popular sovereignty is a key component of political legitimacy. At the non-governmental level, there is a growing political consciousness and increasing support for both democracy and human rights. The values of democracy and human rights are thus becoming part of the domestic political discourse and can no longer be excluded by fiat. Perhaps most important, nearly all governments in the region now embrace the principles of a market economy. Because economic growth frequently leads to greater political openness, Western support for capitalism in Asia appears to have the greatest potential for inducing democratic change. The keys to facilitating democratic transition are promoting socioeconomic development and the domestic forces that will help to limit the domain and power of the state, encourage citizenship participation, and promote pluralism and diversity. And if the West can successfully address its own social and economic problems, then its democratic system, like its capitalist system, will be a more attractive model for emulation.
The flow of events in the last two decades—the collapse of authoritarian regimes in many developing countries, the victory of the West in the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet bloc including the Soviet Union itself, and the adoption of democratic and market principles by the former Soviet bloc as well as many developing countries—has been interpreted by some as demonstrating the superiority and universal validity of the Western ideals of democracy and capitalism. Indeed, in a much discussed article citing the "total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives" (the failures of fascism and communism, the limitations of nationalism, and the restricted appeal of Islam) and the global spread of Western consumerism, Francis Fukuyama claims that history (in the Hegelian sense) is at an end point. "What we are witnessing," he says, "is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of . . . mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government."

Although the "end of history" thesis has been castigated by many, the belief that democracy and the market economy are superior and universally valid institutions informs government policy and the writings of pro-democracy advocates in the United States and Western Europe.1 Anthony Lake, assistant to the president for national security affairs, maintains that "America's core concepts—democracy and market economies—are more broadly accepted than ever . . . We have arrived at neither the end of history nor the clash of civilizations, but a moment of immense democratic and entrepreneurial opportunity." According to the U.S. secretary of state, Warren Christopher, "people everywhere are inspired by the ideals of democracy." History, in his view, is on the side of democracy and human rights, and these principles will continue to transform the political map of the world.2 The global trend, therefore, in the perception of the United States and other Western governments, is toward democracy.

Democratic transitions in the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Bangladesh, and Nepal, as well as "pro-democracy" political uprisings in Burma (1988), China (April-June 1989), and Thailand (May 1992), are said to demonstrate the growing belief in democratic governance in Asia. In seeking to consolidate this democratic trend, Western governments have made the promotion of democracy an explicit goal of their foreign policies. In the words of President Clinton: "In a new era of peril and opportunity, our overriding purpose must be to expand and strengthen the world's community of market-based democracies."3

But is the international political environment affecting East and South-
Does the international environment foster or inhibit the transition to democracy?

The international environment is not necessarily a given, especially for the major states, nor is it static. It is continuously constructed by the goals, the policies, and the interaction of states in the region and beyond.

This report will explore the prospects for democratic transition in Asia by looking at three major issues: (1) Ideals of governance—specifically, how receptive are Asian political elites to the norm of democracy? (2) Can external forces alter a country’s internal governance through incentives and pressure? (3) How might the changing power relationships and economic and security arrangements at the international level affect domestic political change?

IDEALS OF GOVERNANCE

Political ideas inform world views, shape policy, and affect political outcomes. The extent to which political elites are committed to democratic governance will, therefore, influence the structure of domination and domestic political discourse, including political resistance. There are several questions to explore in this regard: Is the ideal of democracy gaining acceptance among the political elite in East and Southeast Asian countries? Who is making the case for and against democracy? On what basis? Are other principles that may contribute to the building of democracy, such as popular sovereignty and human rights, gaining ground?

The West’s Projection of Democracy

Beliefs relating to the rights of the individual—along with the ideas that political power issues from the people and that government must be limited—are key features of the American political creed. These ideas underlie the American foreign policy goal of promoting democracy and human rights. President Carter in 1977 declared that promotion of human rights would be a key guideline in the conduct of American foreign policy. In 1982 President Reagan advocated an international effort to “foster the infrastructure of democracy,” and in the following year he oversaw the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy to coordinate the efforts of American agencies in promoting democracy overseas. This commitment was reinforced by the ascendancy of neoclassical economic policy during the Reagan-Thatcher years.

Many believe that the end of the Cold War removed the last strategic obstacle to the full implementation of the foreign policy goal of promoting democracy and human rights. Since then the West has sought to project with new vigor the claim that democracy and human rights are universally valid norms.

*The word “norm” refers to what the situation ought to be, not what is normal. For a discussion of the concept of norms in international relations, see Thompson (1993). For a discussion of the impact of ideas on policy see Goldstein and Keohane (1993) and Hall (1993).

*As Cold War considerations required the West to support authoritarian governments, practice departed significantly from official rhetoric (see Whitehead 1986: 6–8). With the passing of the Cold War, advocates of human rights and democracy in the Clinton administration argue that this goal should no longer be subordinated to geostrategic considerations and should be restored to its rightful primacy (see Shattuck 1993b: 2).
In the conception of the Clinton administration and pro-democracy advocates, democracy and human rights are inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing. Human rights, defined in terms of the individual’s political rights and civil liberties, are key ingredients of democracy. Without these rights, the integrity of participation and competition—vital aspects of the democratic system—cannot be guaranteed. The protection of human rights “is the best safeguard against the abuse of national power,” it is argued, and only democratic governments can guarantee their protection. Thus a key element in the American conception of democracy is the protection and promotion of fundamental freedom. The other elements are the rule of law, a legitimate political process, a representative and account-
able government, an open legislative process, free trade unions, and an independent media.

The West's projection of the norm of democracy is linked to two other assumptions. One is that democracy and capitalism have a natural affinity and that the development of one inevitably involves the development of the other. This connection between capitalism and democracy is rooted in their underlying philosophy (freedom of individual choice) as well as the assumption that laissez-faire capitalism fulfills the necessary conditions for the working of a successful democracy.\(^6\) In addition to stressing that economic growth will lead to political reform, proponents argue that economic reform cannot be sustained without democratization. Departing from the orthodoxy of the earlier modernization theory, it is now claimed that democracy is a necessary precondition for a thriving market economy and that an open economy cannot coexist with a closed political system, at least past a certain point.\(^7\) Hence, an open economy and democracy must both be promoted simultaneously.\(^7\)

The emphasis on democracy as a precondition for a thriving market economy derives from the resurgence of neoclassical economics, which emphasizes the private sector and the market as crucial elements for the efficient allocation of resources. The second assumption is that democracies do not fight each other. The democratic system is projected as having the tools for domestic and international conflict resolution and as being more capable of protecting minorities, less likely to initiate wars against other democratic states, more likely to support counterterrorism, and more likely to be a reliable partner in arms control, trade, and environmental protection.\(^8\) Hence, the argument goes, a world of democratic states will be inherently safer. Some in fact posit democracy, human rights, and rule of law as the key building blocks for a new world order.\(^9\) The strategy of enlargement, which seeks to expand the community of market democracies, is rooted in such a belief.\(^9\) Indeed, it has been advanced as the successor to the strategy of containment. Its goals can be described as more widespread prosperity and reduced international conflict through a unified world order.

**The Asian Response**

This projection of democracy, based on the presumed superiority of Western values and the assumption that democracy holds the key to peace and prosperity, is contested by the governing elite in many East and Southeast Asian countries. Only the governments in Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines support democratic governance and human rights as universal norms, and their support is somewhat mild.

**Reluctant Converts** Japan is a recent and somewhat reluctant convert to the cause of democracy and human rights. Its own democratic system and human rights provisions were imposed by the United States during the postwar occupation. Indeed, the incumbent government at the time was strongly opposed to the human rights reforms. In the post-occupation period, Tokyo jealously guarded its sovereignty in responding to UN conventions on human rights, holding that "while the UN may identify common categories of rights, it may neither set specific international standards nor impose sanctions."\(^6\) Japan did not sign the two UN covenants on human rights until 1978. In addition to cultural relativism, the government's reluctant posture on these issues appears to have been based on its desire to hold onto political power and satisfy its core benefactor—big business.\(^9\)

Japan's recent conversion to the cause of democracy and human rights is largely pragmatic, rooted in Tokyo's attempt to find common ground with the West. Although the promotion of democracy and a commitment to human rights are cited as criteria (along with controls on military expenditure and arms exports) for the disbursement of developmental assistance in Japan's aid charter, there is no deep commitment to the democratic philosophy. For the Japanese,
Japan has no deep commitment to the democratic philosophy

"the concepts of freedom, democracy, and market economy do not have a home-grown feeling." Some Japanese even believe that excessive individualism and consumerism have exhausted the West.

Thus, while Tokyo is now firmly committed to democracy and human rights in its domestic politics, these values do not figure prominently in the conduct of its foreign policy. The promotion of human rights and democracy is viewed in the overall context of bilateral and regional relations and is invariably accorded a lower priority than maintaining domestic and regional stability. Tokyo's discomfort in preaching about democracy and human rights may be due, in part, to its history. The brutal behavior of Japanese occupation forces in many East and Southeast Asian countries during World War II and the inability of successive Japanese governments to make a clear break with this period in Japanese history weaken Japan's moral leverage in promoting this cause.

Further, Tokyo, now eager to develop an Asian identity, is concerned about being alienated from other Asian countries. It views relations with them as important in their own right as well as a means to counter demands from the West.11

Apart from its lukewarm commitment to the democratic philosophy, Tokyo also differs from the West on strategy and style. It believes in the economic route to political liberalization and in informal dialogue and constructive engagement as opposed to the punitive conditionality approach preferred by Western countries. Thus while it supported the Western position at the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, Japan has in practice settled for a moderating role between West and East. It seeks to narrow the differences and find common ground, using its position as a dispenser of aid to persuade rather than to demand change. Unlike the Western countries, Tokyo did not suspend assistance to Thailand after the 1991 coup or the 1992 military repression of the pro-democracy protest, to Indonesia after the November 1991 Timor-Timor [East Timor] incident, or to Peru after President Fujimori's suspension of constitutional rule in April 1992. With regard to China, while iterating the principles of its aid charter and urging Beijing to improve its human rights record, Tokyo has not made aid and trade conditional upon such improvement.

Japan's policies and their rationales also vary from country to country. In the Philippines, democracy has had a checkered history. The democratic system instituted at independence in 1946 was displaced by authoritarian rule in 1972. Although there has been a return to democracy since the February 1986 "people power" revolution, it is unclear whether this re-democratization is based on deep commitment, and therefore durable, or simply a reaction to authoritarianism with the potential for displace-

* The Western position was that the international community has a legitimate interest in human rights, that human rights should not be sacrificed for the sake of economic development, and that there is a need for the establishment of the post of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. (For the Japanese position, see the statement made by Nobuo Matsunaga, envoy and representative of the government of Japan to the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 18 June 1993.) David Arase (1993) believes, however, that a survey of Japanese responses to repressive action by East Asian governments against unarmed civilians reveals "a pattern of Japanese effort to shield Asian governments from Western pressure." In the case of China, he says, Tokyo has been willing to sacrifice democracy and human rights "for a more intimate economic and political relationship with Beijing."
Some claim the West is pursuing a new basis for world domination. Some have argued that democracy in the Philippines constitutes only a superficial layer. But even if the commitment to a democratic system of government is deep-rooted, Manila does not seek (and in any case does not have the ability) to promote democracy as a goal of its foreign policy. Thus while generally supporting democratic governance and rejecting suggestions that democracy is not suitable for the Philippines, Manila has sought to distinguish itself from the Western projection of a universal norm. The following quote from Robert R. Romulo, the Philippine secretary of foreign affairs, is illustrative:

In the political realm, we believe that human rights mean that the leadership of the state must have the mandate of the people and that the people must have a voice in the formulation and implementation of public policy. This is the substance of democracy. However, countries may, and often do, differ on how a mandate is bestowed and how the public's participation in policy formulation is carried out. In other words, countries differ in their political systems. Here, no state has the right to impose its own system upon another.

In South Korea democratic governance is of recent vintage. Although it appears that democracy is becoming established in a domestic context, Seoul has not made the promotion of democracy an explicit goal of its foreign policy. While generally supportive of the Western position, Seoul, like Manila, has sought to distinguish itself from the Western camp to avoid alienating its Asian neighbors. Speaking on the issue of human rights at the UN conference in 1993, the South Korean foreign minister, while asserting that such rights are important regardless of the political and economic circumstances, stressed that without economic prosperity human rights and democracy cannot flourish. Reminding the audience that the attainment of human rights is a long journey, he cautioned against a self-righteous approach.

Contestation by Governing Elite
Nearly all the other East and Southeast Asian governments strongly contest the projection of democracy and human rights as universally valid norms. This contestation has at least five key strands:

- The projected norms run counter to the key principles of sovereignty and noninterference in domestic affairs;
- Democratization would undermine political stability and economic growth;
- Human rights must be conceived broadly to include not only political and civil rights but also socioeconomic rights;
- Liberal democracy is alien to Asian political culture; and
- Asia can no longer be dictated to.

The remarks of nearly all the delegates and the final declaration of the Asian regional conference on human rights in Bangkok (March-April 1993), as well as the statements made by Asian representatives at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993, attest to the high premium placed by Asia's political leaders on sovereignty and noninter-
Many East Asian leaders, such as Singapore’s Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, argue that economic reform must precede political reform.

In their view, each country has the right to choose its own political system. Issues like human rights, freedom of the press, and freedom of association are matters of domestic jurisdiction, not concerns of the international community. In their view, each country has the right to choose its own political system. Issues like human rights, freedom of the press, and freedom of association are matters of domestic jurisdiction, not concerns of the international community. Some claim that behind the guise of universal norms, the West is pursuing a new basis for world domination. It aims, they say, to undermine and overthrow existing governments and to compensate for its own weaknesses (lack of competitiveness, excessive consumption, low savings and investment, poor education) through “new protectionism” and by exporting decadence to Asian countries with a view to undermining their vibrancy and slowing their economic growth.*

The West is also charged with applying human rights and democratic criteria selectively—by condemning the military coups in Peru, Thailand, and Nigeria but condoning the one in Algeria, for example, and failing to act promptly to protect the Bosnian Muslims. The projection of democracy and human rights as universal values, according to this argument, has imperial and conspiratorial motives and should be viewed as a threat. (The Chinese and Vietnamese governments refer to this as the threat of “peaceful evolution.”) As noted by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad: “When we achieved independence we thought we would be free. But the North is still subjecting us to imperial pressures.”

Contrary to the Western claim that democracy promotes economic prosperity and has the necessary tools for resolving domestic conflict, East and Southeast Asian leaders argue that undue emphasis on democracy and civil liberties can exacerbate domestic conflict in deeply divided societies, undermining political stability with negative consequences for economic growth, development, and civil order. The experience of East and Southeast Asian countries, in their view, clearly suggests that economic growth and law and order were the achievements of enlightened authoritarian governments—and that democratization, as in Taiwan, South Korea, and Thailand, followed economic success and not vice versa. Citing frequent political conflict and slow economic growth in democracies like India and the Philippines, as well as the desperate political and economic conditions in Russia, East Asian leaders make the case for gradualism and argue that economic reform must precede political reform. Singapore’s senior minister, Lee Kuan Yew, has been in the forefront campaigning against democracy for countries like China and the Philippines. Only incumbent governments, it is argued, can decide on issues like the pace of reform and the sequence to be followed because it is they and their people—not Western governments and media—who will have to suffer the consequences of failed policies. Western advocacy is denounced as preaching without responsibility.

*The term “new protectionism” has been coined to describe the alleged effort by the Western countries to offset the comparative advantage of developing countries in cost of labor and resources by insisting on certain labor and environmental standards.

In his address to representatives of 55 developing countries in Kuala Lumpur to set the Third World agenda for the Earth Summit held in Rio in June 1992. See Far Eastern Economic Review (14 March 1992: 22.) Although the West tends to view Mahathir as a maverick, his views and actions command significant support within Malaysia and in many East and Southeast Asian countries. See Far Eastern Economic Review (20 Aug. 1992: 16-19.)
Asian political cultures value the rights of the community over those of the individual

Although some contend that the concept of rights is alien to Asian societies, the mainstream argument admits that human rights are indeed a worthwhile objective. The Asian case is for a broad conception of human rights in which socioeconomic rights carry equal weight alongside political and civil rights. These rights should be treated as a bundle without favoring or ignoring any particular element.¹

The case is also made for an incremental approach in the development of human rights that takes due account of each country’s culture, history, and socioeconomic circumstances. Based on a broad conception of human rights, it is argued that the right to development is fundamental, that the West has a moral obligation to the developing countries in this regard, and that it has failed to live up to this obligation. A substrand of this argument maintains that aid and trade should not be tied to demands for political change or human rights. Further, by failing to provide for the safety of its own citizens, failing to protect its own minority groups, and ignoring the poverty and homelessness of a large number of its own people, the West, it is argued, does not have the high moral ground on the issue of human rights.¹

As seen by many East and Southeast Asian leaders, the democratic system is grounded in Western culture and peculiar to European states. Even in the West the achievement of full democracy took more than two centuries, and the democratic regimes in France, Germany, and Italy were interrupted by monarchy, Nazism, and fascism. Without a high level of economic development and education and political tolerance, critics say that the democratic system cannot be transplanted to Asian countries. Asian political cultures are different in that they place a higher value on the rights of the community than on those of the individual and prefer effective governance to constitutional government. They are more tolerant of benevolent authoritarianism. Crudely put: as long as the government delivers, its form and constitution are not of concern to the people.¹

A more sophisticated version of this argument takes aim at the liberal component of democracy—which enshrines the individual’s political rights and defines the structure of Anglo-American democracy—by making the case for an Asian variant of democracy.¹⁹ Accepting that economic growth will generate pressure for greater political openness and that in the contemporary era political power must be seen to issue from the people, this version emphasizes the democratic component of liberal democracy, especially the procedural dimension. The democracy that emerges, according to this argument,

¹China accords greater weight to socioeconomic rights and argues for sequential development with priority accorded to socioeconomic rights. See the statement by the Chinese representative to the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna.

¹See, for example, the human rights report issued by the Human Rights Society of China. According to this report, the percentage of imprisoned criminals in the total population is lower in China than in the United States, women experience less discrimination than in the United States, and not a single person froze to death in China whereas 130 did so in the United States during a blizzard in January 1994. See Far Eastern Economic Review (7 July 1994: 34).

¹According to Lee Kuan Yew (1993: 36–38), good government (honest, effective, and efficient, promoting the good of the community) rather than democracy should be the goal. He rejects the assumption that all men and women are equal and argues that, with a few exceptions, democracy has not produced good government.
will be peculiarly Asian—placing the community and the common good above the individual with the public displaying greater respect for authority. While opposition will not be precluded, the system will be characterized by a dominant party, a centralized bureaucracy, and a strong interventionist government. This Asian variant, it is asserted, is a final form, not a transitional phase on the path to liberal democracy.

The final strand pertains not to the system of government or the contents of human rights but to the fact of the shifting distribution of power. In light of their growing economic power and their rich cultural traditions, Asia's countries and their interests, it is argued, must influence the writing of

Many East and Southeast Asian leaders make the case for a broad conception of human rights in which socioeconomic rights carry equal weight alongside political and civil rights. Without economic prosperity, they argue, human rights and democracy cannot flourish.
The West must abandon its assumptions of moral superiority and realize that it can no longer dictate terms to the Asian countries. It must be prepared not only to accommodate their interests but also to learn from them. A level playing field must be created. Only then can one seriously discuss democracy and human rights.

It is clear, then, that many of Asia’s leaders do not share the Western belief that democratic governance and human rights are universal norms. Among the East and Southeast Asian countries that have a democratic political system, only Japan has made the promotion of democracy an explicit foreign policy goal. But this commitment is only lukewarm and differs from that of the West in strategy and style. The governing elites in other countries, particularly the non-democratic ones, reject these values. Hence they cannot be expected to voluntarily infuse these norms into their domestic politics. Their contestation has a strong self-serving element, of course, but it is not without resonance in their body politic.

**Domestic Support for Democracy and Human Rights**

There is a small but growing constituency for the norms of democracy and human rights in Asia—even in countries like Indonesia, Burma, and China. Despite being labeled a “threat from the left” by the Suharto government and the Indonesian military, democratic governance has become very much part of the contemporary political discourse in that country, and indigenous human rights organizations have begun to spring up.

In Burma a number of civilian leaders including Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi have proclaimed their commitment to democracy. There is also considerable public support for this norm as demonstrated by the September 1988 uprising and the landslide victory of the National League for Democracy in the tightly controlled May 1990 elections in which the military had hoped to demonstrate its mandate from the people.

The Tiananmen Square incident shows that there is a constituency in China, as well, although its size is difficult to gauge.

Moreover, the meeting of the Asian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that preceded the regional intergovernmental human rights meeting in Bangkok endorsed the norm of human rights. The starting point for these organizations was the citizen and not the state.

The existence and activities of these indigenous groups and individuals, despite grave danger to their lives, families, and property, refute, at least in part, the position taken by the governing elite that democracy and human rights are Western conceptions with no resonance in Asian political culture.

Support at this level is important. Such forces can be decisive in determining the scope, pace, and direction of domestic political change. As pro-democratic constituencies grow and gather momentum, they begin to challenge the legitimacy of the antidemocratic governing elite, as was the case in the Philippines in February 1986 and in Burma in 1988 and 1990.

Despite the salience of such constituencies, their importance, particularly in Indonesia and China, should not be exaggerated. These groups are still relatively small. Through repression, co-optation, and control over the funding and activities of pro-democracy NGOs, governments in these
countries closely control (formally and informally) the organizations, movements, and individuals who espouse the norms of democracy and human rights.

In the short run, the prospects of these groups for influencing the system of government are limited. Over the long term, however, they may become more significant, particularly during a “crisis of authority.” Yet even then, as demonstrated by the experience in the Philippines and the ongoing stalemate in Burma, non-democratic governments can continue to exercise state power for a long time through the application of massive coercion and with external support.

Further, while the opposition of these constituencies to the incumbent government may be clear, this opposition cannot be construed as a sign of their commitment to democracy and human rights. Indeed, democracy and human rights may simply be a vehicle for other causes. In Indonesia, for example, some have argued that the Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI) may be using democracy as a means to bring about an Islamic state. In the case of China, it has been argued that the Tiananmen demonstrators were demanding better living conditions, not democracy. Even among those who may be genuinely committed to democracy, there is a strong belief that the democratic system of government must be adapted to local conditions. In Indonesia, for example, people still remember the negative experiences of the democratic period (1950-57) and many in the nongovernmental elite believe that when democracy does ultimately come to Indonesia, it will have to be grounded in “Indonesian” values, whatever these may be.

Two other developments are also salient. First, despite their criticism, most East and Southeast Asian governments have come to accept human rights as an issue they cannot avoid—hence their attempt in Vienna at the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights to influence, with some success, the content as well as the regulatory aspects of this issue. The Vienna Declaration is a compromise of Western and Asian positions. The West had to sign on to socioeconomic rights; the Asian countries had to accept some minimal inviolable political rights and civil liberties “regardless of the political, economic, and cultural system.” By helping to write the rules of the game, the Asian countries have an obligation to honor, to some extent at least, the contents of the declaration. The Vienna Declaration also affords some leverage, if only symbolic, for domestic and international groups to advance their cause on the basis of principles accepted by the international community, including Asian governments.

Second, there is growing recognition by the elite as well as the politically aware public that sovereignty resides in the people and that popular sovereignty is a key component of political legitimacy. Economic growth, industrialization, higher levels of education, the accompanying growth of the middle class—all have the power to sharpen the public’s political consciousness and increase their awareness of the importance of popular sovereignty. Recognition of this fact is reflected in the actions of governments in Indonesia, in Burma, and to a limited degree even in Vietnam to convey the impression that the people have participated in selecting or at least endorsing the government. Moreover, opposition to governments is framed in the name of the people.

While popular sovereignty can be harnessed in support of non-democratic governments, ultimately there is likely to be tension between the demands of popular sovereignty and those of an authoritarian political system. Popular sovereignty cannot always be controlled—as demonstrated by the unexpected outcomes of the elections in Burma (1990) and in the Philippines (1986).

These developments and their likely consequences, however, are long term in nature and there is no guarantee they will lead to greater acceptance of democracy and human rights. In the short term, the attitudes of the governing elite are likely to be more significant in influencing the orientation of the state and thus the international environment.

THE EFFECTS OF INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE

As there is little support for the Western projection of universal norms among the governing elite, can the Western governments compel their Asian counterparts to accept these norms? Do they have the power to force acceptance or at least to move the political systems in the desired direction? The questions to explore here include: Which countries are committed to promoting democracy? How extensive is their commitment? How does this goal relate to their other priorities? How susceptible are the target countries? And have the efforts to promote democracy through material inducement been successful?

The primary concern of the United States and other Western countries has not been the strengthening of old democracies in Asia or the consolidation of new ones as in the Philippines,
China has the ultimate potential to challenge the predominant position of the United States

South Korea, Taiwan, or Mongolia.* Instead the aim has been to foster human rights and encourage political pluralism, particularly in China but also in other authoritarian states such as Burma and Indonesia. Several reasons account for this emphasis.

First, new democracies like South Korea and Taiwan are relatively affluent and the likelihood of a rollback in these two countries is perceived to be slim. There is little that Washington can do in terms of economic assistance. It sees its primary role in terms of political support for the democratic governments and a continued guarantee of the security of both countries.

Second, while U.S. economic assistance has been limited, Washington's political backing has enabled Mongolia and the Philippines to receive substantial international aid. In the case of the Philippines, U.S. support for the Multilateral Aid Initiative was billed as a demonstration of the American "determination to fortify democracy's economic base." The U.S. Congress, however, in light of tight budgetary considerations as well as bitterness over the Philippine decision to terminate American military bases, has progressively reduced the U.S. allocation for the Multilateral Aid Initiative.†

Third, unlike the countries cited earlier, China is a large country with a critical impact on security and stability in East Asia, a region of great strategic concern to the United States. It also has the ultimate potential to challenge the predominant position of the United States. Thus it is considered to be in Washington's strategic interest to encourage democratic development in China as quickly as possible. Further, the high passion and outrage that flowed from the Tiananmen incident account for the human rights focus of American policy toward China. A similar but much less intense moral outrage and the need to ensure consistency has engaged the United States in Burma. Although the U.S. concern with Indonesia has resulted primarily from pressure from human rights and labor organizations, the killings in Dili aroused political passions in the United States Congress as well.‡

In seeking to foster human rights and political change in these countries, the United States has relied primarily on diplomatic and economic means. It has not resorted to military action or the support of political movements.§ In addition to suspending high-level diplomatic contacts and downgrading relations, the United States has tied its bilateral and multilateral aid, trade, military exchange,

*In Eastern Europe the West seeks to use the resources of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) established in 1991 to "promote multiparty democracy, pluralism, and market economies." Quoted in Leftwich (1993: 609).


‡On 21 November 1991, Indonesian troops gunned down scores of pro-independence Timorese protesters at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, the capital of Timor-Timor. Portuguese Timor was forcibly annexed by Jakarta during 1975-76. This annexation has been and continues to be resisted by sections of the Timorese population.

§While the U.S. government does not directly support pro-democracy movements, it has, through the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the Agency for International Development, and the U.S. Information Agency, provided assistance to civil society organizations and for political institution building. NED supports a number of human rights organizations and pro-democracy organizations that are part of movements struggling for democratic transition.
The high passion and outrage that flowed from the Tiananmen incident account for the human rights focus of American policy toward China.

and technology transfer to such issues as the protection of human rights, respect for the outcome of elections, opposition to military coups, creation of free trade unions, protection of the environment, liberalization of the economy, and freeing of trade. These efforts have had only limited success. While the targeted countries have made marginal concessions, they have not in the main conceded on core issues. Several reasons account for this situation: conflicting priorities and lack of domestic consensus in the United States; lack of support by other Asian countries; perceptions of Western policies as regime-threatening by some governments; and the relative invulnerability of target states to such policies. These points are elaborated below with reference to the policies of the United States (and other Western countries) toward China after the Tiananmen incident, Burma after the September 1988 political uprising, and Indonesia after the Timor-Timor incident in November 1991.

China

Washington, Paris, and later the G-7 countries as a group strongly condemned the actions of the Beijing government at Tiananmen Square, calling upon it “to cease action against those who have done no more than claim their legitimate rights to democracy and liberty.”

The Bush administration suspended all export of weapons, stopped exchanges between senior military officials, and offered humanitarian assistance through the International Red Cross. Under growing pressure from Congress, the United States subsequently suspended all high-level diplomatic contacts with China and resolved with the G-7 countries to suspend loans to Beijing by international agencies. The Bush administration, however, resisted pressures for more forceful action. The Pelosi Bill, for example, would have transformed the administrative sanctions into law. Although a bill was eventually passed, it gave the president sufficient latitude to waive the conditions if American national interests were affected.

Beginning in June 1990, the renewal of most-favored nation (MFN) status for China became an annual battle between the Bush administration and
those who wanted to make the renewal conditional upon improvement in China's human rights record. This issue came to dominate U.S. policy toward China.

Conflicting Priorities Because of China's permanent membership in the UN Security Council and its strategic importance in Asia, its cooperation was crucial in enabling a UN-sponsored coalition against Iraq, in seeking an international settlement of the Cambodian problem, in attempting to relax tensions in the Korean peninsula, and on questions of "destabilizing" missile sales to countries like Iran and Pakistan and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Thus suspension of high-level diplomatic contact with China was never a realistic option. In time this sanction was whittled down and finally set aside with the September 1993 meeting of Secretary Warren Christopher and his Chinese counterpart. This formal change in policy was also driven by the U.S. desire to engage the politically significant People's Liberation Army (PLA) in a dialogue (the PLA is expected to play a crucial role in the post-Deng succession), and for the successful convening of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit to which President Clinton had committed himself in July 1993. This summit required China's participation as well as its cooperation with regard to the participation of Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Economic imperatives moderated the human rights component of the U.S. China policy as well. To address issues of concern like protection of intellectual property rights, the textile quota, and the burgeoning trade deficit ($22.7 billion in 1993), Washington had to engage in a dialogue with Beijing.

Further, while the termination of MFN status would certainly have hurt China, it would also have hurt some American companies, although the potential damage to the American economy is not easy to determine.* As the Chinese economy is currently the most dynamic in the world and its growth is expected to continue, American companies did not want to be excluded from this market. Hence the American business community called for the unconditional renewal of China's MFN status. Economic reform and decentralization, they argued, would do more for the cause of political pluralism in China than conditionality, which touches on the sensitive issue of national sovereignty. While admitting the economic cost to the United States, human rights advocates disputed the extent of the cost and argued that, in light of the huge trade deficit, the cost would be greater to China—and, moreover, that China needs the American market (which cannot be replaced easily or quickly) to maintain its dynamic growth.

Both points of view have merit. But the key point here is that even though the United States had some leverage, which produced some results in the economic field, this leverage could not be exercised with impunity because of the increasing dependence of the American economy on international trade. The cost to the United States and other friendly countries like Hong Kong and Taiwan had to be considered. There was the concern too, that termination of MFN status together

* Beijing had indicated that should its MFN status not be renewed, it would retaliate by canceling orders for American goods. This would certainly have affected companies like Boeing, which then had orders for 64 planes worth $3.9 billion and anticipates further orders based on the calculation that China will require 800 airplanes in the next 15 years.
with tensions in U.S.-Japan economic relations would further intensify the atmosphere of crisis in U.S. relations with Asian countries.

The Asian Approach  Apart from the conflicting priorities and the associated problem of forging domestic consensus, the American attempt to use economic and diplomatic sanctions to alter Beijing's domestic behavior has not had the support of Asian countries. Japan, the predominant aid donor to China, subscribed to the G-7 statement condemning Beijing's action and suspended aid and loans to China, but progressively opted for a constructive engagement policy. Following the Houston G-7 summit in July 1990, Tokyo resumed lending to China in November 1990. Japan's aid package for the 1990-95 period, amounting to nearly $6 billion, helped insulate China from any actual or proposed Western economic sanctions.

While Tokyo has communicated its concern to Beijing, it has not attempted to link aid and trade to improvement in China's human rights record. Japanese premier Morihiro Hosakawa, during his visit to China in March 1994, agreed with Chinese premier Li Peng that "it is not proper to force a Western or European type of democracy onto others." From the outset there has been a strong pro-China lobby in Japan, and the primary rationale underlying Japan's developmental assistance to China has been stability (domestic and regional). Concerned with the consequences of a sharp deterioration in Sino-American relations, Tokyo called upon Washington to view its human rights concern in a larger perspective. Although the perception of China as a threat is beginning to gain ground in Japan, the likely impact of this shift on Japan's aid policy is not clear.

While expressing their concern over Tiananmen, the other Asian countries have treated the incident not as an international concern but as a domestic matter to be resolved by Beijing. Hence they did not support the policies of the West, which they regard as misguided and pushing China into a corner. Like Japan they view the economic route to political liberalization as more promising. In light of their similar political circumstances, some also saw the Chinese response as a counterforce against ideological domination by the West. Beijing capitalized on this sentiment to prevent diplomatic isolation by the West and to restore its damaged international credibility.

The sympathetic approach of other Asian countries was influenced by the opportunities they saw in the Chinese economy, too, and by their concern that an unstable China would unsettle regional stability. While the political and economic clout of the Asian countries, bar Japan, may be limited, without their support the West's policy of diplomatic isolation could not succeed. Further, the support of the Asian countries allowed China to portray the West's policy as imperial and subversive, making resistance on nationalist grounds more attractive and credible.

Beijing's Resolve  From the perspective of the incumbents in Beijing, the Tiananmen demonstration and its suppression have enormous domestic political significance. Any admission that their actions were mistaken would undermine their own legitimacy as well the regime's—hence the stubborn refusal of Chinese leaders to concede in any substantive way.

Equally important is their belief that political opening will have negative consequences for China's stability and economic growth, that China with a 5,000-year history cannot be dictated to, and that it has the power and leverage to blunt the West's isolation-cum-sanctions approach. Beijing may also have believed that Washington was not serious about terminating China's MFN status. Further, in the view of the Chinese leadership, human rights in China, both political and socioeconomic rights, have improved substantially since 1979 but the West has chosen to ignore this fact.

Hence, despite the diplomatic and economic pressure and many high-level visits from Washington to Beijing and summit meetings, China made only marginal concessions in human rights. It has, however, cooperated on certain security matters (Cambodia, the Korean peninsula, to a degree on Iraq, but less so on missile exports and proliferation) and addressed certain U.S. economic concerns (protection of intellectual property rights, export of prison-labor products, violation of textile quotas) in an effort to demonstrate that it is a responsible major power and a reliable trading partner.

Washington's Dilemma  In the months preceding the 3 June 1994 deadline for the Clinton administration to decide whether to renew China's MFN status, there was a growing recognition in Washington that linking MFN renewal to human rights was not having the desired effect and was in fact contributing to considerable tension in relations with Beijing.

President Clinton's 1993 executive order, which renewed China's MFN status for a further year and made
future renewal conditional on improvements in specified areas, appears to have been written rather broadly to allow certification based on minimal progress by Beijing and to delink MFN from human rights in future years. The executive order required progress in seven specific areas: freedom of emigration for Chinese citizens, cessation of export of prison-labor products, adherence to the universal declaration of human rights, accounting for and release of political and religious prisoners, humane treatment of prisoners, maintaining the cultural and religious integrity of Tibet, and allowing freedom of international broadcasting into China.

Beijing, however, refused to go beyond the minimal concessions that it had already made—thus contributing to the failure of Secretary of State Christopher’s visit to China in March 1994, and creating a credibility problem for the Clinton administration. If Washington backtracked and certified that China had made “significant overall progress,” it would have conveyed to the world that the United States is not serious about human rights. Such an approach also raises a domestic credibility problem. But terminating China’s MFN status in order to maintain international credibility would have affected the broader international goals of the United States and would have had an economic cost as well.

The concern in Washington finally shifted from the human rights situation in China to finding a way out of the predicament the administration had created for itself. With pressure mounting from all sides of the MFN debate, the administration began to explore “half measure” options as
Promotion of human rights has been downgraded as a goal of U.S. foreign policy in China

well as the possibility of cutting a deal with China.

To prevent further complications Washington postponed a decision on whether China has failed to live up to a 1992 agreement on protecting intellectual property rights. Finally, on 26 May 1994, President Clinton announced his decision to renew China’s MFN status with virtually no conditions and to delink human rights and China’s MFN. The president acknowledged that China’s progress on human rights had fallen short of the conditions he set last year, but said that China’s economic and strategic importance were so great that it would be unwise to impose broad sanctions. He also acknowledged that China would be reluctant to act if it appeared that it was conceding under pressure from a foreign power. Thus, at least insofar as China is concerned, human rights has been downgraded as a goal of American foreign policy.

The China experience demonstrates that even the might of the world’s only superpower cannot force political change in a major country through the use of diplomatic and economic sanctions. A not too dissimilar set of circumstances appears to have bought time for Burma’s State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which continues to exercise control over political power.

Burma

Following the suppression of the popular uprising in September 1988 and the military’s refusal to transfer power to the National League for Democracy (NLD), which won a landslide victory in the May 1990 elections, many Western governments demanded that the election results be respected—that power be transferred to the NLD. To back this demand, Washington downgraded diplomatic relations with Rangoon, ceased cooperation on counternarcotics efforts (thus denying bilateral aid), decided not to support multilateral lending to Burma, and imposed an arms embargo. Most Western governments followed a similar course of action. As the West’s political and economic interaction with Burma was already at a low level, however, Washington attempted to universalize the diplomatic isolation and economic embargo against Burma through the UN and ASEAN.

This effort continues to be resisted by the Asian countries, particularly China, Japan, and Thailand. Although these countries have considerable leverage over Burma, various political, strategic, and economic considerations have led them to support the military government (China) or to adopt a constructive engagement policy (Japan and the ASEAN countries).

Beijing has supported the military government out of “common cause” considerations as well as for strategic reasons (access to the Indian Ocean and construction of overland routes into Burma) and economic motives (northern Burma has since come under the economic domination of China). China’s political and diplomatic support has been crucial for SLORC’s survival. Not only does China’s support make UN Security Council action impossible, but the arms supplied by China (variously estimated to be worth between $800 million and $1.4 billion) have enabled the military government to control the Burman people and the ethnic minorities. Beijing together with Bangkok has also pressured ethnic minorities to negotiate with Rangoon.

Tokyo, the major aid donor to
Burmese pro-democracy leader and Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest since 1989.

Rangoon,* initially followed the West's lead in suspending aid, but it soon recognized the SLORC government and resumed aid for existing projects. As the new government had effective control over the country and had not violated any international laws or treaties, Tokyo insisted that Japan was obliged to recognize it on legal premises. Moreover, it claimed, recognition and resumption of aid for existing projects would allow Tokyo to encourage political and economic liberalization in Burma. Several other considerations appear to have underscored this decision: pressure from Japanese companies engaged in projects in Burma; the special relationship between the two countries that dates back to World War II, and concern that China and other Southeast Asian countries would quickly fill the vacuum created by the withdrawal of Japanese aid. The timing of the resumption of aid coincided with Rangoon's announcement that multiparty elections would take place before June 1990.

Japan has not, however, provided any new developmental aid and, in fact, has sought to use the promise of new aid to persuade Rangoon to change its policies.† There has been continued domestic pressure in Japan for new aid to Burma, and the Japanese aid community believes that continued suspension of aid is counterproductive to Japanese interests. Japanese business delegations continue to visit Burma, but the government of Japan has insisted that any new aid will depend on political liberalization.

Beginning in late 1990, Tokyo issued carefully worded statements calling upon SLORC to respect the will of the people. This effort to keep a distance from SLORC has contributed to the decline of Japanese political and economic influence in Burma as China, South Korea, and the ASEAN countries assume a greater economic role. But Tokyo continues to support the constructive engagement policy of ASEAN and it welcomed the Thai decision to invite Rangoon to attend the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting in Bangkok in July 1994.

The ASEAN countries, in the belief that isolation will further drive Burma into the embrace of China and that international opening and interaction could alter SLORC's domestic behavior, have from the outset opted for a policy of constructive engagement. In pursuing this policy they have promoted aid, trade, and investment in Burma and have tried to bring Rangoon into the regional fold. Despite their friendly approach, Rangoon refused to receive Raul Manglapus, then foreign secretary of the Philippines, as a representative of ASEAN in October 1991. Rangoon's ill treatment of its Muslim minority (the Rohingyas) and the flow of refugees into Bangladesh alienated Malaysia and Indonesia, which subsequently adopted a more ambivalent attitude toward Burma. They objected to the proposal from Thailand that Burma be invited as ASEAN's guest to attend the July 1994 ASEAN foreign ministers meeting but went along with the sugges-

*Japan has been the major aid donor to Burma since the 1950s. Japanese aid to Burma, which peaked at $244 million in 1986, amounted to about 60 percent of all aid received by Burma (see Steinberg 1993 and Seekins 1992).

†In December 1991 the Japanese deputy foreign minister visited Rangoon and raised the question of democratic reform as a prerequisite for full resumption of aid and also urged that Aung San Suu Kyi be allowed to see her family. Tokyo also approached Ne Win through a network of veterans. It has been suggested that SLORC allowed family members to visit Suu Kyi to accommodate Japan. See Far Eastern Economic Review [14 May 1992: 17-18].
The policies of Asian countries thwarted the West's attempt to induce political change in Burma.

The policies of Asian countries thwarted the West's attempt to induce political change in Burma. Thailand, reaping substantial economic benefits and concerned with stability in Burma, has remained close to SLORC, aiding Rangoon in its efforts to control the ethnic minority groups along the Burmese-Thai border as well as helping Burma to forge a closer relationship with ASEAN. Singapore too has maintained close political and business relations with Burma. Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, the first ASEAN head of state to visit Burma (in March 1994), emphasized the continued relevance of the constructive engagement policy.

While noting that political change is required, he added that this would be undertaken by the Burmese in their own way and time.

The support of China and the constructive engagement policies of Japan and the ASEAN countries have effectively annulled the West's attempt to induce domestic political change through international pressure. And, to consolidate its domestic position and burnish its international image, SLORC itself has taken a number of steps—encouraging foreign and domestic private investment, releasing some political prisoners, lifting curfews and martial law, reopening colleges and universities, allowing family members to visit Aung San Suu Kyi, engaging the ethnic minorities in peace talks, and reaching an agreement with Dhaka for the repatriation of the Muslim Rohinggas. SLORC also indicated that it may start a dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi. Although the junta failed to follow through with similar indications in 1993, the head of the ruling junta did meet with Aung San Suu Kyi in September 1994 for the first time since she was placed under house arrest in 1989. But SLORC has not conceded in the key area of relinquishing or sharing political power.

Despite pressure from the West and the constructive engagement policies of Japan and the ASEAN countries, SLORC appears to have strengthened its control over political power in the country. Perhaps because of this, India, the only Asian country to impose a political and economic embargo on Burma, appears to have opted for a new two-pronged strategy. While continuing to speak out for democracy in Burma, New Delhi, concerned with Beijing's gains in Burma and the need for Burmese cooperation in dealing with insurgencies in India's northeastern states of Manipur and Mizoram, concluded an agreement with Rangoon during the Indian foreign secretary's visit to Burma in March 1992.

Recognizing the failure of their punitive isolationist policies, Australia and some EC countries have moved toward ASEAN's constructive engagement policy as well, albeit with insistence on specific benchmarks to judge progress.

Washington's efforts to enlist the cooperation of Asian governments to make the arms embargo more encompassing, to impose a trade embargo, and to prevent SLORC's participation in regional forums have not succeeded. The United States, however, has not substantially altered its policy. Progress in human rights is still the number one objective of U.S. policy in Burma, followed by controlling narcotics trafficking, and advancing its economic interests. Washington continues to insist on the unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi and is pressuring SLORC to open a dialogue with her. The appointment of an American ambassador to Burma appears likely to be delayed until this dialogue is started and Burma is seen...
moving toward genuine democratic reform.\textsuperscript{32}

That the United States can continue this human-rights-first policy in the case of Burma is due to the fact that Burma, unlike China, is unimportant in strategic and economic terms and hence the cost of such a policy is relatively modest. Although this policy has achieved little thus far, Burma is not China. Despite the appearance of firm control, SLORC is still faced with a fundamental legitimacy problem that is difficult to overcome without entering into some form of power sharing. Continued external pressure in this situation may not be without effect. But for this policy to succeed, Washington must somehow gain the support of the ASEAN countries.

**Indonesia**

While condemning the government killings in Timor-Timor, the United States, unlike the Netherlands, Canada, and Denmark, did not suspend aid. Along with Japan, it threatened to do so only if the independent commission set up by President Suharto endorsed the official army version of the incident.

President Clinton raised the violation of human rights in Timor-Timor with Suharto during their post G-7 meeting, and at the urging of the United States and the European Community (EC), the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva passed a resolution in March 1992 expressing deep concern over the violation of human rights in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{34} But the Clinton administration did not seek to link aid and trade to political change in Timor-Timor, although some EC countries attempted to do so.

Indeed, the U.S. Congress was much more the active player with respect to Indonesia. But even here the proposed legislation—to cut off aid to Indonesia ($58 million in 1992), to suspend GSP (Generalized System of Preferences) export privileges, and to require the American representative in the World Bank to oppose loans to Indonesia until human rights violations ceased and the people of Timor-Timor were allowed self-determination—was set aside. Congress did, however, manage to eliminate the International Military Education and Training funding ($2.3 million in 1992) for Indonesia and block the sale of F-5 jet fighters from Jordan to Indonesia. But this has not prevented the United States from selling weapons systems to Indonesia.\textsuperscript{*}

Indonesia responded to the West's condemnations at three levels. To stem the damage to its international standing (Indonesia was at the time chair of the nonaligned movement and continued aid was crucial for Indonesia's economic development), Jakarta appointed an independent commission to investigate the Timor-Timor incident. Following an advanced report of the commission that excessive force was used, President Suharto replaced two senior officers with operational responsibilities in Timor-Timor and instructed the Indonesian armed forces (ABRI) to set up a new commission to investigate whether any military personnel should face charges in a military tribunal.\textsuperscript{34} Foreign governments, particularly the United States and Japan, which had threatened to suspend aid, were satisfied with the report and Suharto's response. Concurrently Foreign Minis-
ter Ali Alatas traveled abroad to preempt further diplomatic action against Indonesia.

At another level, Suharto reacted negatively to international condemnation of Indonesia—especially by the Netherlands—and the attempt by the Netherlands and Portugal to link aid, trade, and export of arms to human rights violations in Timor-Timor. Jakarta rejected all aid from The Hague, which was in the forefront in condemning Indonesia, and disbanded the 24-year-old Inter-Government Group on Indonesia (IGGI) chaired by the Netherlands. With the support of Tokyo, Jakarta asked the World Bank to form a new aid group for Indonesia comprising all the old members except the Netherlands. This new consortium met in July 1992 and raised more money ($4.94 billion) than in the previous year ($4.75 billion).

The Suharto government’s reaction had wide public support in Indonesia, as many objected to the behavior of the Dutch as patronizing and hypocritical. Some Indonesian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), however, denounced the move. In their view, the associated government directive that NGOs and other private bodies in Indonesia may no longer receive aid from the Netherlands was designed to stifle their activities.∗

Jakarta, with the support of the other ASEAN members, rejected the attempt by the Netherlands and Portugal to link the conclusion of a new EC-ASEAN treaty on economic cooperation to a human rights clause that would make aid to Indonesia conditional upon improvement of the situation in Timor-Timor.† From the

∗The Legal Aid Institute and the Institute for the Defense of Human Rights received 80 percent of their funding from Dutch NGOs.
†Europe’s insistence on the inclusion of a human rights clause to ensure that EC assistance is not used to shore up governments violating basic rights has stalled the new treaty. See Far Eastern Economic Review (9 April 1992: 10.)
A bold human rights policy runs the risk of alienating Washington from Asia

beginning the ASEAN countries had objected to the inclusion of any conditional clause; moreover, the attempt by the Netherlands and Portugal did not have the support of the other EC countries. There was more common ground in backing international and ASEAN NGOs working for human rights. A compromise was finally reached with all parties agreeing to uphold human rights and Portugal and Indonesia agreeing to discuss Timor-Timor under the auspices of the UN secretary general.

Finally, Jakarta became an active participant at the international level in defining the content of human rights and arguing the case for human rights as an issue of domestic jurisdiction. Indonesia hosted a UN human rights workshop in January 1993 and has played an active role in the regional and world human rights conferences. Suharto also ordered the formation of a national human rights commission to keep the matter within domestic jurisdiction.

Labor practices are a specific human rights issue on the U.S.-Indonesia agenda. In June 1992 Asia Watch and the International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund (a pro-labor NGO) petitioned the U.S. trade representative to investigate Indonesian labor practices. Under U.S. law, Washington must end GSP privileges to a trading partner who is not taking steps to afford its workers internationally recognized rights including freedom of association, collective bargaining, prohibition of forced labor, and restrictions on child labor. Arguing that Indonesia has not accorded its workers these rights, the U.S. Labor Department pushed for the suspension of GSP privileges. This move was opposed by the State and Defense departments on the ground that Indonesia is a major player in Asia and a friend of the United States and that it has been a force for regional stability, has participated actively in international peacekeeping, and provides repair facilities for the U.S. Navy. Support of Jakarta was also cited as essential for the success of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, especially in light of Malaysia's criticism of the summit proposal.

In June 1993 the U.S. Trade Representative warned Indonesia that it had until February 1994 to improve its labor record or face curtailment of GSP access. Approximately $600 million worth of exports (14 percent of Indonesia's exports to the United States) benefited from the GSP in 1992. In response to American pressure, the Indonesian government increased minimum wages, revoked regulations allowing employers to call upon the military to deal with strikes, and softened union eligibility requirements. These measures, however, did not prevent the continued persecution of labor leaders and the withholding of recognition from independent trade unions; the government only recognizes the trade union set up by the government. Jakarta banned the largest independent trade union from holding its first congress in July 1993. Nevertheless, the U.S. Trade Representative was able to take Indonesia off the watch list, although it must continue to gain certification for GSP privileges every six months.

While strongly rejecting any attempt to link aid and trade to political change and human rights issues, Jakarta has been willing, though reluctantly, to address more specific concerns that do not threaten Indonesia's territorial integrity or the government's legitimacy. This approach
has generally been acceptable to Washington. A relatively low profile and much less demanding approach on the part of the United States, the greater legitimacy of the Suharto government, and Jakarta's desire to maintain the goodwill of the United States and a favorable international image—all help to explain the relative success that has attended U.S. policy with respect to Indonesia.

Observations

This survey of efforts by Western governments to alter the political behavior of Asian governments through diplomatic and economic pressures suggests several observations.

First, it is clear that the United States and the other Western countries do not have the power to compel authoritarian Asian governments, especially a major power like China, to alter their domestic political behavior through material incentives and pressures. From the perspective of the incumbent governments, the demands are regime threatening. The demands with respect to China, for example, may appear to focus only on human rights. But because these demands are rooted in the Tiananmen incident, which considerably weakened the legitimacy of the Leninist regime, and because the conditions relating to Tibet are perceived to affect China's political and territorial integrity, to Beijing they constitute a threat. In this situation, the desire to hold onto political power outweighs any diplomatic and economic cost. And except for a country like Burma, these countries are not without some political, security, or economic leverage over the West.

Second, diplomatic and economic sanctions are not without value, but their value is limited. They can be deployed to make a moral statement. And when an incumbent government is facing a crisis of authority, they may have catalytic value. But to persist with sanctions when the crisis is long past—especially without the cooperation of other key players—is of little value. The Indonesian and Chinese cases, however, demonstrate that sanctions can help to secure compliance in such areas as labor practices and treatment of prisoners—if the measures are not perceived as regime threatening.

Third, Asian countries have become major political and economic players in their own right. Without their cooperation, attempts by Western governments to shape the political and economic environment in Asia are not likely to succeed. Moreover, such efforts will be resented by the Asian countries.

Fourth, contrary to the assertion of human rights advocates that the three goals of U.S. foreign policy (ideology, security, and economics) are complementary, the promotion of democracy and human rights to a prominent position has created conflict among them. Limited resources, the U.S. economy's growing dependence on international trade and investment flows, and Washington's growing need to consult with other countries in the management of international security—all have increased tension among the three goals. Washington's China policy in the post-Tiananmen period.

Finally, apart from raising sustainability and credibility problems for the United States, a bold human rights policy runs the risk of alienating Washington from Asian countries—adding one more dimension to the already tense transpacific relations. Instead of contributing to the forging of a unified world order, it has fueled nationalism and Asianism and could polarize the Asia-Pacific region. In a leaked memorandum, Winston Lord, the U.S. assistant secretary for East Asia and the Pacific, expressed concern that overzealous pursuit of narrow goals would constitute a threat. In the region "is backfiring and driving Asian nations into a united front against the United States."36

DYNAMICS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL CHANGE

In addition to political ideals and material incentives, domestic political change can also be induced by changes in the international system. This aspect may be especially salient in light of the dramatic changes that have recently taken place in the distribution of power as well as in the economic and security relations in East and Southeast Asia. The emergence of powerful economies in the Western Pacific and the ending of the Cold War, together with developments like the disintegration of the Soviet Union, globalization of capital and technology, and the telecommunications and transportation revolutions, have dramatically altered the dynamics of the international system, including the Asia-Pacific region. How will changing economic and security dynamics affect domestic political change in East and Southeast Asian countries? And are the changes in the international system likely to foster or to inhibit democratic transition?
Economic Dynamics

Unlike their resistance to democracy and human rights, nearly all governments in East and Southeast Asia, including authoritarian and communist ones, have embraced the principles of a market economy. They seek to integrate their national economies into the global market economy in the hope of promoting rapid economic growth and contributing to their goals of industrialization and modernization. And, in fact, with a few exceptions, all these economies are experiencing rapid growth.

What are the consequences of embracing the idea of a market economy, internationalization of national economies, and rapid economic growth for domestic political change, particularly democratic transition? The three key features to consider here are the economic dynamism of the East and Southeast Asian countries, the growing interdependence and economic regionalism among the Asia-Pacific economies (especially among those in East and Southeast Asia), and the tensions in transpacific economic relations. The political consequences of these features may be examined at the domestic and international levels.

The Domestic Level

Conventional wisdom has it that a market economy, by fostering greater individualism, public accountability, rule of law, and growth of bureaucratic and legal institutions, will promote the development of a rule-based political system like democracy. Likewise, sustained high-level economic growth and attainment of a threshold of a high per capita income are expected to generate pressure for political change and lead to a democratic transition. Capitalist development, by changing the power of groups, their interests and alignments, affects the balance of power among them, setting in motion demands to alter the rules of the game. Apart from fostering the growth of rules and institutions, capitalism, it is argued, will contribute to the development of a middle class inclined toward democracy. Developments in South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand are advanced to support the relevance of these propositions for East and Southeast Asia.

That sustained economic growth has in the long run the potential to undermine the legitimacy of authoritarian governments and generate pressure for political liberalization is difficult to refute. But the accompanying proposition that this must necessarily lead to a multiparty democratic political system is questionable. With the exception of Thailand and the Philippines, the other democratic states (South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan) and semi-democratic states (Malaysia and Singapore) have had essentially dominant-party political systems. Even if the dominant-party system is viewed as transitional, this phase, as demonstrated by the Japanese experience, could be a protracted one, and there is no guarantee that it will eventually lead to a multiparty system. Despite rapid and sustained economic growth and a high per capita income, the political systems in Malaysia and Singapore have progressively become more authoritarian whereas Taiwan and South Korea are moving in the other direction of increasing freedom and political competition. It is too soon to draw any firm conclusion on the basis of recent political developments in Japan. A country’s political system, therefore, is more likely to be shaped by its own historical, cultural, socioeconomic,
Economic dynamism has increased the self-confidence of Asian leaders and political circumstances than by any universal trend.

Moreover, while South Korea, Taiwan, and now increasingly Thailand represent powerful evidence that economic development does generate democratic pressures and pluralism, their experience also shows that a market economy and high growth rates can coexist with authoritarian systems for quite extended periods, especially if the incumbent government is flexible enough to accommodate new centers of power. Further, as demonstrated by the experience of Thailand, the political orientation of the middle class depends on the stage of economic development and the relationship of the middle class with the government. In the early phase this class may well find it worthwhile to support the status quo. Only later—when it has become sizable and segmented and the interests of some segments conflict with those of the incumbent powerholders—will the middle class begin to demand political change. And political change induced from below by new socioeconomic groups (as in Thailand), unlike those initiated from the top (South Korea and Taiwan), is likely to be prolonged and tumultuous.

Although it may appear unlikely at this juncture, economic dynamism cannot last forever. Thus it is necessary to consider the political consequences of a sharp economic downturn or recession in these countries. Such a setback is likely to have a negative effect on authoritarian and democratic regimes alike. For authoritarian regimes, economic performance is usually a key component of their claim to legitimacy. Thus failure to perform will almost certainly undermine their legitimacy, as was the case with Marcos and Ne Win. This could happen in Indonesia, China, and Vietnam as well. But it could also happen to fledgling democratic regimes where the commitment to democracy is not deep-rooted. Poor performance will provide an excuse for strongmen and the military to oust democratic governments—as has been the case at various times in Thailand, the Philippines, Burma, and Indonesia. Slower economic growth in South Korea, for example, has tempered that country’s enthusiasm for democracy, although this does not threaten the legitimacy of its democratic regime.

The International Level Internationalization of national economies, increasing economic interdependence, and participation in regionalism are likely to create a freer flow of information and expose the elite and a growing percentage of the public to new ideas and alternative systems of government. The impact of this exposure does not, however, automatically favor democratic development. It depends on the public’s proclivities and experiences. Some may be attracted to the ideals of democracy; others may be disappointed by its drawbacks. It has become quite common in Asia, rightly or wrongly, to associate the perceived rise in crime, adultery, divorce, drug use, and homosexuality as well as the decline in productivity and the quality of education and many other social ills in Western countries with excessive individualism, which in turn is associated with liberal democracy. The difficulty of bringing about change in democratic societies is also perceived by some as unsuited for Asian countries in a hurry to modernize.

This negative appraisal of democracy is reinforced by a strong sense of nationalism and Asianism, which argues that Asian values are as good
as, if not superior to, Western values and that the West has a lot to learn from the East. Socialization among Asian leaders through regionalism could further strengthen their opposition to democracy. Camaraderie, peer pressure, and the need to maintain unity on other issues appear to have led countries like South Korea, the Philippines, and Japan to go along with opposition to “Western” values or at least to mute their support for them.

At the international level, growing economic interdependence, by reducing national autonomy, confers leverage on dominant economies. But this leverage, as observed earlier, is only of limited utility in altering the elite’s political beliefs in these states. Further, economic dynamism has increased the self-confidence of Asian leaders. The growing salience of the markets of East and Southeast Asia confers leverage on them, as well, which they can then deploy to counter the pressures from the West—as was the case, for example, with Beijing’s response to the threatened termination of China’s MFN status. Even a small country like Malaysia has wielded the economic weapon against Australia and Britain, and not without a measure of success. Sustained dynamism, increasing interdependence among the East and Southeast Asian countries, and cooperation among them through the projected East Asian Economic Caucus, for example, are likely to increase their political and economic power, making them less vulnerable to pressure from the West.

As noted earlier, transpacific trade tensions may reinforce the perception of an ideological threat from the West. Demands from Washington for opening of markets, elimination of subsidies, and enforcement of internationally recognized health, labor, and environmental standards could be viewed as an attempt by the United States to seek an unfair national advantage—a trend that is increasingly labeled the “new protectionism.” This trend could fuel nationalism and anti-Americanism, as has been periodically the case in Japan, South Korea, and several other countries. Such sentiments can be harnessed to strengthen the domestic

Washington’s demands for enforcement of internationally recognized health, labor, and environmental standards are characterized by some as a “new protectionism” whereby the United States gains an unfair advantage.
Position of authoritarian governments and to resist international pressure for political change. In the case of new democracies, such demands, if they have the effect of stalling economic growth, are likely to magnify the problems associated with democratic consolidation and in the worst case displace the regime.

It is clear, then, that the relationship between economic dynamics and domestic political change defies neat cause-and-effect relationships. If the current economic dynamism is sustained, then over the long term political liberalization appears likely in Indonesia and could also occur in China and Vietnam. In the short term, however, the staying power of the authoritarian governments in these countries may actually be enhanced. Economic failure, on the other hand, is likely to undermine their legitimacy. But persistent economic failures would also undermine the legitimacy of democratic governments in the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan.

Security Dynamics

Although the structure and dynamics of the post–Cold War security system in the Asia-Pacific region are still evolving, certain key features are discernible: the strategic predominance of the United States in the short to medium term but the waning of this dominion in the long run; the absence of new overarching security dynamics; relative peace in East and Southeast Asia along with the persistence of regional conflicts; and dilution of Cold War security arrangements with growing interest in self-reliance and regional arrangements. These shifts have a number of consequences for political change.

First, the communist governments in Asia, with the exception of Mongolia, have not collapsed. The fall of Marxist-Leninist governments in the former Soviet bloc countries in quick succession did, however, further discredit the communist ideology and undermine the legitimacy of Asian communist governments from the perspective of certain segments of the population, thus increasing their insecurity and forcing them to seriously explore alternative bases of legitimation.* But the discrediting of Marxism-Leninism as a political ideology does not imply that the democratic ideology has gained ground in these countries. Political and economic turmoil in Russia and several other Eastern European countries that embraced democracy and economic shock therapy have, in the eyes of the political elite and certain segments of the public, discredited the democratic system—thereby increasing the appeal of their own approach (gradual economic reform in a closed political system) and enhancing their self-confidence. In China, for example, insecurity was greatest immediately after the Tiananmen incident, but the Chinese government has become progressively more confident.

Second, the end of the Cold War and the Sino-Soviet conflict have contributed to a much less expansive conception of national security in the West.* For the United States, there is no longer a strategic need to provide political, diplomatic, and economic

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* After the legacy of the Cultural Revolution, China and later Vietnam and Laos had already begun to de-emphasize ideology and shift the focus of political legitimation to economic performance.

† One can argue, of course, that the new ideological component (promotion of democracy) in U.S. policy, as well as the broader conception of security that has become fashionable, contribute to an expansive conception of security.
American security guarantees do not carry the same urgency and credibility as before.

Support for authoritarian governments and the military in countries like the Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, and Taiwan. Beginning in the mid-1980s, Washington became more supportive of democratic forces in these and other countries. This trend has become even more pronounced in the post–Cold War era. In the case of the former Soviet Union, there was no longer a need to provide massive support for ideological allies like Vietnam, Laos, and the People’s Republic of Kampuchea. Soviet assistance to Vietnam was progressively reduced and finally terminated. With its economy in turmoil and political instability at home, Russia’s capacity to play a political-strategic role in Asia has been dramatically reduced. Although there is apprehension in China over the threat of “peaceful evolution,” strategic and economic rather than ideological considerations appear to influence China’s conception of security and its support for governments like those in Burma and North Korea.

Third, while the United States continues to be strategically predominant, its capacity to influence the structure of political domination in Asian states is limited. Although a number of Asian countries do value a continued U.S. military presence in East Asia, they separate security from ideology. Any attempt to link the two will be viewed as a threat and resisted by many Asian states. And for a number of reasons, American security guarantees do not carry the same urgency or credibility as before. Together with the absence of an overall security dynamic, this shift has generated greater interest in self-reliance and regional arrangements among Asian countries. These developments—together with Asia’s growing self-confidence and the relative peace and security that characterize East and Southeast Asia today—have generally had the effect of reducing dependence upon the United States, thus reducing its leverage and influence, while increasing the freedom and flexibility of the smaller Asian powers.

Fourth, with the exception of North Korea, the relevance of external security threats as a basis of political authority has declined sharply. Even in South Korea and Taiwan, where external security concerns continue to matter, the claim to legitimacy has come to rest on popular sovereignty, democratic government, and economic performance. In Vietnam too, legitimacy will increasingly rely on economic performance and political liberalization. In a country like Thailand where the military’s domination of politics from 1932 to the early 1980s was justified on the basis of external (and internal) security threats, political developments in the early 1990s clearly demonstrate that security can no longer be effectively deployed in the projection of legitimacy. Domestic stability and security, on the other hand, continue to serve as a basis for political legitimation—especially in multiethnic/multireligious societies and in countries where the institutions and procedures for the acquisition and exercise of political power are not well established.

Finally, the changed international security environment has diminished the relevance of external security as a basis for the military’s domestic political role. This trend can be viewed as contributing to political liberalization. But the political power of Asian militaries continues to be much more a function of domestic political-security and economic developments, and these have not been dramatically affected by the end of the Cold War.
Security and stability can still be used—especially in multiethnic states like Singapore and Malaysia, as well as large countries like China and Indonesia—to justify limits on participatory politics. The political power of the Asian militaries continues to vary by country: in China it appears to have increased in the post-Tiananmen period; in Burma and Indonesia it has remained about the same, though it is seriously questioned in Burma and to a lesser degree also in Indonesia; in Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines the military's power has been or is declining.

The changes in the international security environment have mixed implications for domestic political change. On the one hand, the changes have discredited the Marxist-Leninist ideology, reduced Western support for authoritarianism and military establishments, and diminished the relevance of external security threats as a basis for political legitimation. On the other hand, the end of the Cold War has not had a dramatic impact on the domestic political-security situation in Asian countries. Domestic political and economic developments will be crucial in shaping the structure of domination as well as the power and role of the military in these countries.

**PROSPECTS**

In the short to medium term, the international environment of Asia cannot be judged to be pro-democratic. While the United States and other Western governments have made the promotion of democracy and human rights an explicit goal of their foreign policies, no Asian government, bar Japan, has done so. A recent and reluctant convert, Japan is not deeply imbued with the philosophy of democratic governance, and its approach differs substantially from that of the Western governments. The governing elites in most other East and Southeast Asian countries do not share the belief that democracy is superior and has universal validity. Indeed, they strongly contest such a projection by the West.

Apart from some of the questionable premises that underlie the Western effort to forge a unified world order, the West's power to impose such a value system has suffered relative decline and is likely to decline further if Asia's economic dynamism is sustained. This attempt by the West to create a universal order in its image when its power and influence are ebbing, as well as the linkage of democracy and human rights to economic and security considerations, gives rise to the perception of a reactionary West seeking to preserve its dominance by ideological means.

Instead of contributing to the forging of a unified world order, the substance and style of current policy are creating ideological tension between the West and Asia. In a worst-case scenario, these tensions, together with trade disputes and the perception in some countries of a domineering United States, may contribute to a new East-West divide and conflict in the Pacific.

**Positive Trends**

The outlook, however, is not entirely negative. Although democratic governance is resisted, some governments, as in Vietnam and Indonesia, have begun to explore a measure of limited political liberalization to widen their support base. Similarly, many governments, while critical of the narrow conception of human rights, have begun to accept this ideal, broadly conceived, as a worthy long-term goal in its own right—but as a national, not international, concern. Their resistance to democracy is greater than their opposition to human rights. At the nongovernmental level, there is growing political consciousness and increasing support for both democracy and human rights. These values have now become part of the domestic political discourse in several countries and, as the elite are discovering, they cannot be excluded by fiat.

Even more significant in the long term is the commitment of nearly all governments to the principles of a market economy and the twin goals of economic modernization and industrialization. The social and political consequences of sustained economic growth appear to have the greatest potential for inducing political change from the top by an enlightened political leadership or from below by the demands of new socioeconomic groups for changes in the rules of the political game. The democratic development that issues from such forces is likely to be gradual and more enduring but also, at times, tension ridden. Ultimately, the progress toward democracy will likely depend on the values and circumstances of each society rather than a manifestation of any universal or regional trend.

International influences are not insignificant. Their salience has been sharpened by the telecommunications and transportation revolutions and by the globalization of information, capital, technology, production, and trade that have contributed to the

*The governing elites in Southeast Asia are discovering that the languages of legitimation cannot be controlled. Attempts in several countries to impose national ideologies have not succeeded (see Alagappa 1995).*
The negative effects of a high-profile and self-righteous approach will tend to outweigh any positive ones.

Despite their increased importance, however, external players have clear limits in their power to bring about domestic political change. So long as a state has substantial control over its domestic affairs, it is the internal players who will determine the scope, direction, and pace of political change. Hence domestic factors—the incumbent government's legitimacy, political identity, the elite's cohesion, the level and pace of socioeconomic development, income distribution, development of civil society, and other related factors—will weigh heavily in shaping the prospects for a country's democratic transition. Only when a country is subjugated (as were Third World countries during the colonial era) or is undergoing a "crisis of authority" will external players be decisive in shaping its political system. In most cases the international factors will be contributory. Domestic conditions must be propitious if international forces are to have a significant impact.

Some Guidelines

Promotion of democracy will be more successful if the effort is directed toward strengthening long-term forces that will make democratic principles a durable part of the domestic political discourse rather than demanding a quick transition by the governing elite. Working with a government committed in broad terms to improving the welfare of the people is likely to be more productive than confronting it directly. As confrontation will be perceived as threatening the legitimacy of incumbent powerholders, it will probably be resisted. The negative effects of a high-profile self-righteous approach will tend to outweigh any positive ones.

In seeking to strengthen long-term forces, the focus should be on promoting socioeconomic development, strengthening civil society, and building political institutions. In addition to facilitating effective and autonomous participation, socioeconomic development (provision of food, shelter, health and medical facilities and increasing safety, literacy, education, and occupational skills) should facilitate the building of coalitions for political and economic reform and undermine radicalism. Sustained economic growth will make available the resources for socioeconomic development. As socioeconomic development and economic growth are goals shared by these governments, support for them is unlikely to be a source of tension.

The strengthening of civil society is crucial, too, but likely to be more difficult and contentious. Civil society involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere and is an intermediate layer between the state and the private sphere.* Civil society is crucial because by organizing and expanding public space, it can help limit the domain and power of the state, encourage citizenship participation, promote pluralism and diversity, and during moments of crisis can be mobilized to expose and undermine the legitimacy of authoritarian governments as occurred in the Philippines in 1986. Without civil society it is difficult to transform street demonstrations into systematic programs for political change. Its development

*See Diamond (1994). Civil society can be defined as "the realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules" (p. 5).
will be difficult not only because there is little or no Asian tradition of civil society but also because of its potential to be perceived by governments as threatening. These difficulties can be somewhat mitigated, however, if civil society is perceived not strictly in terms of political associations but more broadly to encompass people and groups at all levels and in all walks of life.

Western assistance in building political institutions will be even more contentious. Strategies will have to be tailored to suit the circumstances of individual countries, preferably to take advantage of the incumbent powerholders' own platforms or those of groups not perceived as hostile by the government. Strengthening the judiciary, the parliament, or local government may be less controversial than supporting political parties. The latter, however, is crucial for democratic consolidation and should take priority in countries where the democratic transition has occurred.

Moreover, promotion of democracy and human rights must be separated from economic and security considerations. Such policy linkage raises questions about the sincerity of the motive and creates serious credibility problems for Western governments. Even more important for success in this endeavor of promoting democracy is success at home. If the Western democracies are indeed successful in rejuvenating their economies and make substantive progress in addressing many of their own social ills, then the West's democratic system, like its capitalist system, will be a more attractive model for emulation.
NOTES

15. For text of the final declaration of the regional conference, see United Nations (1993).
17. For a discussion of how democracy may exacerbate conflict see Kohli (1990).
19. For discussion of an Asian variant of democracy, see Chan Heng Chee (1993).
37. First propounded by Martin Lipset in 1960, this link between the state of economic development and democracy has been the subject of many quantitative and qualitative analyses. For an extended survey of the literature and nuanced discussion of this thesis, see Diamond (1992a).

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