
BOOK REVIEWS

The Invisible Nexus: Energy and ASEAN's Security. Edited by Kusuma Snitwongse and Sukhumbhand Paribatra. Singapore: Executive Publications Pte. Ltd., 1984. Pp. xvi, 238.

There is perhaps no more thankless task than editing the proceedings of an international seminar. If the job is done well, praise will go to the authors of the individual contributions. If it is done badly, blame will fall on the editors. Congratulations, therefore, to Kusuma Snitwongse and Sukhumbhand Paribatra for the excellent way in which they have presented and summarized the discussions of the international seminar on "Energy and ASEAN's Security: Regional and Extra-Regional Dimensions", at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, 19-21 October 1981. The long delay between the holding of the seminar and the publication of the proceedings may be taken as an indication of the difficulty in reconciling the contributions of many authors and discussants.

As in many international conferences of this type for which funds can be had from foundations and international organizations, the ambiguity of the terms used in the definition of the topic is one of the reasons for the wide

diversity of approaches taken by individual contributors. When terms mean different things to different people, the danger of talking at cross-purposes is never far.

The central concept in this particular instance is "ASEAN's Security". The confusion regarding this term, which becomes most evident in a contribution by Narongchai Akrasanee, has understandably left its mark on this publication. Security can be interpreted in an economic sense with regard to the security of energy supply, with regard to the capability to pay increasing energy prices, or with regard to the ability to restructure the economy in the light of changing factor prices. On the other hand, scarcity of supply can lead to insecurity in a military sense, because the scramble for offshore oil resources can lead to conflicts and, in the extreme, to hostilities. Threats to security in this military sense can come from outside the region, both with regard to territorial disputes in areas of potential energy supplies as well as with regard to access to supplies beyond the ASEAN region through the sea lanes. In addition to threats from outside the region, rivalries and conflicts within the region resulting from disturbances in regular energy supplies can cause insecurity, so that regional co-operation in energy policies can be looked

upon as a measure of increasing regional security.

In any case, it is evident that what the editors call the "invisible nexus" between energy and ASEAN security is a multiple one, depending on the concept of security one chooses to use. The authors have tried to organize the material in a way that takes care of these various concepts and, on the whole they have been successful within the constraints set by the actual deliberations, which frequently tended to introduce additional aspects to the ones currently under discussion.

The work starts off with Guy Pauker's overview of the vulnerability of the region after the second oil crisis; Pauker, of the RAND Corporation, draws heavily on the (then) recent regional energy survey by the Asian Development Bank. Praipol Koomsup (also spelt as Koomsap in the book) of Thammasat University, Thailand, analyses the effects of the oil crisis on the ASEAN economies and provides extensive statistical material to support his analysis. In an extensive comment, Henry Clarke (also given as Harry R. Clarke) of the Asian Institute of Technology, provides an interesting overview of the various policy measures available to ASEAN countries when facing the insecurity of future energy supply. This includes storage policy, self-sufficiency policy, diversification of the pattern of energy supply, reorientation of development plans, regional and extra-regional co-operation and, finally, schemes of co-operation after disruption of supply has occurred.

Corazon M. Siddayao of the East-West Resource Systems Institute, Honolulu, presents a characteristically competent and comprehensive paper on the problems and prospects of ASEAN's offshore energy potential. She concludes that offshore oil and gas cannot provide the energy security required to maintain planned levels of development and economic growth in ASEAN countries. The report is supplemented by extensive statistics, charts, and maps. Given the character of the seminar, some overlap in the statistics presented by

individual contributors could not be avoided. Phiphat Tangsubkul (Pipat Tungsuebku?) of Ramkhamhaeng University, Thailand, adds the legal dimension to the problem of offshore energy resources and stresses that the problem should not be seen from an economic point of view alone, but that due account must be taken of the issues raised by the new law of the sea. Choon-Ho Park of the East-West Resource Systems Institute, Honolulu, takes up the latter point and discusses the rivalry over resources in the South China Sea. However, the major disputes are all outside the ASEAN region; it would have been better if Park had placed greater emphasis on the implications of these disputes for ASEAN and ASEAN's security. It is left to Donald E. Weatherbee of the University of South Carolina to analyse this aspect more fully. However, he concentrates more on military co-operation within ASEAN: border agreements, intelligence sharing, joint exercises, political consultation, and strengthening national forces as a contribution to regional resilience, form the continuing pattern of ASEAN co-operation. According to Weatherbee, there seems to be little prospect of multilateral security integration or co-ordinated strategy so long as the ASEAN states have different threat perceptions and intra-ASEAN points of conflict.

Michael Leifer of the London School of Economics analyses the security of sea lanes in Southeast Asia. He concludes that eminent threats to the security of sea lanes in Southeast Asia are minimal at present. They are kept at bay by a network of interdependence which encompasses both coastal states and maritime powers. It is perhaps inevitable that the security of the sea lanes within the ASEAN region widened the discussion to include the role of the superpowers and the potential future competition for energy resources. This leads to some speculation on the growing role of the Soviet Union in the Pacific region. The article on Southeast Asian energy as a dimension of the Pacific Basin Community expanded the topic perhaps beyond the limits of ASEAN's

security. However, the paper by Sevinc Carlson of the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies is interesting in itself, although it repeats much of the information on the energy situation in the individual ASEAN countries already given in previous contributions.

By far the weakest section of this book is that on ASEAN energy co-operation, not only because of the purely descriptive contribution by C.P.E. Luhulima (C.P.F. Luhulima?) of the Bureau of Science and Technology, ASEAN Secretariat, but rather because of the factually low level of actual co-operation achieved in the ASEAN region. True, there have been many meetings and discussions at various levels within the ASEAN system. But the potential for co-operation in energy that clearly exists within the region has hardly been exploited at all. The recent postponement for the second time of the meeting of ASEAN energy ministers is an indication of the lack of emphasis being placed on energy co-operation in ASEAN at present: The agenda for the meeting include a draft ASEAN agreement on energy security. But the meeting originally scheduled for April 1984 was postponed to June. It was then postponed again, no new date having been set for the meeting (*Straits Times*, 30 May 1984).

Donald Weatherbee was most critical of what ASEAN is doing in the framework of energy co-operation. According to him, the contributor from ASEAN had given an excellent rundown on the activities, but it appeared that this was "the usual grab bag of acronyms and alphabet soup", while the basic security problems had not been addressed at all. This task is, of course, not the function of the ASEAN Secretariat, the committees, study groups, or working groups. It is the function of the decision-makers at the top political level of ASEAN.

All in all, this book is an important contribution to the question of energy policy in the ASEAN region and is recommended for all serious students of energy problems and of

ASEAN co-operation. Most emphatically, perhaps, it is recommended to policy-makers and decision-takers in ASEAN.

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In the Kingdom of the Blind: A Report on Protectionism and the Asian-Pacific Region. By A Study Group under the Chairmanship of Lydia Dunn. Special Report No. 3. London: Trade Policy Research Centre, 1983. Pp. xxv, 130.

In March 1983 the Trade Policy Research Centre, London, organized a conference in Hobart, Australia at which ministers, business leaders, officials and independent experts from the Asia-Pacific region discussed problems of development and protectionism in the troubled world economy of today. A study group prepared a report for the meeting. The group comprised its chairman and main author of the book under review, the Hon. Lydia Dunn, a member of the Hong Kong Executive Council and of its Legislative Council; Hugh Corbet, the Director of the Trade Policy Research Centre; D.D. Rowlands, Managing Director of a New Zealand company; Brian Scott, Chairman and Managing Director of a management consulting firm in Sydney; the Hon. Tun Tan Siew-Sin, Chairman of Sime Darby, Kuala Lumpur; Jan Tumlir, Director of Economic Research and Analysis at the Secretariat of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), Geneva; Amnuay Viravan, Finance Minister in the Government of Thailand (1980-82); the Hon. William N. Walker, formerly Deputy Special Trade Representative in the Executive Office of the President of the United States (1975-77); Martin Wolf, Director of Studies at the Trade Policy Research Centre; and Isamu Yamashita, Chairman of Mitsui Engineering and Shipbuilding