

SOUTHEAST ASIAN AFFAIRS 1978

Southeast Asian Affairs 1978
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Established as an autonomous corporation by an act of the Parliament of the Republic of Singapore in May 1968, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies is a regional research centre for scholars and other specialists concerned with modern Southeast Asia. The Institute's research interest is focused on the many-faceted problems of development and social change in Southeast Asia.

The Institute is governed by a twenty-four-member Board of Trustees comprising representatives from the University of Singapore and Nanyang University, appointees from the Government, as well as representatives from a broad range of professional and civic organizations and groups. A ten-man Executive Committee oversees day-to-day operations; it is *ex officio* chaired by the Director, the Institute's chief academic and administrative officer.

FOREWORD

In keeping with its policy of constantly improving the quality, range, and distributional network of its publications, the Institute is pleased to announce that its annual, *Southeast Asian Affairs*, will now be published by Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd under the auspices of the Institute.

Southeast Asian Affairs 1978, like its four predecessors, is a review of significant developments and trends in Southeast Asia, with special emphasis on the ASEAN countries. Readable and easily understood, the publication aims at giving the enquiring reader a broad grasp of major political, economic, social and strategic developments within the region.

The contents of *Southeast Asian Affairs 1978* fall into two broad categories. There are those of a background nature, which attempt to review and where necessary comment upon and explain significant developments during 1977 in the individual countries of Southeast Asia and in the region generally. Then there are the articles of more specialized current interest. These are not necessarily focused on events in 1977 alone. They deal with topical problems of concern to those who desire to know more about the region and its affairs than is possible from the background articles.

To the best of our knowledge, *Southeast Asian Affairs* is the only publication of its kind wholly devoted to Southeast Asia. It is, perhaps, also unique in that, unlike many other annuals, its discussion of issues is from the vantage point of the area, most of the contributors being in and of the region. Moreover, though scholarly in their approach and analyses, the authors have been encouraged to aim at accuracy and readability, and to handle their subjects in a direct manner. Footnotes and bibliographical and other references have been generally dispensed with and a conscious effort made to avoid too ponderous a style. If *Southeast Asian Affairs 1978* helps to generate and enliven interest in the affairs of the region, then its purpose would have been well served.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the authors and the members of the Editorial Committee, as well as all others who have, in one way or another, helped to make this publication possible. While encouraging all points of view, needless to say, the individual authors are exclusively responsible for the facts and opinions expressed in their respective contributions, and their interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Institute itself or its supporters.

Kernal S. Sandhu
Director
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies

15 January 1978

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INTRODUCTION

The twenty-five articles in this volume deal with various aspects of the situation prevailing in individual Southeast Asian countries as well as the whole region. Most of the contributions are concerned with one or more of three interrelated themes: political stability, economic development and international co-operation. Though these themes in themselves are not new, this volume however endeavours to examine them in the context of very recent events and developments, especially those occurring in 1977.

Southeast Asia in 1977 was a politically stable region in the sense that all governments, with the exception of Thailand's, remained in power throughout the year. None the less, most countries in Southeast Asia faced varying degrees of peaceful or violent opposition and hence one can argue that they faced varying degrees of "instability" as well. Harold Crouch's overview attempts to assess the political developments in Southeast Asia as a whole in this light. Political developments in individual countries of Southeast Asia are examined in more detailed fashion in other articles. Thus Montri Chenvidyakarn's paper focuses on the rise and fall of the Tanin Government in Thailand, attributing its failure to the personality of Tanin and his clique and its rigid foreign policy. Somchai Rakwijit, on the other hand, deals with more specific problems of internal security which, no doubt, will continue to impinge upon the political stability of Thailand.

The question of stability is one of the main themes in Yong Mun Cheong's paper on Indonesia. He attempts to identify factors contributing to the instability of the country. Here the problem of political legitimacy is also directly relevant to the question of stability as pointed out in the article by William Liddle who analyses the 1977 Indonesian general election vis-à-vis political legitimacy. Liddle argues that the legitimizing purpose of the election was only partly achieved.

Both M. Rajaretnam's and Benjamin N. Muego's papers on the Philippines discuss Marcos' "New Society" with reference to political opposition, including peaceful and violent forms. Both state that political stability would not be affected at the moment because political opposition has been effectively contained. Joel Jalal-ud-din de los Santos, Jr., posits that the destructive impact of the yet unsolved Muslim problem to the Philippines will continue to be felt in the long run.

Malaysia is yet another country that has had to face the competing demands of various groups in the country. Coalition politics in Malaysia was on trial last year when the Parti Islam Se Malaysia (PAS) withdrew from the coalition government. Both Chandra Muzaffar and Alias Mohamed examine the problem of the coalition and the prospects of political stability in Peninsular Malaysia. Tjoa Hock Guan's essay touches on a similar theme but confines itself to one component in the National Front Government, namely, the parties representing the "Chinese Malaysians".

Looking beyond "stability", Lee Boon-Hiok reviews developments on an island state — Singapore — in 1977 against the concepts of survival and achievement, arguing

that Singapore has well passed the survival period and has come to the era when continuing development is the major problem. To maintain a high standard of living and continued progress, the Singapore Government has introduced, on the one hand, programmes affecting the fertility behaviour of its population and, on the other, policies related to its educational system. Peter S.J. Chen's article explores the effectiveness of the family planning programmes and the reasons behind them, while Gwee Yee Hean discusses the evolution of the educational system up to the present to meet the socio-economic needs of the island-republic. The affairs of another small state, Brunei, are discussed by A.J. Crosbie in terms of its resources, government performance, and the challenges faced in the rapidly changing international environment. He suggests that the stability of Brunei will largely depend on external rather than internal independent variables.

Causes of instability can be either external or internal or both. Addressing himself to the security problem of ASEAN, George Osborn III in his essay maintains that the threats to ASEAN security are more internal than external. He points out that the internal socio-economic and political conditions of ASEAN countries are directly responsible for their security problems and hence political stability.

Many observers have maintained that economic development is a means to achieve political stability. Some have argued, too, that political stability is a prerequisite for a country to secure economic development. Chia Siow Yue in her paper does not get involved in this controversy but surveys economic performances of the countries in the region. Sediono Tjondronegoro scrutinizes one specific aspect of economic development in Indonesia, namely, rural development. He describes the dilemma faced by the elite who took the "top-down" approach in order to solve the problem of agricultural development. Harvey Demaine focuses his discussion on the rural sector of Burma, outlining the achievements and failures of its agricultural planning. Ta Huu Phuong and Guy Ta jointly examine some aspects of Vietnamese economic planning and development since the communist victory in 1975. Relying on limited sources, the article presents a general trend of Vietnam's economic performance, indicating that the problems of economic development faced by a communist country are not much different from those faced by noncommunist states in Southeast Asia.

Domestic economic development can be fostered by international co-operation. One of the main objectives of ASEAN is indeed to promote economic co-operation between member-countries. ASEAN achievement in this regard has not been as much as might have been expected, but modest progress has been shown. Hans Indorf's essay discusses ASEAN before and after its second summit in Kuala Lumpur and he contends that one has to evaluate ASEAN more realistically to avoid undue disappointment. Toru Yano's article presents Japan's economic role in Southeast Asia within the framework of the so-called "Fukuda Doctrine", positing that Japan is more important to ASEAN than ASEAN is to Japan. Lim Joo-Jock's essay studies the recent agreement among three ASEAN countries on the Straits of Malacca, with reference to its geopolitical implications within and beyond the region. Still on the subject of international relations, but not necessarily on international co-operation, Albert Moscotti documents Burma's relations with other Southeast Asian countries showing its gradual trend towards an outward-looking orientation. On the same general theme, William Duiker's essay attempts to identify the foreign policy behaviour of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, arguing that the present preoccupation of Vietnam is more with internal development problems than with external expansion. However, he maintains that in the long run, "for good or ill," Vietnam represents a "destabilizing force in Southeast Asia."

Before concluding this introduction, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the authors for their contributions, members of the Editorial Committee for their co-operation, and the staff of the Institute for their assistance and advice. My thanks

Introduction

are also due to many fellow academics for their constructive comments. In fact the timely publication of this volume was made possible through the valuable assistance of all those abovementioned.

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Co-ordinator
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