

# The Heritage Lectures

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## U.S. Foreign Policy in Asia and the Pacific

by Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.



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# **U.S. Foreign Policy in Asia and the Pacific**

**by Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.**

**Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.**, is President of The Heritage Foundation. A veteran of the national political scene, Dr. Feulner is former director of the Republican Study Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition to his duties at Heritage, Dr. Feulner serves on the boards of several other foundations and research institutes. In 1982 he was appointed chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. Dr. Feulner holds an M.B.A. degree from the Wharton School of Commerce and Finance and a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Edinburgh. His latest book, *Conservatives Stalk The House*, was published in 1983.

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# Introduction

It is now a poignant reality that the Asia-Pacific region has become the area of the world most important to the United States. This is true in the commercial sense: More U.S. trade is conducted with nations in the Western Pacific than with Europe. It is true in the security sense: The U.S. has fought two wars in this generation—both in Asia—and the challenge of Soviet military expansion is greater in this region than anywhere else. It is true in the political sense: Nations of the Asia-Pacific region have been more successful in engineering political development over the last two to three decades than nations elsewhere. And the stakes in this process are higher.

The ASEAN nations play a special role for U.S. interests in Asia. American businessmen consider them to be the most economically promising countries in the world and places where U.S. investment can be most beneficial to both the U.S. and the recipient nation. Southeast Asia remains strategically important to the U.S. notwithstanding American retreat from the area following the Vietnam War. The Soviet Union now has bases in the area. U.S. bases in the Philippines are less secure than they were in the past. ASEAN is playing a major role in its own defense and the domino theory has not proven valid. Nevertheless, the ASEAN nations desire a greater U.S. military presence in the region. Indeed, it would contribute to stability in the region. Political problems persist in Southeast Asian nations, but answers are being found quickly and are being implemented.

The Asian Studies Center at The Heritage Foundation was established early in 1983 on the realization of the importance of Asia to the United States both present and future. The Asian Studies Center of the Heritage Foundation already is an important source of ideas that will help policymakers to formulate an intelligent U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis the Asia-Pacific region. The Center, through its publications, conferences and lectures, analyzes and anticipates problems in Asia as well as issues for U.S. decisionmakers.

Edwin J. Feulner, Jr., President of the Heritage Foundation, recently toured several Asian countries. Dr. Feulner is an old Asia hand. During his tour he gave a number of addresses. Most of his ideas are summed up

in the speech he gave at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta on January 6, 1984.

That speech succinctly presents the view of The Heritage Foundation regarding the situation in Asia, problems for the United States in Asia and solutions to those problems. For those reasons it is published in our lecture series for our friends in Asia and the U.S.

Richard V. Allen, Chairman  
Advisory Board  
Asian Studies Center

# United States Foreign Policy in Asia and the Pacific During the 1980s

EDWIN J. FEULNER, JR.

By any standard of measurement, the prospects for political violence on a global level will be considerable during the 1980s. Rising Soviet and Soviet surrogate power, nuclear proliferation and the transfer of sophisticated weaponry, the exacerbation of the North-South conflict, exponential population growth, the incapacity of many governments to deal with the complexities of industrialization, endemic poverty in certain regions, unresolved ethnic conflicts and border disputes, the competition for scarce resources—all suggest continuing conflict and instability in many sectors of the globe.

These conflicts and crises will affect, and sometimes threaten, important or vital interests of the United States, its allies and its friends. The Soviet Union will be alert for opportunities to exploit such violence to advance its own interests and to derogate those of the United States. The recognition that crises and conflicts will occur and will have to be addressed brings with it the need to translate concern into policy—which is beginning under the Reagan Administration—a responsible and flexible foreign and military policy to deal with potential conflict areas—before, during, and following such crises.

During the 1980s, one such critical area will be the Asian and Pacific region. This area, which contains over half the world's population, has exhibited diverse and often discordant political, social, and economic trends. While some nations in the region have demonstrated high levels of economic growth and a relative degree of political stability, others have experienced stagnation and violence. They fall generally into one of three categories:

- Countries with sufficient talent and resources to support economic development and growth, such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand.
- Those with fewer resources, which could conceivably make reasonable and steady progress, or could run into serious obstacles and stagnate or regress, as in the case of Indonesia, the People's Republic of China, India, Thailand, and the Philippines.
- Those whose survival is at stake because of the unavailability of resources or gross mismanagement by political elites, as in Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos, and Burma.

In all three cases, the prospect for violence exists. Obviously, the region is in an extremely volatile state. The outcome is impossible to predict, and the risk of a more extensive conflict involving the major superpowers is always present.

Since the conclusion of World War II, the Asian and Pacific region has been beset with both international and internal conflicts. In less than three decades, it has been the scene of at least five major wars: the Korean War, the Vietnam War, several Indian-Pakistani Wars, the war between India and the People's Republic of China, and the conflict between Vietnam and the People's Republic of China. In addition, large-scale conflicts between government forces and insurgents have erupted in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Kampuchea, and Burma. Finally, Vietnam remains at war with its neighbors and continues to occupy both Kampuchea and Laos, thereby robbing Indochina of any possibility of peace in the future while at the same time threatening the stability of the ASEAN nations. Thus, it is no wonder that the nations in this region are concerned about their security and about the role the United States can play in it.

During the 21st Century, a shift in the economic, and possibly in the political balance of the world with a new focus on Asia seems extremely likely. For that reason, the Reagan Administration has given a high priority to reevaluation and redefinition of America's role in the Asian and Pacific region.

## THE CARTER PERIOD

During the four years of the Carter Administration, we witnessed the precipitous decline of America as a world leader. President Carter's foreign policy, as our current Ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick said in November 1979, rested on a vision of the world in which "plenty will replace scarcity, harmony will replace conflict, peaceful competition will replace war, and reason will replace power as the operative method for conflict resolution." This vision unfortunately became the goal of the Carter foreign policy. Such an idealistic approach to international affairs collided with reality—evoking an infantile and myopic view of the future.

The Carter foreign policy, particularly with regard to the Asian and Pacific region, was deficient in six specific respects:

- *Breaking agreements.* Many Asian and Pacific leaders decried the confusing and often contradictory statements regarding U.S. policy in the region. An example was the abrogation by Washington of the Air



Transport Agreement between the United States and Taiwan within six months of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act by the United States Congress. Despite explicit assurances by the Administration that all treaties and arrangements would remain in force, Congress was informed that a major bilateral agreement was to be unilaterally terminated.

- *Consultation.* Asian leaders frequently complained of being caught “off guard” because of unexpected U.S. initiatives. A clear illustration of this was the lack of consultation regarding the diplomatic recognition of the PRC and the derecognition of the Republic of China on Taiwan by the United States. Indonesia and Japan, the two largest noncommunist states in Asia, were visibly and understandably upset.
- *Human rights policy.* Many Asian and Pacific leaders, particularly from ASEAN states, strongly disapproved of Carter’s human rights policy, which was, I think, correctly termed “moral imperialism.” Asian nations resented the aggressive application of the policy, especially the Philippines and Indonesia. Similarly, they noted the absence of any serious indictment of the PRC or Vietnam regarding human rights abuses.
- *Soviet expansionism.* Asian and Pacific leaders, as a whole, sensed an abandonment by the United States of their critically important region, especially in light of the gradual but significant Soviet military expansion. By the end of the Carter Administration, U.S. force levels in the Pacific were at their lowest level since 1939.
- *The Korean withdrawal.* Many Asian and Pacific leaders were concerned over the regional ramifications of the proposed American withdrawal of its ground forces from South Korea. President Carter’s later decision of July 1979 to defer U.S. troop withdrawals at least until 1981 was lauded throughout Asia. In contrast, his original decision to withdraw U.S. troops was not supported by any major figure within his own administration including his Secretary of State, the intelligence community, or the Department of Defense.
- *The unreliability of the United States.* Many Asian and Pacific leaders perceived American commitments, especially those of a defensive and strategic nature, in the region as of limited or no value because future American intentions and capabilities were uncertain. The sudden abrogation of the Mutual Defense Treaty with the Republic of China and the planned withdrawal of American forces from South Korea were seen as America’s lack of commitment to Asia and the Pacific.

The perception of America’s role as a world leader in this critical Asian and Pacific region declined palpably during the Carter years.

## THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION AND THE BEGINNING OF CHANGE

Immediately upon assuming office, the Reagan Administration sought to restore confidence in U.S. leadership through, what former Secretary of State Alexander Haig on April 24, 1982, called, "A more robust defense of U.S. ideals and interests and a more realistic approach to the dangers and opportunities of the international situation." To that end, the Administration proposed a comprehensive and coherent overall foreign policy. The four basic elements, or anchors, of that policy were outlined as:

First, the Administration recognized that, beyond simply asserting its role as leader of the free world, the U.S. must act as a leader. The United States must be strong, balanced, consistent, and reliable in its policies and actions, and it must proceed with prudence and sensitivity with regard to the interests of its allies and friends, consulting with them as both work together for a more secure and prosperous world.

Second, the United States must strengthen its military posture in order to compensate for the worldwide military buildup of Soviet military power that has been going on for the past several decades.

Third, the United States must seek a greater degree of moderation and restraint in the Soviet Union's global adventurism.

Fourth, the United States must seek to restore viability, productivity, and balance in its own economy. The Administration has correctly recognized the significance of such actions in the international economic context. Such a policy fits the long-range international effort to contribute to building a more prosperous, stable, and equitable world order. Without accomplishing this, none of the other priorities would be possible.

During the first three years of the Reagan Administration, significant improvements have been made in the U.S. economy: productivity is up, interest rates have fallen dramatically, inflation is under control, unemployment has slowly but steadily dropped, and the general level of economic activity has increased substantially. As a consequence, improvements have taken place in the international scene, as the rest of the world has benefited from America's gains. And the United States is once again assuming the responsibilities of leadership world wide. U.S. alliances are being reinvigorated, friendships strengthened, and the free world is being consolidated. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Asian and Pacific region.

The Heritage Foundation firmly believes that the United States is embarking upon the "Asian Century" by focusing upon the largest, most

dynamic and still in some ways the most troubled area of the world. That is why we have established our own Asian Studies Center, for study of our central concerns in Asia—security, trade, and human rights.

### THE SECURITY COMPONENT OF ASIAN POLICY

The security dimension of U.S. foreign policy in the Asian and Pacific region is obviously the most important. Unfortunately, the Carter Administration denigrated this priority. Happily, the Reagan Administration is tackling the problem head on.

From the U.S. perspective, the most fundamental security problem in the entire region stems from the massive Soviet military buildup during the past decade and a half. This Soviet military expansion has taken several forms. The early 1970s witnessed a massive buildup of conventional ground forces and air power along the Sino-Soviet borders. The mid-1970s saw the transformation of the USSR's Pacific Fleet, once a coastal, defensive navy, into an instrument of both conventional and nuclear power projection. Since 1970, the Soviet Pacific Fleet has acquired over 25 nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines. Their long-range capability would allow them to strike Asian and U.S. targets from protected areas off the Kurile Islands and the Kamchatka Peninsula—an area brought into prominence recently by the tragic and brutal shooting down of Korean Airlines flight 007. Conventional naval power in the region increased dramatically by the 1979 transfer of the anti-submarine aircraft carrier MINSK and the large amphibious landing ship IVAN ROGOV to the Pacific Fleet.

The Soviet Pacific Fleet today consists of some 810 vessels of 1,600,000 tons—about a quarter of the total Soviet naval strength. In addition to its ballistic missile submarines, the fleet has 95 other submarines, 85 major surface combatants, 20 amphibious ships, and 77 major auxiliary support ships. In the Far East, the Soviets also maintain some 52 army divisions (mostly motorized rifle divisions), thousands of tactical aircraft (including the supersonic medium-range BACKFIRE bombers), and some 117 SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles, also carrying nuclear weapons. The threat posed by the Soviets is not just to Asian nations, but to the strategic sea lanes of communication throughout the Pacific. Soviet use of naval bases in Vietnam and Kampuchea compounds the problem of defending these strategic sea lanes of communication.

This is hardly an overly strong estimate of the Soviet role. As Professor Yoshi Tsumuri of New York University stated in the *New York Times* of January 1, 1984, "The Pacific Basin is a de facto community, a political interest resisting the Soviet Union."

Further complicating the security of the Asian and Pacific region are the persistent tension on the Korean Peninsula and the continuing occupation of Kampuchea and Laos by communist Vietnamese forces.

Cognizant of the magnitude of the Soviet military buildup and the threat it and other communist forces pose in Asia, the Reagan Administration moved quickly to reassure Asian and Pacific allies of its steadfastness in opposing Soviet and Soviet-proxy adventurism throughout the area. President Reagan's visit and speeches in Seoul vividly reaffirmed America's commitment to South Korea, for example.

Regarding Vietnam and its aggressive designs on mainland Southeast Asia, the Reagan Administration has supported the ASEAN position on a Kampuchea settlement based on the declaration from the international conference on Kampuchea in July 1981. The United States seeks to stress its role as a treaty ally to Thailand and the Philippines and a reliable supplier of credit, equipment, and training for the military modernization programs of other ASEAN nations.

As to the broader problem of Moscow's military buildup in Asia, the United States is committed to the qualitative improvement of its own forces stationed in the region. The Reagan Administration has pledged to build and maintain a 600-ship navy, which will enable increased and longer deployments throughout the region. This is what the United States is now doing, but it goes without saying that the time is long since passed when the United States, alone, can or should shoulder the security burden of defending the Pacific. Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the six ASEAN nations—and all friendly powers must contribute to the common defense of the area.

### *The Role of Other Nations*

The Carter Administration demanded publicly that Japan increase its defense spending and often castigated Japan when its defense efforts fell short of Washington's expectations. A more productive approach has been taken by the Reagan Administration. Washington is now attempting to influence Japan's defense efforts through quiet but firm diplomacy. The emphasis has been on Japan's own national interest and a strategy that emphasizes defense and coordination of efforts with the U.S. throughout the area. Assistant Secretary of State for Asian Affairs, Paul Wolfowitz, has spoken of Japan's role in defending its own territory plus the sea lanes to 1,000 miles, not as some magical numerical commitment in terms of its GNP to be allocated to defense expenditures, but as a measure of Japan's growing military importance in Asia. However, at what pace Japan will continue to upgrade its defense efforts is difficult to say.

Clearly, Japan's self-defense forces must be substantially improved, given the increasing Soviet military presence in the Far East, and most particularly on the four northern islands of Hokkaido. The U.S. commitment to Japan under the Mutual Security Treaty is clear and unwavering. Japan, however, must itself do more. The Reagan Administration is not asking Japan to remilitarize in violation of its Peace Constitution. The Administration is merely asking Japan to shore up its defense forces and abide by its commitments, made by former Prime Minister Suzuki and reaffirmed by the current Prime Minister Nakasone, to defend adequately the air and sea spaces around the islands of Japan. Working together, cooperating more, Japan, the United States, South Korea, and all friendly nations can adequately secure the defense and stability of the Pacific.

#### *The U.S. and the PRC*

Let me now suggest one reservation with regard to the Administration's security policy in the Pacific. In a number of specific respects, the policies of the United States and the People's Republic of China do not coincide. For example, in September 1982, Beijing sought to normalize relations with the government in Angola and succeeded. This is significant because until then, the PRC and the U.S. were the two major nations who had not recognized the Cuban supported Angola regime. China's action made the U.S. position on the question of Namibia, linked as it had been to the removal of Cuban troops in Angola, much more difficult.

Beijing also refused to join with the U.S. in economic sanctions against Poland after the imposition of martial law. In fact, the PRC actually increased its trade with Poland.

Finally, U.S. and Chinese interests do not coincide in the Middle East or Central America. Beijing has assailed U.S. policies in both regions.

These areas of policy disagreement make me very skeptical of the possibilities of U.S.-China policy. I hope the Reagan Administration is equally skeptical, especially in such aspects of policy as trading or giving away sophisticated military technology to the PRC. Clearly, a policy of slavishness toward Beijing has not borne fruit. The Asian Studies Center at The Heritage Foundation published a study in August 1983 entitled, "The Lessons of Playing Tough with China," which shows how a stronger U.S. stance has always produced a more normal relationship between the two countries.

For a number of reasons Washington has assumed a tougher stance toward Beijing: (1) new personnel have assumed key positions in the State Department; (2) Beijing had grown so used to getting everything it

wanted from the United States that it began making unreasonable demands; and (3) U.S. officials had reached the end of their rope making concessions to China for which the U.S. received little, if anything, in return.

In taking a tougher stand on six recent issues, Washington has learned that China has been asking for more than it expected to receive, and it is willing to accept less if it must. It is clear that the U.S. is more important to China than China is to the U.S.—a position that a number of scholars and critics of the Carter Administration long have held.

The six recent issues are: textile trade, the Hu Na "affair," Pan American Airlines' new route to Taiwan, U.S. weapons sales to Taiwan, Washington's stance on Beijing's efforts to expel Taipei from the Asian Development Bank, and China's demand that Taiwan's diplomatic organizations in Western countries not be allowed to issue visas.

The lesson for the U.S. is that, as viewed by Beijing, the major issues in U.S.-China relations are technology, trade, investment, and other forms of U.S. aid. Taiwan is not viewed as an urgent issue by Beijing. It was an issue that Deng Xiaoping's opponents attempted to use against him. And by hard bargaining Deng attempted to parry his critics. And in view of the past successes of China's demands, further concessions on Taiwan did seem achievable. But Deng was proved wrong.

Also wrong were those who warned against a tougher stance in Washington because such a position would force China to seek improved relations with the Soviet Union. Indeed recent Soviet overtures are signs that Moscow is trying to play its own China card. Thus Beijing has an opportunity. In fact, following deployment by the United States of new Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe, Moscow's leaders have attempted to apply their own pressure on the United States via Beijing. But this has not succeeded.

Hence, Washington and Beijing appear to be on the road to a more normal relationship. The two sides now seem aware of both mutual advantages and mutual disagreements. And for the present at least, a less concessionary U.S. stance seems to be working better than the old system of unilateral U.S. concessions.

## THE TRADE COMPONENT OF U.S. ASIAN POLICY

Beyond the strategic aspects of U.S. policy in Asia, there is a very important trade and economic dimension.

Today, U.S. foreign trade generally accounts for the sales of 20 percent of U.S. goods and services. This translates into staggering amounts of

exports for an economy of three trillion dollars. Forty percent of America's agricultural production is exported. Twelve million U.S. jobs are directly involved in foreign business. One third of U.S. corporate profits come from foreign trade and investment. Regarding the Asian and Pacific share, the most recent figures available (1982) indicate a two-way trade of \$165 billion as compared to \$115 billion with Europe.

I believe the Reagan Administration fully understands that, in the economic realm, the Asian and Pacific region is the trend setter for the rest of the world. By the year 2000, it is likely that the capitalist nations of the Western Pacific will exceed both Western Europe and the United States in economic strength as measured by outputs of goods and services and world trade.

Free trade has been the key to the success of the free and democratic states of Asia and the Pacific. Free trade is also a principal component of the Reagan Administration's economic proposals. Impediments to free trade, be they tariff or nontariff barriers, must be gradually eliminated throughout the region. And they must be eliminated by the U.S. as well. The alternative is protectionism, which almost no one in Asia and very few in the United States want.

Yet 30 to 40 percent of Asia's exports to the United States are affected by barriers other than tariff barriers. Domestic content legislation is favored by many in Congress, especially Senators and Representatives from areas where steel and auto industries are suffering and unemployment is high. Significantly, the domestic content bill, which was submitted to the House of Representatives in November 1983, carried by a fairly narrow margin, 219-199. And it passed only after Ford and Chrysler Corporations joined the United Auto Workers in support of that particular legislation.

We must beware lest protectionism find more supporters in 1984 as the United States moves toward an election. On the plus side, however, the reinvigorated American economy should deflect some of these pressures for protectionism.

## **THE IMPACT OF HUMAN RIGHTS ON ASIAN POLICY**

The broad subject of human rights is a sensitive issue that is of concern to many Americans. On this issue, the Reagan Administration has attempted a very difficult posture relative to its predecessor. The Carter Administration's public denouncement of alleged human rights abuses in the Philippines, Indonesia, and the Republic of Korea provoked friction between the U.S. and these nations. The Reagan approach, which

emphasizes quiet but firm diplomacy, has been more productive.

The Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Affairs, Elliott Abrams, discusses the Reagan human rights policy in the current issue of The Heritage Foundations' journal, *Policy Review*. Mr. Abrams reflects on the fall of the Somoza government in Nicaragua, only to be replaced by the Sandinistas, and the fall of the Shah, replaced by the Ayatollah Khomeini. He notes, "It is no contribution to the cause of human rights to replace a regime we can work with and we can improve, with a communist regime. It is not a question of real world, good and bad, but bad and worse or perhaps more accurately, bad but improvable on the one hand, and worse and permanent on the other hand." A recent example of the success of the Reagan human rights policy is President Chun Doo Hwan's decision this past Christmas to grant amnesty to more than 1,700 political prisoners. This, we believe, provides an excellent example of the continued progress of genuine human rights in Korea and is evidence of the positive effects of President Reagan's new approach. The U.S. has learned to distinguish friends from adversaries and that, in sensitive areas like human rights, the carrot is much more effective than the stick.

In these broad areas of security, trade, and human rights, a new and very different foreign policy toward Asia and the Pacific has emerged during the Reagan Administration. It is a policy that is confident, but not cocky. It has the support of the American people. It is genuinely committed to the future, and it consistently promotes the maintenance of friendly relations with U.S. allies and firmness with adversaries. It is a policy that treats the Asian Pacific region as an end in itself and not as an instrument of policies in other sectors of the globe.

A great deal has already been done under President Reagan; a great deal remains to be done. Together with its friends and allies, however, the U.S. can have high hopes of realizing a prosperous, dynamic, and peaceful "Asian Century."

\* \* \*

**Question:** What is the U.S. policy in relation to the Third World?

**Answer:** I did not address a specific role for the United States vis-à-vis the Third World for two reasons. First of all, it is fair to say that I, my colleagues at The Heritage Foundation, and many individuals in the Reagan Administration do not view the Third World as a homogeneous group, that is, a single group for which we can necessarily devise a single policy. Instead we view it as a group of diverse and independent entities with which we have many things in common as well as some substantial differences. The second reason is that it would be in many ways presumptuous of the United States to dictate a one-sided policy toward



the Third World. And a final point, which was stated earlier: it is very important, as the Reagan Administration's policy toward the Pacific evolves, that it is clearly understood as being a two-way policy—not a policy imposed by the United States on our partners and friends, but one that is genuinely reciprocal. Equally important, it must not be perceived as a means to some other end—such as containing the Soviet Union or reaching some kind of stable relationship with the PRC—but as an important, vital, and necessary entity in and of itself. In light of these considerations, it would be inappropriate to describe a single policy toward a homogeneous “Third World.”

**Question:** What is the position of the United States with regard to Taiwan and how does this affect the U.S. government's policy toward the People's Republic of China? Is this the most important element of the U.S.-Asian policy?

**Answer:** The U.S. relationship to the PRC and Taiwan is unique legislatively, and a source of confusion to many. Because of the Carter Administration's derecognition of the Republic of China, the U.S. does not have an official relationship with the government of Taiwan. However, an official relationship has been mandated by Congress. This is something that any Administration must deal with.

In terms of U.S.-PRC relations, it should be emphasized that Taiwan is not the primary issue from Beijing's perspective. Rather, trade, technology, and aid have first priority. The ritual denunciation of U.S. policy with regard to Taiwan is something to be put up with. But the U.S. does not have to make concessions to do so.

In November 1981, then Secretary of State Alexander Haig discussed the U.S. government's relationship to Taiwan. Among other considerations he held as former Supreme Commander of NATO was a positive view of what a close relationship with Beijing would do vis-à-vis our European allies. He perceived, that if the U.S. did not continue to push ahead with a strong relationship, Beijing was likely to do something dramatic—recall its ambassador, possibly break off diplomatic relations—and that this would have very damaging domestic consequences for the President. This view must be corrected. The domestic political dimension of the U.S.-PRC relationship is very easy to overstate. Quite frankly, the average voter in Paducah, Kentucky, or Chicago, Illinois, is not going to vote for or against a presidential candidate on the basis of what happens to U.S.-PRC relations. He is going to vote on the basis of whether or not his son has a job on the assembly line of General Motors. This sort of domestic political implication of foreign policy issues should not be discounted.

Certainly one of the three or four pillars of U.S.-Asian policy is our relationship with the People's Republic of China. A second would be the defense and trade relationship with Japan. Closely related are the mutual relations with Korea and what happens on the Korean Peninsula. Another is the general security policy throughout the area and the U.S. relationship with those countries, like Indonesia, that are good friends but are not formally allied with the U.S. All separate pillars, if you will, supporting the U.S. Asia policy.

**Question:** It seems that the U.S. policy toward Asia is changing. Could you explain the reasons for this and what you hope will be on the agenda of the reciprocal visits between the U.S. government and the government of the People's Republic of China?

**Answer:** The Reagan Administration's policy toward Asia seems to be evolving—in an overall foreign policy best described as the “squeaky wheel rule of diplomacy.” The “squeaky wheels” at the moment are in Central America, in the Middle East, and until very recently, with our NATO allies under the guise of the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear forces. The fact that there have been no squeaky wheels in Asia means that the policy has not been on the front pages of the American newspapers. But quite frankly, U.S. policy on the front pages of American newspapers often is not clearly enunciated. So, in many ways, the Asian allies are quite fortunate, as Asian policies have been allowed to evolve away from the front pages, and with each month, the Reagan Administration has become more aware of the relevant subtleties.

The visit of President Reagan to Beijing has a full agenda, and those of us who would like to see the agenda concentrate on joint opposition to Soviet hegemonism will probably be disappointed. But looking at it realistically, it is a tribute to the mutuality of interests as perceived by both Beijing and Washington—for the first time since the opening of the China process under Secretary Kissinger and President Nixon more than a decade ago, a head of government from the PRC has visited Washington under the Administration of President Reagan—a visit that will be reciprocated. This is not to say that a new breakthrough will necessarily occur. In fact, President Reagan, Premier Zhao Ziyang, and Chairman Deng Xiaoping should be addressing a more realistic agenda.

President Reagan's visit will not focus merely on the Soviet question. In fact, it is our hope that it will focus more on areas in U.S.-PRC joint interest, such as Indonesia, Korea, Japan, and all the Asian allies. Questions like the sale of advanced military technology cannot be viewed strictly on a bilateral basis between the United States and the People's

Republic of China. Nor even on a triangular basis including Taipei. It is much more involved and complicated than that. It involves considerations in the U.S., in Northeast Asia, in Korea, and in Japan. U.S. meetings with Beijing should be approached from this perspective. And, with the improved knowledge of the subtleties of Asian policy, they will.

**Question:** Has the level of communist activity increased, and has this caused the U.S. public to seek a return to a form of isolationism?

**Answer:** The Heritage Foundation published a paper in August 1983 about the perception of the world from Moscow. It is not optimistic. The Soviet Fleet has substantially increased, and only the United States, in terms of a projected maritime presence, can offset it substantially. But at the same time, unlike in earlier periods, the Soviet Union has grave internal problems today. The Kremlin has serious problems in Afghanistan, Angola, Nicaragua, and Kampuchea. The successful rescue operation in Grenada, the evidence of Cuban and Soviet complicity in Grenada's Marxist government, and the positive reaction from the American public also add to their troubles and help the U.S. move away from an isolationist pose. Americans are satisfied that the United States still can do something right; when it is clearly in its own interest, the U.S. still can prevail. In a way, this has helped to finally alter the Vietnam mentality.

The American people may be more inward looking than a few years ago, but this is different from what could be called isolationism. I remember an intense dialogue with some friends from the Federal Republic of Germany about a year and a half ago, in which I expressed my great concern that the perception outside the Boston-New York-Washington corridor, among the real people in the United States, was a sophisticated form of isolationism. It was sophisticated because many Americans were shocked at the reaction of the European public to the Euromissiles. Americans were saying, in effect, "We are in an alliance *together*. We are not trying to put cruise and Pershings in Europe because it is necessarily going to help *us*. It is a decision that was made jointly, yet we are asked to bear the brunt of the financial burden—we, the United States." And along with that, Americans experienced real frustration at what was then accepted as the general European view—the perception of the demonstrators. As it turned out, of course, the demonstrators, both electorally and as a percentage of the populations, were not significant; the cruise missiles and Pershings were deployed successfully; Prime Minister Thatcher was reelected, and the CDU-CSU coalition government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Germany was reaffirmed. In large part the frustration has subsided, but Americans feel a need for reciproc-

ity. For example, if the Germans are demonstrating against the missiles, then Americans really ought to look at the fundamental relationship and redetermine the U.S. course.

Pulling out of UNESCO is another example. The United Nations Assessment Project at The Heritage Foundation has been looking at the 96 specialized agencies of the U.N. with which the U.S. is affiliated. In this work, Heritage is a recognized nongovernmental organization at U.N. Headquarters in New York and routinely monitors activities at the U.N. offices in Paris and Geneva and elsewhere. The Heritage researchers have found that U.N. agencies get so far off track that they not only do not serve U.S. interests, but, in fact, do not carry out the missions for which they were intended. The best way to make the U.N. effective and useful, in terms of its necessary real work, is to get rid of the rotten apples so that they do not spoil the rest of the barrel. For that reason, The Heritage Foundation has been in the forefront of those urging the Administration to pull out of UNESCO, but that cannot be viewed as an isolationist move.

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# The Heritage Lectures

It is now a poignant reality that the Asia-Pacific region has become the area of the world most important to the United States. The U.S. conducts more trade with the nations of the Western Pacific than with Europe. The last two wars the U.S. fought both were in Asia. And the challenge of Soviet military expansion is greater in this region than anywhere else.

Heritage Foundation President Edwin J. Feulner, Jr., an old Asia hand, recently reviewed U.S. foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region in an address at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta. As a result of the Reagan Administration's new approaches toward Asia, he concludes, the U.S. and its friends and allies can have high hopes of realizing a prosperous, dynamic, and peaceful "Asian Century."

  
The Heritage Foundation

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