

raise several concerns for less-developed economies. For instance, according to a report by the International Food Policy Research Institute in September 2004, farmers are losing billions of dollars every year due to trade-distorting subsidies, which enrich the United States and European Union farmers and traders. Such trade is termed discriminatory because the United States and EU spend nearly US\$300 billion subsidizing their farmers (whereas other less developed countries spend subsidies of less than US\$1 billion on farmers), while pressurizing the developing countries to cut down these meager subsidies and open up the agricultural sector for cheaper imports. Nevertheless, while both the United States and EU announced in August 2004 a series of corrective measures to cut these subsidies, they appear to be ineffective as no deadlines were set for their implementation.

While the volume is an invaluable source for a serious study of the current economic reforms in China, a more objective assessment is needed.

SRIKANTH KONDAPALLI

Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses
New Delhi, India

***Strategic Asia 2004–05: Confronting Terrorism in the Pursuit of Power.* Edited by Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills.** Washington, Seattle, USA: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2004. Softcover: 520pp.

This edited volume seeks to examine “how the war on terrorism has affected the strategic prospects of key powers and regions in Asia, and to assess how successfully the United States has managed to achieve its own particular strategic goals toward specific countries and sub-regions” (p. x). Two overriding U.S. strategic goals stand out in the volume: to win the war on terror and maintain, if not enhance, U.S. global dominance.

Besides the editors, thirteen top American specialists in Asian affairs and international relations have contributed chapters to this impressive book. Although all writers appear to embrace the necessity of waging a war on terror and accept that U.S. hegemony is desirable to American national interests, and the balance of power and stability in Asia, their analyses are generally very thoughtful and candid. Most chapters do not merely provide a year-in-review but also

comprehensive background analyses and a bold projection of trends at least five years hence. This review will highlight the overarching themes and selected writings rather than summarize every single chapter in this book.

The book is organized into three sections: the first focuses on key strategic countries namely the United States, China, Japan, Korea and Russia; the second on regions including Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Middle East; and the third on issues such as Asia's energy insecurity, weapons of mass destruction diffusion in Asia, scenarios in the Korean peninsula, and science and technology in Asia. The final chapter provides very useful indicators and statistics on Asia's economies, globalization and trade, investment, population, energy, defence expenditure, military forces and nuclear weapons.

In the editor's introduction, Ashley J. Tellis observes that although Washington has recorded notable successes in Asia against Al-Qaeda and its global affiliates, "U.S. strategy so far has been unable to reduce the global ranks of disaffected Muslim sympathizers. The United States needs to wage a war on terrorism that not only destroys Al-Qaeda and stabilizes Afghanistan and Iraq, but also addresses the roots of sprawling anti-American sentiment in the Middle East" (p. 3). Tellis warns:

what Osama bin Laden appears to have done successfully is to make an appealing argument that Washington's support of unjust, despotic, and corrupt Muslim states, its war against Muslim countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, and its favouritism toward Israel, actually represents evidence that the United States is at war with Islam itself and, consequently leaves the weaker Muslim community with no alternative to armed resistance. As long as millions of Muslims believe this claim, many passive sympathizers will elect for active terrorism, and the war on terrorism will not be won (p. 15).

These are sobering words but Tellis does not really tell us how the Bush administration can win the hearts and minds of alienated Muslims. However, Tellis suggests that "no attempt at defusing Muslim resentment against the United States is likely to be effective without better approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian problem (p. 22). And this problem is, of course, intractable.

Next, Robert G. Sutter notes that Southeast Asia initially was a low priority area for the Bush administration but after September 11

U.S. policymakers also began to pay greater attention to fighting terrorism in Southeast Asia, notably in the Philippines. There also was closer U.S. cooperation with Singapore and Malaysia, and tentative steps to improve security cooperation against terrorism with Indonesia (p. 44).

Despite the difficulties the United States is facing in Iraq, and the war on terror, Sutter believes that America has improved its relations with all the leading powers in Asia; even China recognizes the reality that the United States will remain Asia's dominant power.

Sutter is probably right to assume that the United States will remain the top dog not only in Asia but the world for some time to come. But what about the prestige and influence of the American superpower in Asia if Iraq turns out to be a decade-long quagmire and Iran eventually becomes another bog leading to the haemorrhaging of the U.S. military and American treasury, differences and tensions among U.S. allies increase, and there is polarization within American domestic politics and public opinion?

Dominant powers are usually wary of rising powers which may emerge as challengers. Michael D. Swaine argues that, against the backdrop of the war on terror, the United States and China have improved their relations even though the latter is emerging as a great power in Asia. In this regard, China has shrewdly been "exploiting a strategic opening" (p. 67) to augment its "peaceful rise". Not addressed by Swaine is the question: will the U.S. regard China as its main competitor and a country to be contained once the war on terror has wound down?

Mike M. Mochizuki points out that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's staunch support for the U.S. war on terror has gained Japan "greater maneuverability to pursue a more autonomous foreign policy and beyond" (p. 103). This is evidenced by the Bush administration's tolerance towards Koizumi's dramatic trip to Pyongyang and Japanese moves to develop the Azadegan oil field in Iran. Indeed, the U.S. war on terror has also given Japan the opportunity to increasingly become a "normal" state whereby the country sheds its post-Second World War pacifism and can engage in collective security. Mochizuki also insightfully notes Tokyo's multi-pronged strategy in Asia: "While softly balancing against China through a reinvigorated Japan-U.S. alliance, Japan also seized the commercial opportunities presented by China's economic ascendancy, worked to prevent a downward spiral in Japan-China relations, and promoted East Asian economic integration" (p. 105). However, Mochizuki does not raise the possibility of the United States failing in Iraq and, not inconceivably, subsequently in Iran — and the impact such a scenario would have on Japan's strategic options. Should we assume that, given the presence of an opaque and self-declared North Korean nuclear power and a rising China, the Japanese will have no choice but to stick it out with the United States? After all, Japan remained a U.S. ally despite the latter's defeat in the Vietnam War.

Victor D. Cha observes that “despite pronounced domestic ambivalence, the ROK (South Korea) has been a supporter of the war on terrorism” (p. 139). Cha also writes: “the catalyzing event for the much-noted “anti-American” candlelight vigils of late 2002 and early 2003 in Korea related not to the war on terrorism but to the acquittal of U.S soldiers in the death of two Korean schoolgirls during military exercises” (p. 149). He also notes that the “final variable that could dramatically drive developments is unpredicted North Korean behaviour” (p. 157). Cha is absolutely right about this but what about the perception in Pyongyang that Washington is hostile and intent on regime change? After all, the United States invaded Iraq on the pretext of destroying weapons of mass destruction. Does the United States not consider the option of a pre-emptive strike against suspected North Korean nuclear facilities? One can also paraphrase Cha and say that perhaps the final variable that could dramatically drive developments is unpredicted *American* behaviour.

In the following chapter, Stephen E. Hanson argues that September 11 had a “dramatic and unexpectedly positive effect on U.S.-Russian relations” especially after the United States publicly pledged to reconsider its criticisms of Russia’s war against Chechen Muslim separatists (p. 164). However, Hanson also warns: “it must be made clear to Putin and his generals that unchecked brutality in Chechnya does not further the war on terrorism; rather, it simply produces a new generation of terrorists” (p. 191). Hanson also notes that China has emerged as one of Russia’s top two markets for arms exports. It would also have been interesting if Hanson had addressed the question: what are the implications for Russo-U.S. relations if Moscow continues to sell sophisticated weapons to a rising China that is prepared to use them against a Taiwan seeking independence?

On Central Asia in the face of insurgent Islam, Gregory Gleason opines:

To defeat terrorism, the United States must succeed in its military operations. But victory on the battlefield is not enough. The political doctrines that bolster terrorists must be overcome if the war on terrorism is to succeed. As moderate Muslim societies, these Central Asian countries offer the Muslim world a moderate alternative to Muslim extremism (p. 201).

While Central Asian countries may share common interests with America, they “do not always share common interpretations of how to pursue these interests” (p. 215). An example is Uzbekistan which has been guilty of human rights violations and the use of terrorism as a “pretext for political repression” (p. 216).

In the next chapter on South Asia and the war on terrorism, Walter K. Andersen writes:

Differing interpretations of what constitutes terrorism, however, impede cooperation among them and constitute a threat to regional stability. While Pakistan has cracked down on Al-Qaeda activists in its territory, President Musharraf's government does not regard Kashmiri militants or the anti-Karzai Taliban rebels as genuine terrorists. The United States, dependent on Musharraf to fight Al-Qaeda and confident it can resolve Indo-Pakistani tensions, has yet to put real pressure on the Pakistani president to stamp out Islamic radical groups that engage in violence within India or against the Taliban fighting in Afghanistan (p. 235).

Following that is Sheldon W. Simon's chapter on Southeast Asia. According to him,

The core of the controversy is whether Southeast Asian jihadists operate at the behest of Al-Qaeda or whether they have separate agendas compatible with Osama bin Laden's organization but independent of it. The bulk of the evidence suggests the latter ... The September 11 terrorist attack thrust the United States into this witch's brew of Southeast Asian Islamic terrorism (p. 264).

Simon also perceptively identifies the problem of certain Islamic schools especially *madrasahs* and *pondoks* which churn out cohorts of radical students hostile to the West. He notes that the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will support basic education to "prepare Indonesia's children to be effective participants in their own democratic society while reducing extremism and intolerance, supporting democracy and respect for diversity" (p. 289). Simon also mentions that President Bush pledged US\$157 million in education aid to Indonesia over six years when he visited Bali in October 2003. In this reviewer's opinion, this amount is just a fraction compared to the billions spent on the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan and Iraq. While U.S. rhetoric sounds good, it remains to be seen whether this paltry amount would enable Washington to win the hearts and minds of Muslim students in Southeast Asia.

Graham E. Fuller next writes about "confronting resentment in the Arc of Crisis" in the Middle East. He correctly observes:

the U.S. military campaigns linked with the war on terrorism, especially in Iraq, have crystallized unprecedented levels of anger at the U.S. presence in and its policies across the Middle East, caused it to be identified with Israeli strategies, and rendered regional publics (as opposed to regimes) practically sympathetic to anti-American violence (p. 301).

Fuller ominously warns: “Just when will regimes be seriously threatened or actually overturned by angry publics? Many analysts, including this author, feel that the longer-term process of reckoning is just beginning” (p. 305).

Due to space constraints, the reviewer cannot comment on the fine chapters on Asia’s “Energy Insecurity” (Mikkal E. Herberg), “WMD Diffusion in Asia” (Gaurav Kampani), “Alternative Futures for the Korean Peninsula” (Nicholas Eberstadt) and “Science and Technology” (Richard P. Suttmeier). Rare in edited volumes, all the papers are of a consistently high quality.

In conclusion, this is an annual review which is second to none: virtually all the chapters are critical and excellent and address past, present, and future trends which go beyond the year-in-review. This volume is highly recommended to policy-makers, scholars and journalists. If they have the patience to read a challenging book with more than half a thousand pages, there is much to learn from it.

LAM PENG ER
East Asian Institute
National University of Singapore