

## The Clinton Administration and Regionalism- Security Linkages in the Asia-Pacific Region

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# The Clinton Administration and Regionalism-Security Linkages in the Asia-Pacific Region

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The U.S. foreign policy priority has shifted significantly toward the Asia-Pacific region in recent years. This shift reflects Washington's increased commitment to regionalism in the 1980s. The Clinton administration's Asian policy reflects such a new orientation: commitment to APEC along with NAFTA and WTO, a new emphasis on multilateralism, and the "redefinition" of the U.S.-Japan security relationship in a regional and global context.

This paper will first examine some of the important sources, both domestic and external, of such a new orientation as well as the rationales and thinking behind the Clinton administration's new emphasis on Asia and regionalism.

The U.S. commitment to regionalism in the late 1980s and 1990s reflects the important part of a political project for Washington policymakers to establish regional hegemony in the Americas (NAFTA) and, with NAFTA as a leverage, to retain its influence in Asia (APEC) in order to offset the relative decline of its global hegemony. It also reflects U.S. transnational capital's drive for a larger share of the market and, therefore, capital's interests.

Such a perspective will help us explain many of the actions and statements made by the Clinton administration in the formulation and implementation of its Asian policy in both economic and security fields. I will particularly focus on President Clinton's conception of the "new Pacific Community" and examine some of the major problems that this concept and his Asian policy involves in the changing trends and dynamics of the region.

One of the major problems that the present administration's policy faces in its effort to maintain regional hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region is the question of regional security and stability. U.S. policymakers are worried that the dynamic growth of the region may be disrupted without a secure and stable environment. In connection to this, the question

of economics and security will also be addressed.

Specifically, I will discuss the ongoing redefinition of the U.S.-Japan security relations and explore some of the problems and implications that such redefinition necessarily involves. It will be shown that the ongoing redefinition of the bilateral alliance contains the limitations and dilemmas that are inherent in bilateralism: neighboring countries' fear of Japan's expanded security role; the perennial popular perception gaps between Americans and Japanese; oftentimes latent, sometimes open suspicions of Japan going independent militarily among the American public and even among policymakers; constant pressures on Japan to play a larger security role, sometimes to the neglect of Japanese domestic politics or Japan's constitutional constraints, on the American side, and frequently without sufficient explanations to the public and/or deliberations in the Diet on the Japanese side. The China factor in the security equation of the Asia-Pacific region adds to its dilemmas and limitations. Therefore, I will try to explore and show that more emphasis should be placed on our effort to advance multilateral rather than bilateral security arrangements in the region as a useful remedy to such limitations and dilemmas. The usefulness of existing bilateral security arrangements should be duly acknowledged, but more effort should be put into fostering conditions conducive to institutionalized multilateral security mechanism, fully recognizing that the security agenda can no longer be dominated by military issues and that the process will be a lengthy and difficult one.

## I The United States and its new Emphasis on Asia

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum was created in 1989. In the initial years since its creation the United States had been a passive participant, more concerned with the Uruguay Round and

NAFTA negotiations. The Bush administration's foreign policy priority was still in Europe despite its occasional emphasis on Asia.<sup>(1)</sup>

The first indication of Washington's real interest in the region and APEC appeared in the winter of 1991. On November 12, 1991 President Bush announced his "Pacific Community" concept at a dinner party hosted by the Asian Society of New York. The concept was explained more fully by Secretary of State James Baker who contributed an article to *Foreign Affairs* in which he noted it as an 'emerging architecture for a Pacific Community.' In this scheme, Baker said that APEC was an important mechanism for sustaining market-oriented growth in the region as well as for advancing global and regional trade liberalization. He also stressed that APEC was a hallmark of American engagement in the region.<sup>(2)</sup>

However, these remarks reflected not so much the U.S. commitment to APEC as a hedge against further weakening of the GATT and a reaction to the apparent turning inward of the EC. The remarks also reflected the administration's attempt to counter widespread perceptions in East Asia that the U.S. might withdraw from Asia in the immediate aftermath of the ending of the Cold War. More importantly, policy makers during the Bush presidency were concerned about possible adverse effects that moves toward multilateral security arrangement might have on the existing networks of bilateral alliances.<sup>(3)</sup>

It is during the Clinton administration that the Asia-Pacific region has been given a standing at least equal to that of Europe. One of the first indications appeared when Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs testified before the Senate confirmation hearings in the spring of 1993, that "today no region in the world is more important for the United States than Asia and the Pacific." Such a new orientation of U.S. foreign policy was more clearly enunciated in two major speeches in July, 1993, in which President Clinton talked about his vision of the new Pacific Community. Winston Lord elaborated on Clinton's vision. Repeating that the Asia-Pacific region is most important for the U.S., he emphasized that GATT, APEC, NAFTA and bilateral measures would be used to open markets, and that the time was ripe for a ministerial-level agreement to enter into a regional trade and investment framework. He added that creation of "a true Asia-Pacific economic community" would be at the top of the U.S. agenda for that year.<sup>(4)</sup>

It is clear from the Assistant Secretary's statement that the Clinton administration elevated the Asia-Pacific region to the status of its top priority agenda. The APEC meeting of November 1993 which was hosted by the U.S. government was part of the administration's effort to strengthen regional trading ties so

that Asian markets for American goods and investment would expand. The Clinton administration also made it clear that APEC is at the center of its economic and trade policy in the region and that it has been made the cornerstone of regional economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific.

In addition, the Seattle meeting introduced a new element into the APEC process; the first informal meeting of leaders was proposed and held under Clinton's initiative. The meeting provided the leaders with an opportunity to address political and security issues of the region.

Why has the U.S. foreign policy priority shifted significantly toward the Asia-Pacific region? Why has APEC come to be regarded as the cornerstone of regional economic cooperation, along with NAFTA and GATT/WTO?

In trying to answer these questions, it is useful to think about the reasons why the United States began to increase its commitment to regionalism in the 1980s.

More generally, regionalism reflects in part the globalization of the economy under the competitive nature of the world capitalist system. Today capital must compete for a share of the market on a global scale. Capital, to survive the competition in the market, must be able to produce competitive goods and services, which in turn requires capital to freely move across national boundaries to seek after the most efficient combination of production endowments. Transnational capital's drive for a larger share of the market on the global scale explains the globalization of the economy and the rise of regionalism.

As long as the United States enjoyed a hegemonic position in the world economy, it supported and promoted the GATT/IMF system, and the incentive for regionalism was not strong. Therefore, the increased U.S. commitment to regionalism in the 1980s needs to be explained by another factor, the decline of America's economic hegemony. In this sense, the U.S. commitment to regionalism is strongly motivated by the government's desire to reorganize its regional space in such a way as to regain its economic hegemony by reinforcing competitiveness of American industries. The formation of NAFTA in this context was expected to make the United States competitive against Japan and Europe by creating the world's largest market (370 million people and \$6.5 trillion of production).<sup>(5)</sup>

The U.S. commitment to regionalism was also influenced by the development of regional integration in Europe and Asia. NAFTA was intended to prevent the EC from becoming an exclusive economic and political bloc as well as to counter the growing economic and political challenge from Asia.

Ultimately, NAFTA reflects the important part of a political project for Washington policymakers to

establish a U.S. regional hegemony in the Americas. In the same vein, APEC reflects the U.S. desire to retain its influence in Asia. Together they reflect the U.S. strategy to offset the loss of global hegemony and regain its hegemonic position in world politics.

The Clinton administration's top policy priority is domestic economic renewal. To that end President Clinton has vigorously sought access to foreign markets for competitive U.S. goods and services. Administration officials understand that expanding open markets for U.S. exports are essential for economic renewal at home. According to their estimate, every billion dollars in U.S. exports creates about 20,000 American jobs. Between 1988 and 1992, almost 60 % of real growth in the U.S. economy came from export expansion. Increased exports are claimed to be "the best job creation program" for the U.S.<sup>(6)</sup>

They believe that the Pacific Rim is the key to this domestic economic renewal. In the past decade, the region has seen the most dynamic economic growth in the world. Reflecting this dynamism, over half of America's total world trade today is with the Pacific region, 50 % more than its transatlantic trade and three times its trade with Latin America. It is estimated that more than 2.5 million U.S. jobs now depend on exports to East Asia.<sup>(7)</sup>

The rapid growth of the region holds even better promise for more job-creating exports of U.S. goods and services. In the year 2000, the GNP of the 15 member economies of APEC will exceed that of the G-7 countries. U.S. trade with the Asia-Pacific will be double that with Europe. The IMF estimates that half of world growth in the decade of the 90s will be in the Asia Pacific region.<sup>(8)</sup>

Washington's recognition of the growing weight of the region in the renewal of the American economy is the most important motive for the administration's increased commitment to APEC. Besides, a significant part of the U.S. global trade deficit is with this region (about 70-75%). So increasing its exports to the region will help to improve the overall U.S. trade deficit.

In addition to the new importance of this region to the U.S. interest, APEC is expected to become a flagship of global trade liberalization. It is an important vehicle for the administration to prevent the EU from looking inward and creating trade barriers against non-members which include the U.S. It is in this context that Assistant Secretary of State Lord stressed that APEC is "not a trading bloc but a building bloc for the world trading system."<sup>(9)</sup>

Another important motive for Washington's increased commitment to APEC is rooted in American domestic politics. America's isolationist tendency has become more pronounced in the post-Cold War era. Many Americans are more concerned with domestic

problems and the primacy of foreign policy has declined.<sup>(10)</sup> The Seattle meeting of November 1994 was considered a very good occasion to highlight to the American people and the business community "the tremendous opportunities in the region." It was an occasion for the administration to reaffirm the U.S. support for the APEC not only to the world but also to the American people and let them know that "no area of the world is more central to our domestic economic strength, or more lucrative for American jobs and exports."<sup>(11)</sup>

Washington often warned that for the American people to appreciate the benefits of U.S. engagement, Asia's markets must be open to U.S. goods and services. Such a warning has a double message. One is that Washington wants to remain fully engaged in the region to enjoy the high rewards that they can expect from the fastest-growing economies of the area. There is a nagging fear that America otherwise could be isolated from Pacific sources of prosperity under the pressure of isolationist forces at home. Another fear is that America may be excluded not only by regional economic cooperation in Asia but also squeezed out of the region politically. Washington's strong reaction to Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir's proposal of an East Asian Economic Group was an indication of such fears as his original proposal excluded the U.S. from its membership. If that should occur, the result would be the emergence of Asia that falls under a de facto sphere of influence centered around Japan or/and China at the expense of U.S. interests. Therefore, for Washington policymakers as well as for the interested business community, APEC is an essential means of anchoring the U.S. both strategically and economically to maintain its influence in the region.

## II Clinton's "new Pacific Community" and Problems of Regional Economic Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region

Having examined the motives and rationales behind the increased commitment of the U.S. to regionalism in the Asia-Pacific region, it will be useful to move on to explore some of the problems and uncertainties that the U.S. government faces in its efforts to promote regional economic cooperation and maintain its influence in the region.

Firstly, critics have questioned the validity of the assumption upon which President Clinton's vision of a "new Pacific Community" is based. Paul Krugman challenges the assumption of the vision that the present dynamic economic growth of this region will continue for many years to come. According to Krugman, Asian growth has been driven by "extraordinary growth in inputs like labor and capital rather than by gains in efficiency." He argues that the future pros-

pects for the Asian growth are "more limited than almost anyone now imagines." The counterargument is that if Krugman's thesis is valid, why have the real wages in manufacturing in these Asian countries increased between 1980 and 1990? Low productivity should mean low growth in real incomes.<sup>(12)</sup>

Krugman's position has so far been in the minority. Although it is yet too early to say which of the two arguments prove right in the long run, the kind of question Krugman has raised is something we ought to bear in mind simply because the slowdown of the present dynamic growth of this region would undermine not only the basis for Clinton's "Pacific Community" concept but would also endanger the future development of regionalism consistent with the GATT/WTO principles.

Robert A. Manning and Paula Stern do not deny the importance attached to the Pacific community idea by President Clinton but they claim that the idea is "more aspiration than reality." They warn that the Pacific community idea may be pulled apart by more powerful forces. They point out that EU trade with the Pacific Rim is also growing substantially, surpassing its transatlantic trade with the U.S. in 1992. They also note that intra-Asian trade accounts for 45% of East Asia's total trade while the share of East Asian exports to the U.S. market fell to 24.2% in 1992 from 34.1% in 1986. In other words, the region's dependence on the U.S. has been eroded rather than strengthened.<sup>(13)</sup>

These conflicting forces make the concept elusive but what is more troublesome is that U.S. power and prestige in the region is declining despite its renewed interest in the region. The pervasive feelings of "a shameful America unable to take care of itself" exist not only among the Americans<sup>(14)</sup> but tend to create an image abroad that the American model of development is not the only choice available to the leaders of other countries struggling to develop their economies. "The United States is losing its moral authority in the Pacific," testified Hunter College Professor Donald Zagoria before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, "as many Asians conclude that the U.S. is in decline, that it cannot solve its own problems, and that it is increasingly resorting to scapegoating others, particularly Asians, for its own failures."<sup>(15)</sup> If it continues, this declining influence in the region could undermine the basis for a Pacific community.

Some people argue that the U.S. is not the common glue that makes a Pacific community work. Don Russell, Australian Ambassador to Washington D.C., contends that it is "the growing weight and confidence of the Asian nations" that would be the basis for a community.<sup>(16)</sup> Such an argument is flawed for the following reasons. Firstly, the fast growth of the Asian economies has relied considerably on the capacity of the U.S. market to absorb exports from these coun-

tries. This absorbing function performed by the U.S. continues to be important for the export-oriented economies of the region as Japan is not going to be able to perform this function to the same degree that the U.S. has done in the postwar years. Secondly, America's economic, political and military disengagement is likely to lead to the emergence of an exclusive East Asian bloc, or the further deepening of intra-Asian trade and investment, thus undermining the opportunity for a trans-Pacific community. Thirdly, the countries of the region want the U.S. presence economically and politically to prevent Japan or China from dominating the region. Fourthly, America's disengagement is likely to be destabilizing for the region.

Many critics including Manning and Stern question the concept on the grounds that the Asia-Pacific region is geographically vast, culturally, politically and historically so diverse, that it is unrealistic, though not impossible, to foster the "common psychology of belonging", or to create the "sense of shared interests and responsibilities" which are necessary to build a Pacific community. However, Ambassador Russell and some others think it a mistake to see Asia as a disparate group of nations destined to have little in common. They point out that economic growth and growing economic interdependence in the region are transforming Asian societies and that cultural links between the middle classes of various Asian countries are developing rapidly.

I am inclined to think that the "diversity" thesis, "historical antagonisms" thesis or Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis exaggerate the differences among Asian countries. The history of ASEAN's success seems to contradict their contentions. The ASEAN members include Muslim, Buddhist, Christian and Confucian countries, their security interests have differed widely, and their economic structures have been similar and more competitive than complementary. Despite such differences, the ASEAN economies have been a success and ASEAN as a subsystem exercises a growing influence in the region as is seen in the formation of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The ASEAN experiences seem to show that we should not be oblivious of the historical antagonisms, differing security interests and cultural/ideological differences that characterize this region but we ought to be aware, at the same time, that recently these differences have been increasingly marginalized. A recent survey covering 15 countries in Asia Pacific was published in 1995. As the title 'Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community' suggests, the book points out "a significant growth of the nonprofit sector" in recent years in the region. This nonprofit sector growth and emerging civil society are "often attributed to the growth of the middle class" which has been brought

about by rapid economic growth.<sup>(17)</sup>

More serious in terms of promoting economic cooperation and "open regionalism" than the cultural, political, ideological, geographical differences described above is the economic gap between advanced countries and less advanced countries and within countries. The per capita income in 1991 of high-income members ranged respectively from the highest \$ 26,930 (Japan) to \$ 22,240 (U.S.), \$ 20,440 (Canada), \$ 17,050 (Australia) and \$ 14,210 (Singapore). At the other end of the scale, the low-income members included China (\$ 370), Indonesia (\$ 610), and the Philippines (\$ 730).<sup>(18)</sup> These income gaps are likely to become a big problem in facilitating liberalization and political stability.

Liberalization creates both winners and losers on both national and domestic levels. Losers react strongly against the adjustment costs that inevitably accompany liberalization or free trade agreement. Wide divergence in stages of development and income will make it more difficult to coordinate the trade, investment, and macroeconomic policy stances of member countries, which in turn will make it more difficult to reach regional consensus because of the asymmetric nature of the concessions required of the less competitive, more closed members. In other words, the higher adjustment costs are, the greater reactions are expected domestically and the more difficult successful regional cooperation becomes among members. An analysis of the negotiating process over NAFTA seems to clearly suggest that the question of adjustment costs deriving from the wide divergence in economic development and income in the region is going to be a big problem for the U.S. government in view of the fact that both NAFTA and APEC include advanced and less advanced economies.

The NAFTA debate has demonstrated that protectionist or inward-looking sentiments are still strong in the United States and that the U.S. project to extend its influence in the Americas is not grounded on a firm social and political basis domestically. The House vote on November 17, 1993 was 234 (Yes) against 200 (No). The Senate vote of November 20 was 61 against 38. The figures show that there exist a fervent core of members who oppose current U.S. trade policy. Labor opposed it strongly because it would further deindustrialize America, causing job losses and a decline in living standards. Their fear is confirmed by the fact that not only have real wages been stagnant for twenty years but also that the gap between rich and poor has significantly increased.<sup>(19)</sup> This condition has made many Americans very sensitive to a free trade arrangement that might possibly lead to a lowering of their living standards. Many of the factors that made the NAFTA debate so contentious also exist in economic relations between the U.S. and other APEC members.

Therefore, many Americans fear that free trade and investment with Asia could endanger their jobs and drag their wages down to Chinese or Indonesian levels.

The NAFTA-forming process has also raised the question of how to reconcile contradictions between liberalization and democratization, and between liberalization and environmentalism. Environmentalists, human rights activists and consumer advocates opposed NAFTA because they feared it would undermine domestic environmental and public health laws. Brecher and Costello points to a loss of democratic control as the result of globalization: "Globalization has reduced the power of individuals and communities to shape their destinies through participation in democratic processes." This loss of democratic control has been caused by "the power of capital to pick up and leave" and capital's support for political movements to "dismantle government institutions for regulating national economies".<sup>(20)</sup> The Clinton administration's strategy assumes that liberalization promotes democratization but such an assumption is over simplistic. One might also add that drugs control and prevention of illegal immigrants are not made easier by the freeing of markets. The Clinton administration must address these difficult problems inherent in the prescriptions that the neo-liberal consensus favors.

A look at the effects of the ongoing NAFTA process reveals another problem that the region-building processes bring into American society. Tony Payne points out that the problems of the Caribbean and Latin American states and societies "increasingly penetrates the US domestic order in all manner of difficult ways."<sup>(21)</sup> Some of these issues are potentially divisive and harmful in American society and politics: drugs and immigrations are exacerbating both class and racial tensions as Proposition 187 in California showed at the time of the November 1994 mid-term elections; half of the residents of the Miami area are Latino and one Californian in five is of Mexican heritage, and these realities are changing the nature of politics in those states. To the extent that the Clinton administration's regional political project for the Americas represents part of the U.S. global strategy to offset the loss of global hegemony by the establishment of regional hegemony in the Americas, these potentially divisive elements that the NAFTA process has introduced into American society and politics will affect Clinton's approach toward APEC from a long term perspective.

Not only does the Clinton administration face such broad problems but also it must overcome some of the more concrete problems if it seeks to strengthen the ties between the U.S. and APEC.

Firstly, Washington officials must address the difference between the U.S. and the less-developed economies of the APEC members in relation to how

fast they should lower their tariffs and other non-tariff barriers as well as how they should go about it. APEC's Economic Leaders Meeting (ELM) held on November 15, 1994 at Bogor, Indonesia, issued a Declaration of Common Resolve in which they agreed to achieve "free and open trade and investment" by the year 2020. But there was disagreement on the speed and process of liberalization. The U.S. government wants to use APEC to set an example for GATT to emulate. On the other hand, the members of less-developed economies whose position Mahathir represents think that liberalization should go more slowly than the U.S. government desires.<sup>(22)</sup>

They also insist that APEC ought to remain informal and low-key. They advocate a "concerted unilateral approach" whereby trade and investment ought to be liberalized unilaterally, voluntarily, and spontaneously. However, American policymakers prefer a negotiated, reciprocal, and compulsory process of liberalization and President Clinton made this clear at a press conference in Jakarta by saying that the United States wants a formal APEC blueprint for liberalization. The U.S. government must adapt to this difference as well.

Secondly, the U.S. will have to settle the question of how APEC members apply the liberalization achieved within APEC to non-members, either on an unconditional Most-Favored Nation (MFN) basis or on a reciprocal, free-trade-agreement basis. They have to settle this question so that APEC's across-the-board liberalization can be consistent with the GATT/WTO. If an APEC member applies APEC liberalization on an unconditional MFN basis, that is, unilateral liberalization to nonmembers, it will be consistent with the GATT. But if an APEC member offers liberalized trade to non-APEC members on a reciprocal basis, it is unclear whether this kind of preferential trading arrangement is consistent with Article 24 of the GATT. The U.S. government seems to prefer the latter in order to prevent "free riders". But this U.S. approach might be viewed by non-members as threatening, possibly causing a negative reaction amongst the EU, NAFTA, and APEC.<sup>(23)</sup>

Thirdly, what form is the relationship between NAFTA and APEC going to take in view of the fact that APEC includes all NAFTA members. Two new members, Mexico and Papua New Guinea were added to APEC at the Seattle meeting in November 1993. It was then announced that after admitting Chile in 1994, the membership question would be frozen for the next three years. As for NAFTA membership, the U.S. wants to widen its membership southward to Latin America, while Canada wants to have Japan and other APEC members included in it. Mexico agrees with Canada about inviting APEC members while being ambivalent about widening southward.

The Mexican crash of January 1995 threw some cold water on America's approach. "I am not sure we are ready for more adventures," said Senator Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y. of the possibility of extending NAFTA to U.S. neighbors. Moises Naim, former Minister of Industry of Venezuela and former Executive Director of the World Bank felt that the peso crisis "has pushed the prospect for extending NAFTA to the rest of the hemisphere well into the next century." If so, there may be a positive impact on Canada's approach, which seems more constructive for the future of APEC. One of the reasons is that there is a considerable concern among Asian countries including Japan that the U.S. may be forming a preferential economic bloc against them. Such concerns have led to proposals for Mahathir's EAEG, now an East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC). In a situation in which there is a tug of war between global liberalization and regionalization, the relationship between NAFTA and APEC should be adjusted in such a way to stimulate both toward open regionalism.<sup>(24)</sup>

### III Economics and Security in the Asia-Pacific Region

There remains the question of economics and security in the Asia-Pacific region. It is said that the region has been the only major region of the world that has not developed region-wide intergovernmental institutions, in either the economic or security dimensions, to foster and facilitate its progress. There are many factors for explaining the dynamic growth of the region. A widely accepted explanation is the view that stresses the central role of the private sector. Peter Petri concludes in his study that "postwar trends in East Asian interdependence have been driven by market rather than political forces."<sup>(25)</sup> In this sense, it should be noted that the regionalization in East Asia lacks much of the political project that characterizes the NAFTA processes.

However, we should not lose sight of the role played by the U.S. in economic and security fields, particularly the fact that the U.S. presence has played an important stabilizing role in the region. Jonathan Clarke, a former British diplomat and currently a senior associate at the Asia Pacific Policy Center in Washington D.C. argues that "a security dimension either as a component of APEC" or "in a parallel agency is needed," and that if this security dimension is ignored, "American efforts for a revitalized and integrated Asia policy may suffer fatal damage." Most Americans, including administration officials, seem to agree that economics and security cannot be separated. Secretary of State Christopher himself made it clear that "ultimately, all our efforts to advance American prosperity in Asia depend on the peace and

security of the region."<sup>(26)</sup>

The Clinton administration's thinking on this question is as follows. The "NewPacific Community" is the philosophical foundation of Clinton's Asia policy, and the concept is composed of three pillars. The first component of the new concept is prosperity or opening of Asia's markets for American goods and services under the banner of market efficiency, and trade and investment liberalization. In this respect, APEC is a vital part of the strategy as well as the cornerstone of regional economic cooperation. The second component is America's continued security engagement in Asia that is provided by the U.S. military presence and bilateral alliances, and new regional security consultation and cooperation. The third element is the support for democracy and human rights. Democracy is also considered the foundation of security and prosperity because, according to their rationale, "more open societies make for a more stable region and democratic nations make better neighbors and better trading partners". Therefore, all these three elements are inseparably linked in the minds of administration officials.

The major problem with this concept and the administration's Asian policy is that there are trade-offs between these three elements. Winston Lord himself admits it. Though he believes that human rights and economic and security interests are "mutually reinforcing over the long run," he admits that "one of the most difficult conceptual and political problems" is how to "reconcile these goals when you have tradeoffs."<sup>(28)</sup>

Now, looking back at the record on this point in the past three years, the last core element of democracy and human rights has declined in importance. The administration has backed down because of protests from ASEAN countries and China. The Clinton administration at first linked renewal of China's MFN status to overall improvements on human rights in that country. However, after several attempts, Clinton finally decided to break the link between the two in May, 1994. This means that the United States decided to give priority to economic relations over human rights and democracy. A State Department official accompanying Secretary of State Christopher on his recent mission to open the first U.S. embassy in Hanoi said that in the old days, the U.S. "wanted to make Asia safe for democracy", but "these days, we want to make it safe for American exports." The new emphasis on exporting American products rather than American political principles marks a significant change from the early days of the Clinton presidency. Reflecting such a change, Secretary Christopher, at every stop on his trip to Asia in August 1995, avoided any explicit criticism of their human rights records.

The climb-down from the third element of democ-

racy and human rights means that the first element, economics and prosperity, is given a priority in Clinton's scheme. This reflects an ideology largely consistent with the world view and political priorities of large-scale, internationally mobile forms of capital as well as the current phase of economic globalization that emphasizes market efficiency, trade and investment liberalization.<sup>(29)</sup>

On the other hand, the administration has been slow in making headway in the field of security. Even though President Clinton's new emphasis on multilateralism was a significant departure from the previous administrations, efforts to build regional multilateral arrangements in the security field in the region have so far remained elusive.

A more important initiative towards building multilateral or subregional security arrangement was taken not by Washington but rather by Australia, Canada, Japan and particularly ASEAN. The fourth ASEAN leaders' meeting held in Singapore in January 27-28, 1992 agreed for the first time that security matters would be discussed at the ASEAN-Post Ministerial Conference, which was formally announced at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held in Manila in July that year. This eventually led to an announcement at the ASEAN-PMC of July 1993 that the ASEAN Regional Forum would be established in 1994. It was ASEAN which took the initiative in this whole process leading to the successful establishment of the subregional security framework called the ARF.<sup>(30)</sup>

Washington welcomed the ARF and expressed hope that it would become an important basis for Clinton's New Pacific Community concept. However, the primary significance of the ARF from America's perspective lies in the promotion of mutual understanding and confidence-building through multilateral dialogue and consultation, not in resolving issues. In other words, the ARF is expected to supplement, but not replace, the U.S. security alliances. The ARF will provide a mechanism through which the U.S. can serve as an "honest broker" in a dispute, the role that the Department of Defense envisions in its report to Congress.<sup>(31)</sup>

The slow progress in building a multilateral or regional security framework in the Asia-Pacific means that the U.S. government must rely on traditional alliances. Broadly speaking, the "redefinition" became necessary because of the end of the Cold War and the radically altered security environment, as well as the change in priorities in U.S. domestic politics. However, the renewed emphasis on the U.S.-Japan security system in the form of its "redefinition" must also be viewed in the light of the slow progress toward multilateralism.

The continued growth of Asian countries depends on the region's stability, which necessitates Japan's



larger security role in the existing U.S.-Japan security framework. This logic lies behind the recent "redefinition" of the bilateral security relationship.

An examination of the political process (the Nye initiative) shows that it is not merely a reaffirmation of the status quo. As part of the so-called Nye initiative launched in November 1994 by Joseph Nye who became Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security on September 15, U.S. defense officials have worked closely with their Japanese counterparts to redefine the bilateral security relationship.<sup>(32)</sup> The dialogue has focused on three different areas: (a) bilateral issues relating to the defense of Japan, (b) discussions of regional forecast and strategies, or the question of region-wide security, (c) respective involvement in global issues of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, or Japan's responsibility for global security.<sup>(33)</sup>

What has come out of this "aligning of views" process is the shifting of the alliance's focus from the defense of Japan proper to the objective of promoting regional security/stability and global security.<sup>(34)</sup> In this respect, Japan is expected to provide U.S. forces with logistical support during military operations that extend beyond the defense of Japan proper. The U.S. has also supported Japan's active participation in U.N. peacekeeping operations as well as cooperative joint efforts to nurture multilateral security dialogue in the Asia-Pacific region.

The U.S. government's security policy which reflects the Department of Defense report (*U.S. Security Strategy for the East-Asia Pacific Region*, February 27, 1995) has been vigorously challenged by 'revisionist' Japan experts like Chalmers Johnson and non-mainstream think tanks like the Cato Institute. According to Johnson/Keehn, "Japan's protectorate status" guaranteed by the present bilateral treaty makes it impossible for any leader in Japan to attempt to revise the constitution to allow Japan to engage in "equitable risk-sharing." "Only an end to Japan's protectorate status," they argue, "will create the necessary domestic political conditions for Japan to assume a balanced security role in regional and global affairs." Therefore, they recommend as the corrective measure that the U.S. should withdraw all its military forces from Japan and abrogate the bilateral security treaty.<sup>(35)</sup>

A milder version of Johnson/Keehn thesis has been developed by Mike Mochizuki, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. Mochizuki differs from Johnson/Keehn as his aim is to strengthen the bilateral security relationship.

But he shares with Johnson/Keehn the opinion that the current policy pursued by the Department of Defense "entails major risks" because it is preoccupied with keeping Japan in a "greenhouse" in which Japan

has "little incentive to develop a more mature attitude towards international security." Therefore, he recommends that "the windows and doors of the 'greenhouse' be opened to let in some fresh, cool air," so that such an open debate will "trigger a constructive process of revising Article 9 of the postwar constitution" and lead Japan to "explicitly recognize its right of collective as well as individual security."<sup>(36)</sup>

The major difference between the U.S. government's policy and that of its critics is their perceptions of possible consequences that the critics' recommendations would cause both within Japan, and amongst its Asian neighbors. The arguments involving a "cap in the bottle" thesis are quite revealing in this respect. Johnson/Keehn claim that the DOD report's assumptions lend credence to the idea that it is only the U.S. military that "keeps the Japanese genie in the bottle." To put it more bluntly, the current bilateral security relationship is built upon mistrust and a lack of confidence in the Japanese political process and the public's ability to control the military. On the other hand, the critics' assertions are too optimistic and unrealistic.

Mochizuki goes so far as to say that "the process of constitutional revision would make the Japanese people feel that democracy is something of their own making."<sup>(37)</sup> It is too optimistic to assume that the Japanese people's ability to control the military is firmly established. Such an anxiety has been reinforced not only by the secrecy of the defense-related decision-making process of the Liberal Democratic Party governments in the postwar years but also by the fact that the Japanese policy-making process in relation to the recent redefinition of the U.S.-Japan security system lacked transparency and that there was little debate or discussions of the ongoing process either in the mass media or the Diet. Johnson/Keehn's neglect of Asian neighbors' fear of Japan's militarization is neither politically sound nor realistic from a Japanese point of view. Their arguments are also flawed because they have little regard for Japanese domestic opposition to the revision of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution.

It is quite revealing to come across such a paradoxical assertion in Mochizuki's arguments that Washington and Tokyo "must work together to foster multilateral security arrangements—both formal and informal—in the Asia-Pacific region." Curiously enough, he justifies this for the reason that, without Japan's security linkage to the U.S., East Asians would be much more nervous.<sup>(38)</sup> In this respect, Mochizuki's argument on this point is closer to that of the U.S. government's position.

U.S. government officials are more cautious on this point. The Nye initiative and the DOD report reject as Japan's options not only the existing Japanese government's security policy as "economism" (pursuit

of narrow economic interest) but, interestingly enough, they also reject a "normal country" with an independent military capability on the ground that such an option is "enormously expensive." The fact that a normal country's option is not supported by the U.S. government reveals an apprehension among Washington policymakers that Japan might become a military power with nuclear capability and that such an eventuality would trigger the arms race in the region. The U.S. government denies that the bilateral security alliance functions as a "cap in the bottle" but it is implicit in its rejection of a normal country's option. Instead, DOD officials emphasize the need to develop "complementary strategies" and "a balanced, interdependent security relationship" through the U.S.-Japan security treaty.<sup>(39)</sup>

This is one of the major dilemmas and limitations of U.S. security policy toward Japan. The U.S.-Japan security relationship is not based on a sound basis politically and psychologically. The expansion of Japan's security role that is envisioned in the 1995 DOD report raises the question of Japan's further militarization. As a result, Japan's security linkage to the U.S. through the bilateral treaty assumes a semblance of a "cap in the bottle." It is also well known that Japan's security linkage to the U.S. is the condition upon which Japan's Asian neighbors can accept its larger security role in the region. With the common objective of expanding Japan's security role without delinkage, this "twist" remains a feature of the bilateral relation. This "twist" sometimes finds its extreme expression as is advocated by the revisionists like Johnson/Keehn.

Moreover, expanding Japan's security role from the defense of Japan proper to region-wide and global security is contradictory to the Japanese government's present security policy subject to the dictate of Article 9. Also, the Japanese dissatisfaction with the present bilateral security relationship seems to be rising in the recent years. A survey conducted by *Asahi Shimbun* in late October 1995 showed that those Japanese who believe that the treaty serves Japan's interest decreased from 52 % in April 1992 to 42 % in October 1995. During the same period, those who felt the treaty did not serve Japan's interest increased from 21 to 28 %. Moreover, many Japanese (73 %) think that, with Japan's share reaching 70 % of the total, they bear more than its share of the host nation support for the U.S. forces stationed in Japan. Only 7 % of them favor an increase of Japanese defense capability, with 36 % favoring a decrease and 52 % favoring the status quo.

The above figures are contrasting with those of Americans. Those Americans who felt the treaty served America's interest constituted 57 %, a 13 % increase from the figure of April 1992. On the other hand, 32 % of them thought it did not serve the U.S. interest, an 11 % decrease from the 1992 polls. This

figure shows there is a significant percentage of people who feel that Japan is benefiting more than the United States. Their discontent has been intricately linked with their feelings that Japan has not been sharing a fair burden in the area of security. The criticism that Japan is a free rider is just an extreme and symbolic expression of such dissatisfaction among Americans.

During the 1970s and 1980s, such criticism was heard not just among the public and Congressmen but also among high-level government officials in Washington.<sup>(40)</sup> However, a clear shift took place in the 1990s at the governmental level. The 1995 DOD report, after detailing various categories of costs, stresses that Japan "supplies by far the most generous host nation support of any of our allies." These costs, taken together, amount to \$ 5 billion dollars annually.<sup>(41)</sup> Such a shift in recognition of Japan's host nation support at the governmental level is intended to counter the arguments of the "revisionists" or "isolationists" in American politics.

These perception gaps have trapped the two countries in the habit of mutual recrimination. Specifically, the security and economic dimensions of the U.S.-Japan alliance have been increasingly and inextricably interwoven since the mid-1970s. The ending of the Cold War tipped the security-economic equation in favor of the latter in American domestic politics. The Clinton administration's focus on the domestic front, and economic renewal in particular, has increased such a tendency. Reflecting such a change, the Clinton presidency has witnessed a growing influence of "trade guys" vis-a-vis national security establishments upon the decision-making process. The rise of "trade guys" strained U.S.-Japan relations because of their pressure tactics to open up Japanese markets by frequent references to retaliatory measures such as super 301. The Department of Defense and their supporters, on the other hand, saw security as a top priority of U.S. policy in East Asia, maintaining that regional stability in East Asia is what supports the region's economic growth and creates greater American export and investment opportunities. Therefore, the Nye initiative worked as a corrective to the Clinton administration's initial preoccupation with trade issues and neglect of the security partnership with Japan.

Despite this needed corrective, the post-Cold War situation in which it is increasingly difficult to insulate security from economics will continue, and so will economic friction between the two countries. This competitive aspect of U.S.-Japan economic relations will continue to be a destabilizing factor in the maintenance of the bilateral security relationship. The 1995 DOD report is quite suggestive in this respect. "We must not allow trade friction to undermine our security alliance," says the report, "but if public support for the relationship is to be maintained over the long run,

progress must continue to be made by both sides in addressing fundamental economic issues."<sup>(42)</sup>

Given the postwar trend of the Japanese public attitude to the bilateral security relationship as well as the dissatisfaction within both U.S. government circles and an influential segment of public opinion leaders, and given the dilemmas and limitations of the present U.S.-Japan security and economic relations, exploration of a complementary alternative to the existing security relationship is necessary.

Given the dilemmas and limitations of the existing bilateral security relationship (the postwar trend of the Japanese public attitude to the bilateral security relationship, the dissatisfaction within both U.S. government circles and an influential segment of public opinion leaders, Asian neighbors' suspicion of Japan's larger defense role, and the increasingly and intricately interwoven security and economic aspects of U.S.-Japan relations), much stronger effort towards multilateral security dialogues and arrangements is necessary.

The existing U.S.-Japan security relationship must be examined in its relation to more comprehensive, preventive, cooperative security arrangements in a multilateral framework. In connection to this, it is significant to note the following points. Firstly, during the Cold War years, the term security was defined as the absence of military threats to the territorial integrity of a state. This concept of security has been too narrowly defined, and should be broadened to include political, economic, societal, and environmental dimensions of security. In the post-Cold War context, more emphasis should be placed upon non-military dimensions of security such as preventive diplomacy and environmental issues with security implications, as well as less sensitive aspects of security such as confidence-building measures and regional security dialogues. Secondly, the transboundary nature of these issues necessarily dictates multilateral approaches. Thirdly, the post-Cold War environment in the Asia-Pacific region is congruous with multilateralism. The Clinton administration recognizes the desirability of exploring multilateral security arrangements like the ASEAN Regional Forum, which is based upon the U.S. perception that "the increasing economic integration and interdependence" of the region provides "an excellent and unique opportunity" to pursue subregional security dialogues/forums.<sup>(43)</sup> Fourthly, the focus on the U.S.-Japan bilateral talks involving the redefinition of the security relationship aroused suspicions among some Asian countries, China and Korea in particular. Multilateral dialogues could avoid such complications.

Moreover, there are uncertain factors to be addressed in this alternative scheme. One of the most crucial is the China factor. The Nye initiative address-

ed this crucial question of how the U.S.-Japan security treaty system could be redefined to meet China's growing economic and military power in the future.<sup>(44)</sup> What came out of this consultation was the reconfirmation of the Clinton administration's strategy of "enlargement and engagement."

Washington's China policy is called "engagement". The engagement policy aims at integrating China into the international system so that Chinese external behavior may be more moderate and cooperative. Other than that, Washington so far seems to have come up with no effective, consistent set of policy measures to deal with China. Thus their relations have been often strained over such issues as human rights, non-proliferation, nuclear testing, Taiwan and trade deficits.

Their perception of each other is one of mutual suspicion. On the U.S. side, some argue that China's economic success will pose a long-term danger to the stability and security of the region. Therefore, the best strategy is to slow the growth of China's military and economic power.<sup>(45)</sup> The U.S. government is not as unrealistic as advocates of this extreme line of argument but still regards the development of Chinese power with growing concern. The 1995 DOD report notes: "although China's leaders insist their military build-up is defensive and commensurate with China's overall economic growth, others in the region cannot be certain of China's intentions, particularly in this stage of leadership transition." Questioned by a congressional panel in Washington in July 1995, Winston Lord, U.S. assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific affairs said, "We cannot predict what kind of power China will be in the 21st century. God forbid, we may have to turn, with others, to a policy of containment. I would hope not; we're trying to prevent that."<sup>(46)</sup>

Chinese leaders, on the other hand, are suspicious of Washington's engagement policy: they tend to view it as an indirect way of containing China. China's nuclear testing is considered necessary because the U.S. may bungle over the Taiwan question and worsen the bilateral relations.<sup>(47)</sup> Nancy Tucker, a specialist in U.S.-China relations at Georgetown University observed in July 1995 that "it's clear that the Chinese have come to the conclusion that there is a U.S. plot to keep them weak and divided."<sup>(48)</sup>

Chinese perceptions of Japan have become more critical during the U.S.-Japan talks about redefining the security relationship. During Nye's visit to China in November 1995 he was "lectured" by several Chinese military men about a possible revival of Japanese militarism. Chinese are suspicious that the U.S.-Japan alliance might be turned against them. In this context, Chinese institute researchers and analysts think that multilateralism could serve to constrain Japan's mili-

tary role in the region. From such a perspective, encouraging Japan to play a constructive role is a major challenge to multilateral approach to security and, in the words of a researcher from the National Defense University's Institute of Strategic Studies in China, "the inclusion of Japan is a must" in any security dialogue or mechanism.<sup>(49)</sup>

Japanese perceptions of China have turned rather critical in the past twelve months or so. Ezra Vogel, ex-senior analyst in the National Intelligence Council and a Japan specialist at Harvard University was impressed during his visit in the fall of 1995 by a major change in top-level government officials' perception of China. He felt that such a change in perception was a cause of Japan's renewed effort to strengthen security ties with Washington. Yoichi Funabashi of the *Asahi Shimbun* also makes the observation that China's behavior in the recent years have changed the public mood in Japan: the pro-China hands lost their influence both in business and political circles; mass media which had hitherto reported favorably about China has become more critical.<sup>(50)</sup>

The "redefinition" of the U.S.-Japan bilateral security relationship should be viewed in the above context of uncommendable Chinese-American relations. From an American perspective, the alliance with Japan actually serves as a good counterweight to China. From a Chinese perspective, it poses a dilemma: on the one hand, it provides the reassurance necessary to prevent Japan from becoming a great military power that could threaten its East Asian neighbors. On the other hand, the Chinese are very apprehensive about America's intention to expand the role of the treaty beyond the defense of Japan proper.

Under such circumstances, Japan faces the dilemma of the triangular relationship. In other words, Japan in the above situation is in a very delicate and difficult position. Ideally she should be in a position to mediate between America and China without siding with one or the other. But the task is extremely difficult. Japan cannot alienate the U.S., which raises the question of how to satisfy the latter's increasing expectations for Japan's larger security responsibility. Japan's willingness to meet the U.S. expectations in the midst of worsening American-Chinese relations would certainly alienate China, making it impossible for Japan to mediate between the two. Therefore, the best way for Japan to follow is to prevent Chinese-American relations from turning sour before it is too late, which means making every possible effort to help them solve various potentially explosive issues between Washington and Beijing.

Thus we come back to our earlier suggestion that more emphasis should be placed on cooperative, comprehensive, preventive security arrangements within a multilateral framework to maintain and promote sta-

bility and peace in the Asia-Pacific region. Notwithstanding deep-seated Chinese suspicions of utilizing multilateral fora to deal with regional security issues, China's attitudes toward multilateral security cooperation have recently become more positive. Chinese officials and academics have already attended the meetings of the ASEAN Regional Forum as well as many track two meetings. The present Chinese position on multilateralism can be best described as "a cautious stance", waiting for other countries to take the initiative. While insisting that most security problems in the region are not amenable to multilateral solutions, they nevertheless view multilateralism as inevitable and "non-participation in the process could be riskier for China than selective involvement."<sup>(51)</sup> So an effort should continue to be made to pursue multilateral dialogue and cooperation with China in an incremental and flexible manner until such time as conditions are ripe for establishing institutionalized multilateral security mechanisms.

#### IV Conclusions

Given the dilemmas and limitations of the U.S. security partnership with Japan as well as the question of how to deal with the China factor, the Clinton administration faces a very difficult task in building cooperative, multilateral security arrangements that will advance and assure the stability of the region.

As we have seen, Clinton's "new Pacific Community" concept is full of uncertainties. The administration must tackle various problems of regional economic cooperation as well as domestic complications arising from such regional cooperation or integration. Moreover, economics and security cannot be easily separated in America's effort to maintain an economically prosperous and politically secure environment in the Asia-Pacific region.

Philosophically, the Clinton administration's policy is beset with the trade-off of policy priority between the three components of its strategy of "enlargement and engagement", namely, opening of Asian markets, America's continued military presence and security engagement in the region, and commitment to human rights and democracy. More specifically, the U.S.-Japan bilateral security relationship faces a host of problems-both domestic and international. The China factor further complicates the situation. Under such circumstance, multilateralism is a badly needed corrective to such dilemmas and problems.

Such a search for a multilateral security mechanism is suited to the post-Cold War environment of the region. Firstly, there is a growing recognition among some regional powers and the U.S. that supplementing the existing bilateral security arrangements with a

multilateral framework is in everyone's interest. Secondly, post-Cold War security issues include those of a transboundary nature that demand multilateral cooperation, such as arms-build up, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, environmental degradation, drug trafficking, flows of refugees, and international terrorism. In this respect, cooperation with China could begin from non-traditional security issues such as drug trafficking and environmental problems, gradually moving from "soft" military issues like CBMs on to "hard" and sensitive issues such as arms reduction and nonproliferation.<sup>(52)</sup> Thirdly, regional economic cooperation reflecting the deepening economic interdependence of the Asia-Pacific region increasingly favors a multilateral security mechanism.

So far, the Clinton administration has not been very successful in this effort. Moreover, the emergence of the Republican Congress in the mid-term elections of November 1995 put Clinton in a much more difficult position because many Republicans insist on defending the country through unilateralism and bilateral alliances rather than through a multilateral framework. The Republican impact is already beginning to show in such areas as reducing the share of U.S. contributions to the U.N. from nearly 30 % to 25 % by 1996. The House of Congress passed a bill in February 1995 which would reduce U.S. contributions to peace-keeping missions from 25 % of the total to 20 %. Clinton must overcome such domestic opposition to his multilateralism.

Despite his brilliant diplomatic success in bringing about the ceasefire agreements among the warring factions in Bosnia, there are signs that President Clinton is retreating under domestic pressures from "assertive multilateralism" into "passive multilateralism" in the area of security. Such a tendency is not a good prospect for the stability of the Asia-Pacific. The usefulness of existing bilateral security arrangements should be acknowledged and utilized, but it is equally important to make an effort to foster the conditions for more institutionalized multilateral arrangements in the region, however ad hoc and informal such processes may seem at present.

America's retreat from multilateralism into renewed emphasis on unilateralism and bilateralism, as we see in the "redefinition" of the U.S.-Japan security treaty and in the unilateral, overplayed, disciplinary military measure taken against Iraq this September, will be rather more destabilizing than reassuring, if only because such approaches will make it difficult to keep China fully "engaged" in the process of security cooperation, which will in turn affect the dynamic growth of the region negatively.

## notes

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other states in Asia-Pacific security matters. Secondly, some ASEAN states and the U.S. might use it to put pressure on China regarding the Spratly Islands and human rights issues. Thirdly, Taiwan may exploit such a forum to pursue its "two-China policy." Fourthly, a multilateral security forum could be "a platform for China-bashing" in which China's military modernization can be the critical focus of other states (*ibid.*, pp. 25-27).

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