



Director of  
Central  
Intelligence

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# Soviet Policy in East Asia

National Intelligence Estimate

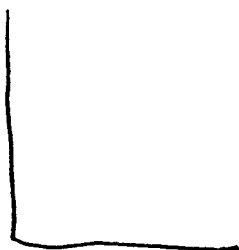
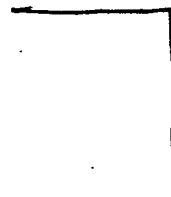
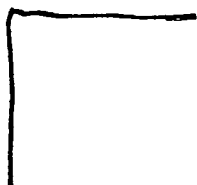
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SOVIET POLICY  
IN EAST ASIA

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THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS.

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## SCOPE NOTE

With this Estimate, the Intelligence Community takes its first look ever at Soviet activity and policy across the entire East Asian region. The issue is of increasing significance to US security interests in the 1980s because of the buildup in Soviet military power in the region; the salience of the US-Sino-Soviet relationship for US global strategy in dealing with the Soviet Union; the question of Japan's future political-military role in the Pacific; the future security of South Korea; the stability of Indochina and Southeast Asia; and the renewed emphasis on Asia in US foreign policy priorities. Such problems will become increasingly complex for US policymakers during the period of this Estimate (1984-89), even though much of the East Asian area continues to enjoy remarkable prosperity and relative stability.

A source of concern is the potential political ramifications of continuing buildup of Soviet military power in East Asia and the Pacific. Clearly, the Soviets have in mind a set of wartime tasks for these forces, and probably intend for them to serve certain deterrent functions as well. For the most part, however, we address the peacetime relationship of Soviet military power in East Asia to the panoply of Soviet goals in Asia. What kinds of benefits, political and economic, can Moscow buy with its substantial military might in Asia? What price is it willing to pay? What risks is it willing to take? How will US interests be affected? <sup>1</sup>

The geographic designation of East Asia comprises:

Australia	Laos
Burma	Malaysia
China	New Zealand
Indonesia	Philippines
Japan	Singapore
Kampuchea	Thailand
Korea, North	Vietnam
Korea, South	Taiwan

and the various island nations in the western Pacific Ocean area.

<sup>1</sup> For detailed descriptions of Soviet forces in Asia, see NIE 11-14/40-81, *Soviet Military Forces in the Far East*, and NIE 11-6-84, *Soviet Global Military Reach*.

## KEY JUDGMENTS

The primary Soviet concern in East Asia is to achieve superior military power, and toward this end all other Soviet interests in the region—political, economic, and diplomatic—will be subordinated. The Soviets probably see increasing challenges, including an improving Sino-US relationship, growing Chinese military capabilities, intensified US pressure on Japan to assume a greater security role in northeast Asia, evolving Sino-Japanese trade and political ties, and a commitment by the United States to increase its military posture in the region. We further believe the Soviets will focus much of their attention on the United States as the key obstacle to increasing their power in the region.

The principal *strategic objective* of the Soviet Union in East Asia is to increase Soviet power while containing China and reducing US and Japanese influence. The USSR's strategy in pursuit of these goals generally subordinates the achievement of local objectives and better relations with individual East Asian nations to its overriding strategic concerns. In pursuit of their strategic objectives the Soviets will:

- Protect against Sino-Japanese-US strategic cooperation by striving for military advantage against such a worst case contingency.
- Deter, through diplomatic and other means, the formation of a Sino-US alliance or substantial Sino-US military collaboration.
- Seek to erode the US alliance system in the Far East and develop countervailing friendly relations with states in the area.

We believe that Soviet policy toward East Asia will continue to emphasize improvement of military capabilities. The Soviets have strengthened their military position but have thus far been unable to translate it into intimidation sufficient to develop substantial political influence. We expect this shortfall to continue over the next five years.

We expect further additions to Soviet nuclear deployments, including land-based missiles capable of striking at Asian targets, and steady improvements to nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines and intercontinental nuclear-capable aircraft. The most dramatic development—an almost-100-percent increase since 1981—has been the growth of the SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missile force deployed east of the Ural Mountains.

The present disposition of Soviet forces in East Asia and trends in key measures of military capability indicate that:

- Qualitative improvements in ground, air, and naval forces and the related command structure in Asia are likely to continue. The rapid quantitative growth pattern ended for these forces in the 1970s.
- Long-term planning to meet worst case military contingencies seems to drive the Soviet force improvements.
- Some Soviet weapon systems in Asia, especially aircraft, are increasingly being modernized at roughly the same pace as in Europe.
- The Soviets pay a relatively low price for their forces opposite China.
- Soviet naval and air developments are increasingly oriented toward Japan and the South China Sea.
- Soviet forces at Cam Ranh will be significantly augmented.

We anticipate persistent Soviet efforts to detract from US and Western influence in East Asia. The components of such an effort, which would probably rely heavily on the use of both coercion and inducements, might be:

- New diplomatic initiatives designed to show Soviet flexibility.
- Encouragement of pacifist, antinuclear, anti-Western sentiments, especially in New Zealand, Australia, and Japan, which, if successful, would greatly complicate US strategy.
- Implicit (and on occasion explicit) threats regarding targeting of Soviet SS-20s and other nuclear forces, linked to regional arms control proposals, confidence-building measures, and other collective security plans.
- Economic inducements, including offers of economic assistance to developing countries as well as proposals for joint resource development and industrial projects.

The Soviet military buildup has reinforced a pervasive sense of suspicion of the USSR on the part of nearly all East Asian countries. With varying degrees of concern, they believe that the USSR is intent on becoming an East Asian power by using its military capabilities to build political influence. The general East Asian desire to avoid closer political and economic links with Moscow should persist as long as Asian leaders perceive a credible US deterrent to Soviet power.



While the Soviets probably will seek to expand trade with non-Communist states in East Asia, they have relatively little to offer the countries of the region. Soviet economic assistance is important only for Indochina and North Korea, among all the states of East Asia.

The Soviet presence in non-Communist East Asia has grown over the past decade but, in terms of the overall numbers involved, still appears quite low. We believe it is unlikely to increase markedly in the near future, principally because of regional suspicions of Soviet intentions.

The relatively small leftist political elements in non-Communist East Asia are neither politically influential nor responsive to Soviet wishes. Nonetheless, on occasion they engage in local actions that further Moscow's own goals in the region.

We regard it as possible but unlikely that the Soviet political position in East Asia will be substantially strengthened during the period covered by this Estimate. But, even if unlikely, it is worth flagging those areas where changes are most possible. Developments that would favor increased Soviet influence include:

- The growth of antinuclear sentiment in the region, as typified by New Zealand, and concern over vulnerability to a nuclear strike by countries hosting US forces, could further the Soviet objective of "neutralizing" the area.
- Substantial improvements in Sino-Soviet relations could increase pressures on non-Communist East Asian nations to reach accommodations with the Soviets.
- Escalation of Sino-Vietnamese hostilities could increase Hanoi's dependence on Soviet military assistance. In return, Moscow would almost certainly demand and receive further military concessions from Hanoi, including additional base rights.
- Continued political and economic instability in the Philippines could provide Moscow with new opportunities to curry favor with either the Philippine Government or the opposition.
- Markedly improved relations between P'yongyang and Moscow could increase Soviet pressure against China [ ]

Alternatively, Moscow's relations with various East Asian nations might suffer decisive setbacks under different conditions:

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- A continuing Soviet military buildup, combined with certain other developments such as Soviet aid to local opposition movements, could produce a dramatic hardening of East Asian perceptions of Soviet intentions.
- A sharp rise in the level of tension between Moscow and Beijing could lead to a major rupture in relations. US-Japanese-Chinese cooperation could improve accordingly.
- A Sino-Vietnamese rapprochement could prompt Hanoi to decrease its dependence on the Soviet Union, with a commensurate reduction of Soviet presence.

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## DISCUSSION

### How the Soviets See the Balance Sheet in East Asia

1. The primary Soviet concern in East Asia is to achieve superior military power, and toward this end all other Soviet interests in the region—political, economic, and diplomatic—will be subordinated. The Soviets probably see increasing challenges, including an improving Sino-US relationship, growing Chinese military capabilities, intensified US pressure on Japan to assume a greater security role in northeast Asia, evolving Sino-Japanese trade and political ties inimical to Soviet goals, and US commitment to increase its military posture in the region. To meet these challenges, Moscow not only will continue its steady improvement of defensive capabilities, but also concentrate on upgrading its ability to carry out offensive operations against a combination of potential adversaries. (See figure 1.)

2. Successive Soviet leaders have maintained that the USSR must be recognized as a major player on the Asian political scene. Traditionally, Soviet foreign policy relies heavily on military instruments to advance the USSR's strategic and regional objectives. These include deliveries of arms, the use of allied and Soviet forces, and the employment of military aspects of active measures.<sup>2</sup> Thus, while Moscow's military presence has confirmed its role as a major regional power, it has detracted from other long-term Soviet foreign policy objectives, primarily because of the widespread regional perception of the Soviets as a threat. An apparent inability to use effectively other instruments of foreign policy—diplomacy, economic aid, trade, and cultural ties—has hindered Soviet efforts to increase their political influence.

<sup>2</sup> The Soviet term "active measures" is used to distinguish influence operations from espionage and counterintelligence. Soviet active measures involve activities by virtually every element of the Soviet party and state structure and supplement traditional diplomacy. They include manipulation of the media, written or oral disinformation, use of foreign Communist parties and fronts, clandestine radio, economic activities, military operations, and other political influence operations.

3. Soviet leaders probably believe that certain considerations operate to Moscow's benefit in East Asia:

- The Soviets have gained a de facto military base in Vietnam which has enhanced their strategic position in the region.
- Certain conditions tend to limit better relations between the United States and East Asian states. For example, the Soviets frequently stress the Taiwan question in Sino-US relations and economic frictions in US-Japanese relations.
- A perception in some East Asian countries that China is also a potential threat to regional security.

4. On the other hand, the Soviets also believe that the United States and China will remain key obstacles to increasing the USSR's power in the region:

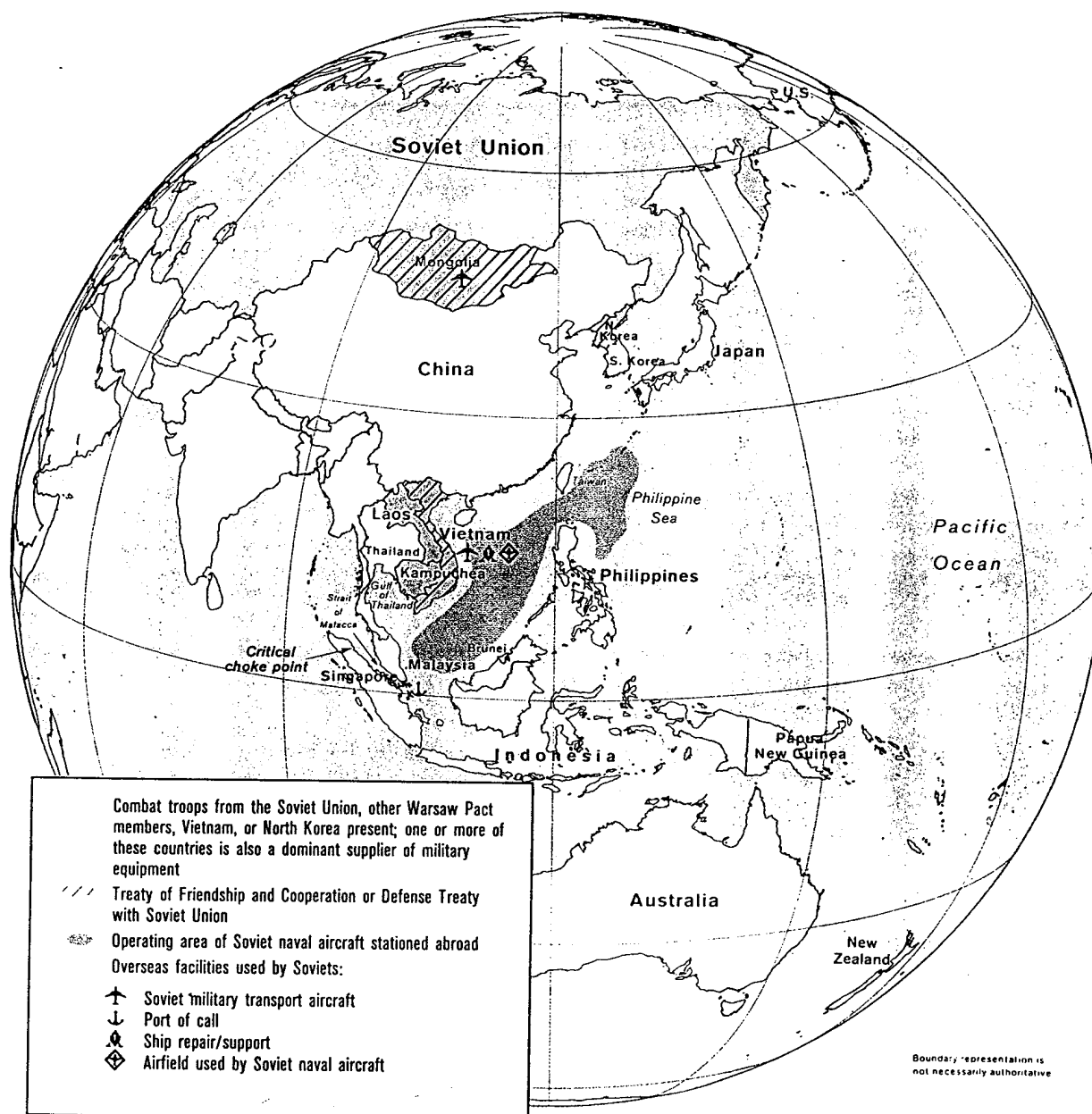
- The United States doubtless appears to the Soviets to have moved beyond its hesitant post-Vietnam phase and on to a more assertive strategic stance in the Pacific and East Asia.
- Problems in Sino-US relations have not resulted in greatly improved Sino-Soviet relations, and Sino-US cooperation in economic and technical fields has expanded to encompass a military component.
- The Soviets are disappointed in their failure to make any real new political and economic inroads in Asia, and in their inability to attract Japanese (and US) development capital into Siberia.

### Soviet Strategic Objectives

5. The principal strategic objective of the Soviet Union in East Asia is to increase Soviet power, while containing China and reducing US and Japanese influence. Soviet strategy in pursuit of these goals generally subordinates the achievement of local objectives and better relations with individual East Asian nations to its overriding strategic concerns.

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Figure 1  
Key Strategic Features of East Asia and the Pacific



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6. In pursuit of their strategic objectives, the Soviets will seek to:

- Protect against Sino-Japanese-US strategic cooperation by striving for military advantage against such a worst case contingency. The Soviets seek to create a military capability in East Asia that is viable against the potential combined forces of these adversaries and confers a significant advantage if such a combination does not occur.
- Deter, through diplomatic and other means, the formation of a Sino-US alliance or substantial Sino-US military collaboration. "Normalizing" relations with China and restoring Soviet leverage in the US-China-USSR triangular relationship represents a key goal.
- Erode the US alliance system in the Far East and develop countervailing friendly relations with states in the area.

7. Other Soviet objectives include building better economic and political ties with non-Communist states; attracting Japanese capital and technical support for development of the Soviet Far East; thwarting the growth of Chinese political influence; inhibiting cooperation of the United States, China, and Japan with South Korea; and developing regional relationships for exploiting ocean and seabed resources.

#### The Problem of Competing Objectives:

8. Conflict and competition among Soviet security concerns, political objectives, and regional priorities inevitably arise, presenting Soviet decisionmakers with difficult policy choices. We believe that strategic considerations weigh most heavily in the Soviet calculus, as they have in the past, and that those objectives which bear most directly on US-Soviet global competition will continue to receive the highest priority. The pattern of Soviet relations in East Asia suggests to us that the Soviet policymakers will continue to prefer to weather the adverse near-term political consequences if larger strategic concerns are believed to be at stake—and because they may believe that these political setbacks will eventually be overcome.

9. Soviet policies toward China, Japan, Indochina, and North Korea illustrate the problem of competing objectives:

- *Sino-Soviet Relations.* Moscow is not likely to bargain away the military, political, and territorial footholds it has gained in Asia for the sake of a Sino-Soviet reconciliation. The Soviets have

consistently maintained that their relations with third parties are not subject to bilateral discussions with Beijing. The Soviets also insist that the military situation along the 6,700-kilometer border with China can be discussed only after political relations have been normalized and Beijing has shown a willingness to be flexible. The Soviets have tried to encourage more rapid forward movement in Sino-Soviet relations—thus far without success—through proposals for a nonaggression pact, mutual force reductions along the border, and confidence-building measures involving prior notification of military exercises and troop movements along the shared frontier.

- *Japan and the Northern Territories.* Japanese officials have repeatedly emphasized to the Soviets that bilateral relations will not improve substantially until the Soviet Union at least recognizes the existence of a territorial issue. But for Moscow, even such partial concessions could lead to new vulnerabilities for Soviet nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) in the Sea of Okhotsk. Thus, the Soviets see more losses than gains in concessions, and apparently hope their broader "peace offensives" and pressure tactics will allow them to sidestep the contentious Northern Territories issue. The Soviets have offered instead proposals ostensibly designed to enhance "regional security"—and they try to sidestep altogether the issue of Soviet-Japanese boundary disputes dating back to the close of World War II. The package of confidence-building measures, nonaggression treaties, and non-nuclear-weapons agreements the Soviets have repeatedly offered the Japanese since the mid-1970s is designed to promote neutralism in Japan. By deflecting a Japanese challenge to the territorial status quo, the Soviets preserve the control of areas that Moscow deems militarily significant and avoid setting a precedent for reopening territorial claims by other neighboring nations, including China.

- *Vietnam and Indochina.* Vietnam's occupation of Kampuchea has damaged Soviet relations with member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has become one of the principal obstacles to real progress in Sino-Soviet reconciliation, and has cost the Soviets in world opinion. But the USSR continues to support Vietnamese efforts to dominate Indochina, both

because of the strategic pressure the Moscow-Hanoi relationship applies to China and because this support is a precondition for the Soviet access to strategically important military facilities in Vietnam. Thus the present advantages of their relationship with Vietnam far outweigh, in Soviet eyes, any likely political benefits that would accrue from a resolution of the situation in Indochina.

- *North Korea.* Two important Soviet objectives conflict in policy toward North Korea: the desire to avoid being drawn into a war with the United States in Korea, and the drive for an advantage in the competition with China for influence in North Korea. Strategic concerns about the potential for conflict with the United States on the Peninsula appear to influence Soviet actions. The Soviets up to now have refused to supply the North Koreans with such military items as advanced aircraft. This stance has cost Moscow in its competition with Beijing over the past decade.

#### The Track Record: Soviet Instruments of Power and Their Impact

##### Soviet Military Instruments

10. *Nuclear Forces.* Soviet nuclear deployments include extensive deployments of land-based missiles capable of striking Asian targets and steady improvements to SSBNs and intercontinental nuclear-capable aircraft. The most dramatic development since 1981 has been an almost-100-percent increase in the SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) force deployed east of the Ural Mountains. (See figure 2.) Further additions are likely. Continued replacement of Badger medium-range bombers with Backfire bombers adds to the threat of weapons of mass destruction in East Asia.

11. Y-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines are conducting patrols in the Sea of Japan. Previously, these were normally deployed in the Pacific against targets in the continental United States. From the Sea of Japan, the Y-class submarines can cover targets throughout East Asia, while remaining within the protective umbrella provided by Soviet naval and air assets. (See figure 3.) As the responsibility of the Y-class units for targets in the United States is gradually taken over by newer D-class units, we believe that additional Y-class units will be assigned a

theater nuclear role. Also, we expect to see the deployment of nuclear-tipped land-attack cruise missiles on board submarines off Asian coasts in the next few years.

12. The Soviets may also believe that nuclear weapons can add weight to the political-psychological impact of their military presence in Asia. This is especially true of the SS-20 missiles; as in Europe, the Soviets have tried to use them as instruments of political intimidation as well as important military forces. Possible political benefits of these deployments might include encouraging both Beijing and Tokyo to question the risks and benefits of their relationship with the United States. To date, however, deployments have had the opposite effect, encouraging both nations to accept expanded cooperation with the United States on Asian security issues.

13. *Conventional Theater Forces.* The Soviets have now established a balanced force structure for theater warfare. Soviet options in a strictly Sino-Soviet conflict—primarily a land and air campaign—could range from large-scale conventional operations with limited objectives to a full-scale invasion of western and northeastern China supported by nuclear strikes. In the event of simultaneous wars with NATO and China, however, the Soviets' priority effort would undoubtedly be against NATO. We believe Moscow would avoid operations in the Far East that could hamper Soviet efforts to achieve a quick victory in Europe.<sup>3</sup>

14. The present disposition of Soviet forces in East Asia and trends in key measures of military capability indicate:

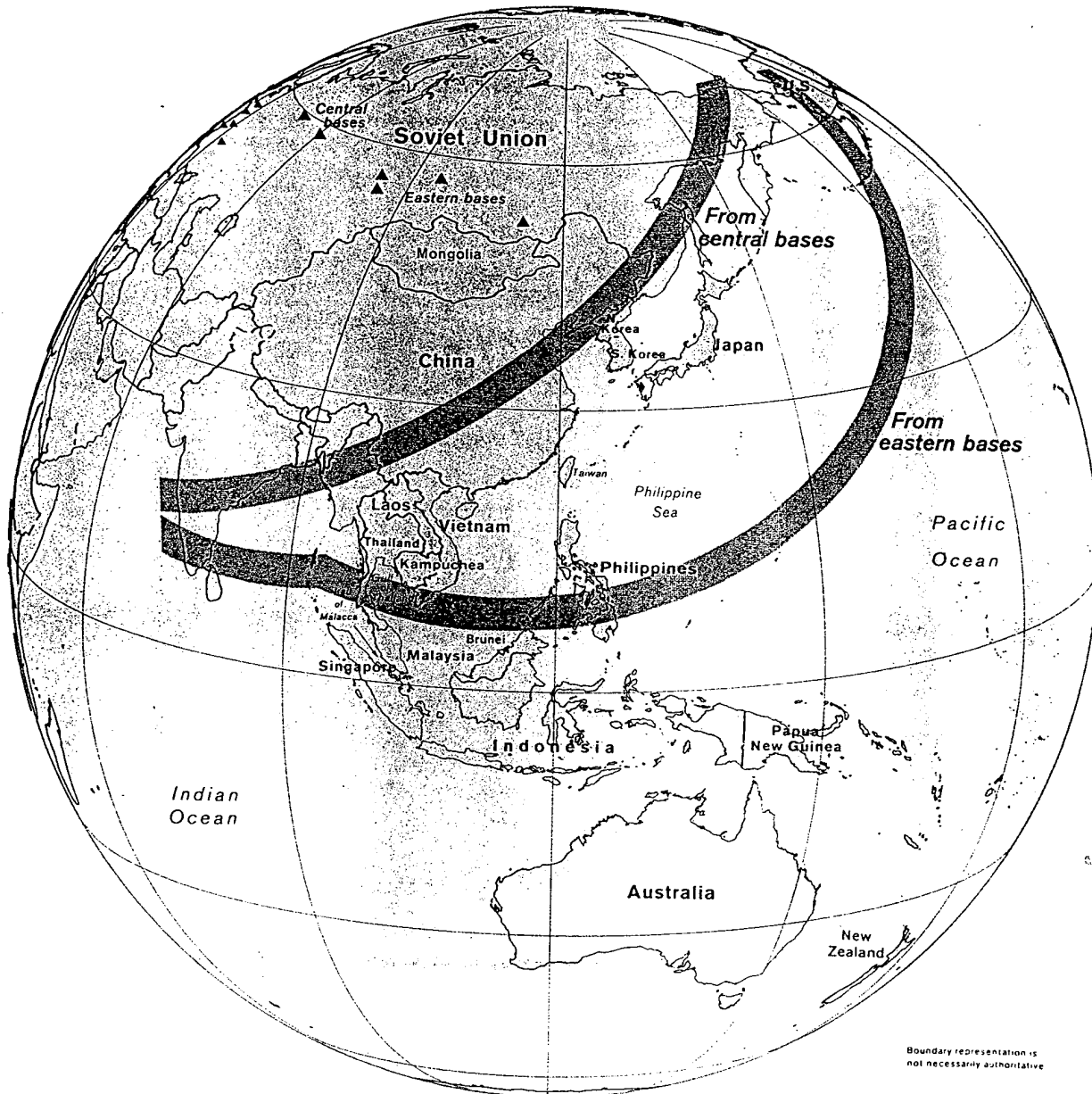
- Qualitative improvements in ground, air, and naval forces and the related command structure in Asia are likely to continue. The rapid quantitative growth pattern ended for these forces in the 1970s.

- Long-term planning to meet worst case military contingencies seems to drive the Soviet force improvements. The continuing qualitative improvements of Ground and Air Forces capabilities to counter either US or Chinese forces is one consequence of Soviet military policies in East

<sup>3</sup> This assessment is based on NIE 11-14/40-81, *Soviet Military Forces in the Far East* (August 1981). See especially the annex to the Estimate on "Soviet Force Structure in Asia and the Pacific: Roles and Missions."

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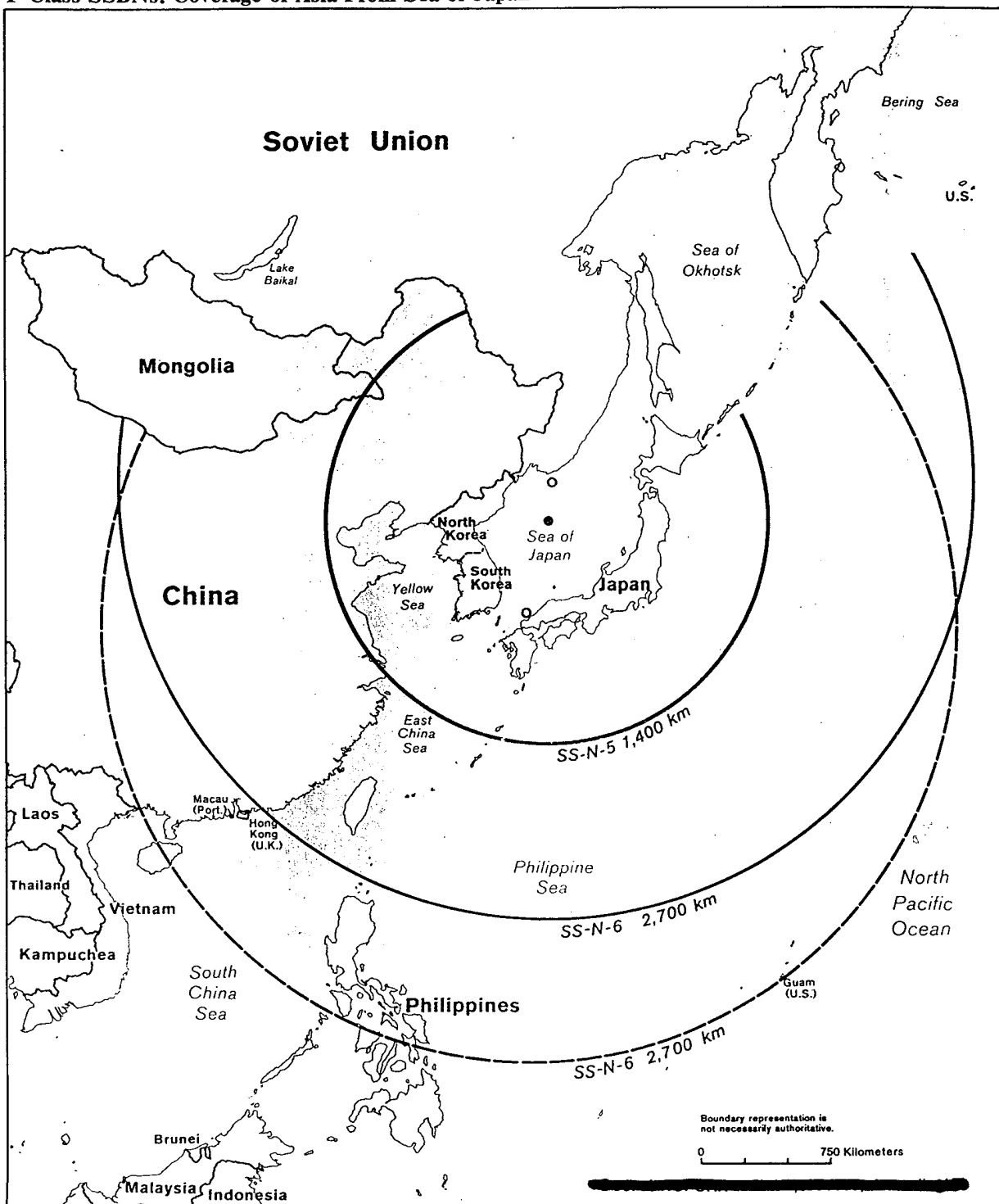
Figure 2  
SS-20 Deployment and Selected Coverage in East Asia



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Figure 3  
Y-Class SSBNs: Coverage of Asia From Sea of Japan



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Asia. These continuing qualitative improvements are designed to prepare Soviet forces to fight simultaneous wars with NATO and China, including a combination of US, Chinese, and Japanese forces.

- Some Soviet weapon systems in Asia, especially aircraft, are increasingly being modernized at roughly the same pace as in Europe. Although the gap between the capabilities of Ground Forces units in East Asia and those facing NATO has narrowed somewhat, for the most part Soviet forces in East Asia are still equipped with older weapons.
- The Soviets pay a relatively low price for their forces opposite China. The annual outlays for the more highly ready forces opposite NATO between 1966 and 1980 have consistently been more than double those for Soviet forces in East Asia.
- Soviet naval and air developments are increasingly oriented toward Japan and the South China Sea.

#### Soviet Economic Instruments

15. While the Soviets probably will seek to expand trade with non-Communist states in East Asia, they have relatively little to offer the countries of the region. Arms make up their main exports worldwide, but East Asian nations now purchase their weapons from the West or manufacture their own. Trade between the USSR and ASEAN amounted to only about 1 percent of the group's total foreign trade in 1983. From 1972 to 1983, the USSR did not serve as a major export market or a source of imports for a single ASEAN country. From Moscow's perspective, trade with ASEAN accounted for a total of 5 to 8 percent of all Soviet trade with developing countries in the early 1980s and had been consistently less than 1 percent of total Soviet foreign trade. (See figure 5.) Moscow, however, recently made overtures for expanded trade with Indonesia, playing on Indonesia's desire to increase nonfuel commodity exports in a depressed world market. In return, Moscow is demanding fewer restrictions on Soviet visits to Indonesia.

16. Soviet trade with *Japan* has never accounted for more than 3 percent of Tokyo's foreign trade and looks less promising today than at any time since the early 1970s. On the Soviet side, some 8 percent of Soviet trade with industrialized states in 1982 was with

#### Cam Ranh Bay

The Soviet facility at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, accommodates the largest concentration of Soviet naval assets currently deployed outside the USSR. (Soviet deployments to Egypt in the 1960s were larger; even with expected expansion, the Soviet presence at Cam Ranh will not match that in Egypt in those years.) The Soviets now have in place missile loading and handling equipment, ordnance ranges, aircraft maintenance depots, and communications and intelligence facilities. In addition, the seven surface combatants and four submarines usually present are supported by seven naval auxiliaries. A composite aircraft squadron of TU-16 Badgers, TU-95 Bear D's and TU-142 Bear F's has been at Cam Ranh Bay since January 1984. (See figure 4.) We expect these forces to be significantly augmented and an operational squadron organization established for the surface/submarine units stationed there over the next five years. Cam Ranh Bay, unlike other facilities abroad, provides the Soviets with a base from which they could sustain combat operations in the South China Sea in the initial stages of a general war. Soviet forces there could be used to:

- Counter Chinese SSBNs.
- Attack Western facilities in the Philippines.
- Attack Western sea lines of communication (SLOCs) in the South China Sea.
- Augment the Indian Ocean Squadron.

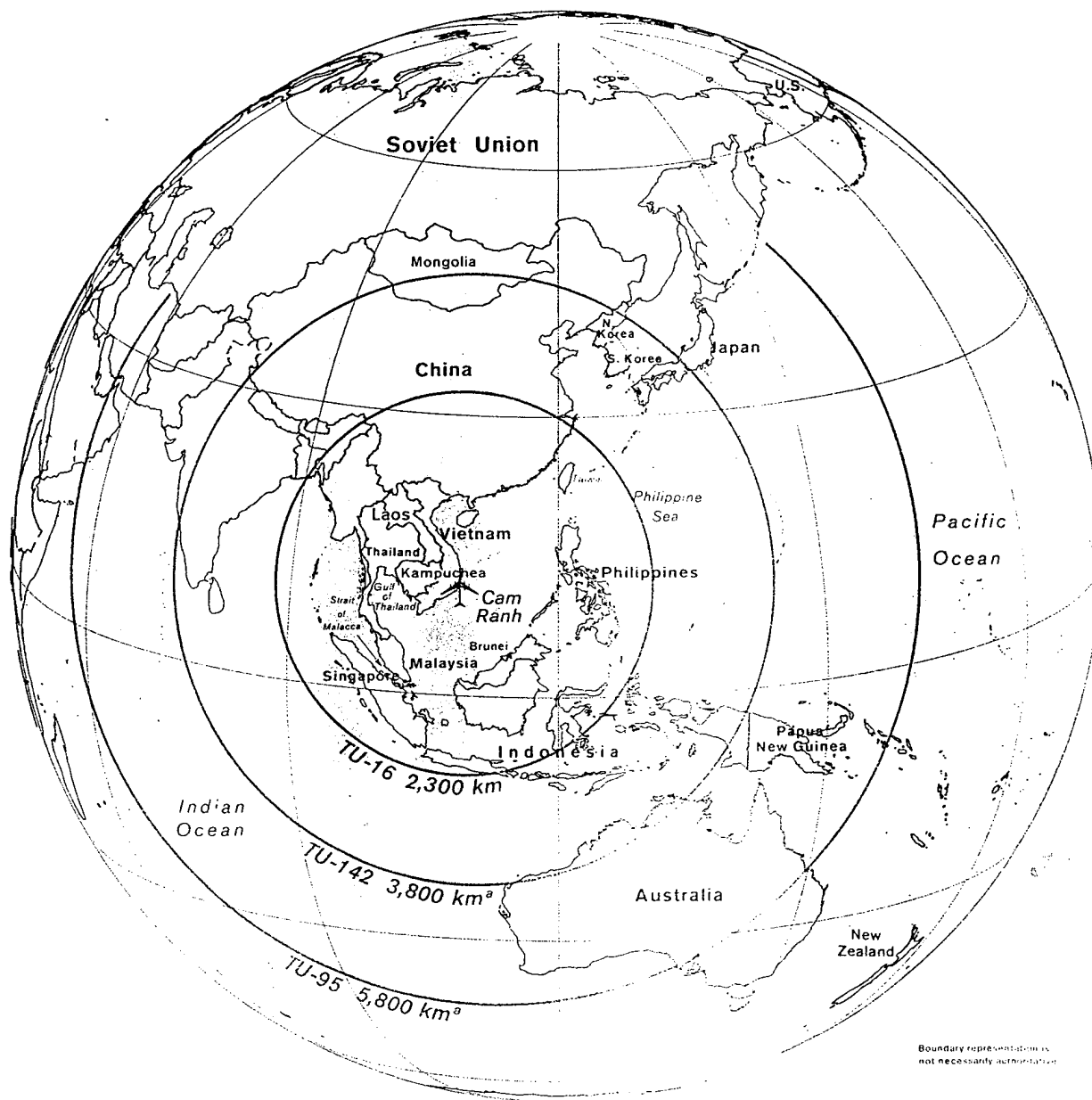
The Soviets probably regard Cam Ranh Bay as an important facility with growing wartime utility; however, they undoubtedly realize their ability to defend it against a concerted attack by Western forces is very limited. (S NF WN)

Japan. After steady growth since 1977, bilateral trade decreased by 20 percent in 1983. The decrease stemmed from a combination of diminished Japanese demand for Soviet resources, the impact of economic sanctions, and a leveling off of Soviet demand for Japanese steel and construction machinery. In the future, Moscow might steer major contracts to West European countries, which have complained that their bilateral trade deficits are in effect financing Japan's exports to the USSR. An interruption of Persian Gulf oil supplies is one event that could rekindle Japanese interest in Soviet resources, particularly the Sakhalin offshore liquefied natural gas project.

17. Despite recent increases, *Sino-Soviet trade* lags substantially behind the volume of Sino-Japanese or

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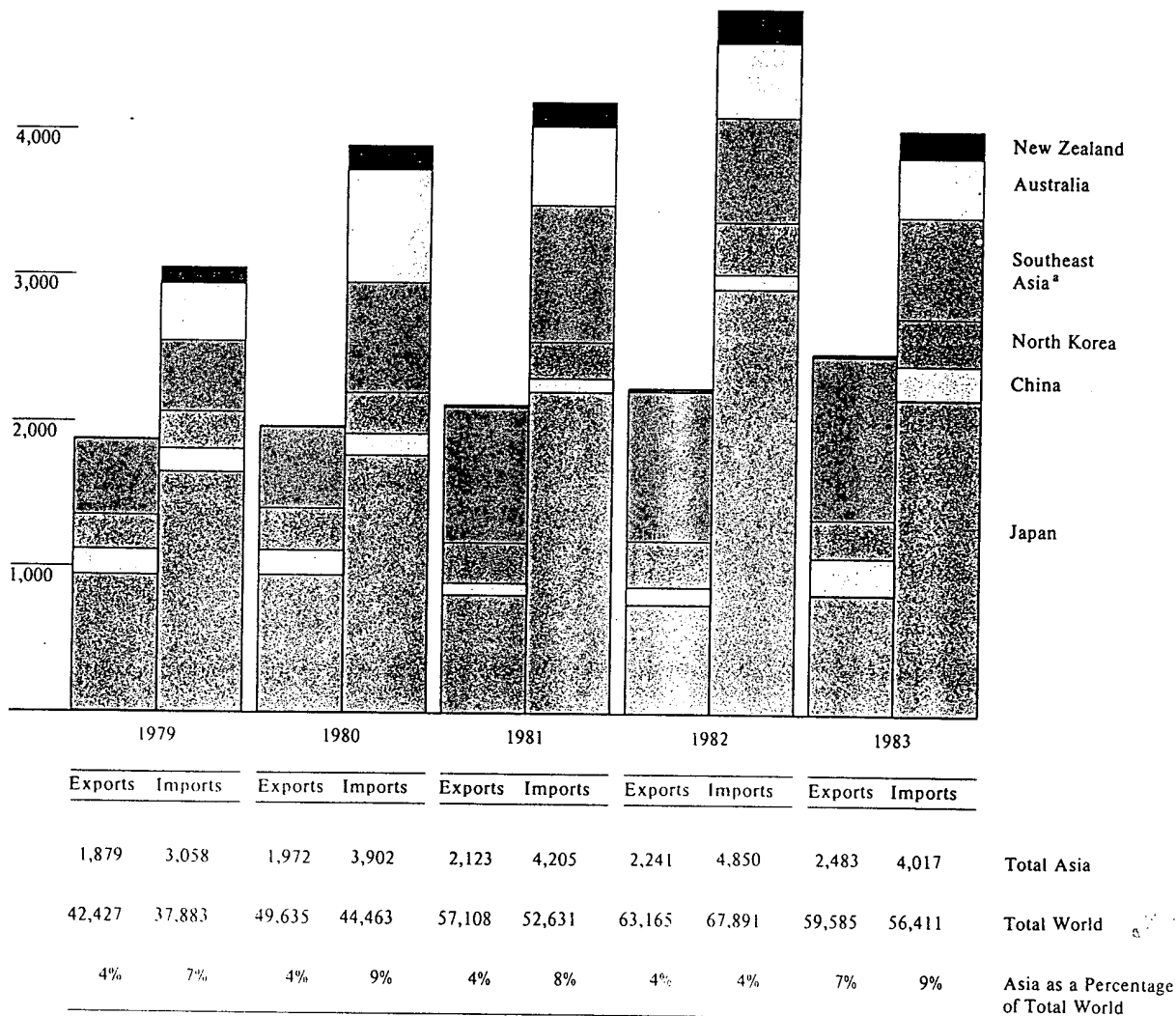
Figure 4  
Soviet Naval Air Coverage From Vietnam



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**Figure 5**  
**Soviet Trade With Selected Countries in Asia, 1979-83**

Millions of Foreign Trade Rubles  
5,000



<sup>a</sup> Southeast Asia is composed of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

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Sino-US trade. Moscow and Beijing have spoken of \$5 billion as an annual total for Sino-Soviet trade by 1990. Achievement of that goal is unlikely. Some Chinese leaders have suggested that the USSR can play a supplemental role in China's economic modernization. Soviet assistance in reequipping Chinese factories built with Soviet assistance in the 1950s is being explored. The Soviets are pushing for a long-term trade agreement to solidify this economic link. The Soviet market for Chinese textiles and consumer goods is complemented by China's need for the fertilizer, timber, and machinery that the USSR offers.

18. Despite concerted efforts over the past decade to expand trade relations in Asia, the Soviets have significant *economic relations* with only the Communist states of Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, and North Korea. Moscow remains North Korea's largest trading partner, but Soviet determination to reduce P'yongyang's trade-and-aid debt to the USSR—\$600 million as of the end of 1982—sets limits to an expanded relationship on the Soviet side. Vietnam is the USSR's only other major Asian trading partner. In some instances the Communist states are themselves producers of the raw material—oil and timber—that compete with Soviet exports.

19. Among all the states of East Asia, *Soviet economic assistance* is important only for Indochina and North Korea. (See table 1.) But the Soviets have expressed their dissatisfaction with the way these states have managed economic assistance and have been less forthcoming over the past few years in terms of both

the amount of aid and the credit terms extended. Soviet reservations about the value of aid to the North Koreans—given P'yongyang's political independence and unpredictability—have kept Moscow from providing the major economic assistance that P'yongyang would like. In the case of Vietnam, the previous mismanagement of Soviet aid argues strongly against increases except for infrastructure development that enhances Vietnam's ability to meet export commitments to the USSR. Soviet economic assistance is nonexistent for ASEAN and Japan. A renewal of large-scale Sino-Soviet aid agreements is unlikely.

#### Soviet Political Instruments

20. The *Soviet presence* in non-Communist East Asia—defined as the penetration of the political, economic, and cultural life of the region by means of official representatives, access to local shipping facilities, scientific and cultural exchanges, and the like—has grown over the past decade but, in terms of the overall numbers involved, still appears quite small. (See table 2.) We believe it is unlikely to increase markedly in the near future, principally because of regional suspicions of Soviet intentions.<sup>4</sup> This expansion in the number of Soviets in East Asia parallels the expansion of the Soviet presence in other parts of the world. The overall profile is still small compared to that of the United States and other Western nations.

<sup>4</sup> Over the past two years, the Governments of Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia have taken steps to limit the Soviet presence by expelling officials whose illegal activities have been exposed and denying requests for their replacement.

**Table 1**  
USSR: Economic Aid to East Asian Countries <sup>a</sup>

*Million US \$*

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Total</b>	395	585	805	780	975	1,165	1,310	1,660	2,205	2,315	2,175	2,160
<b>Communist</b>	395	585	705	780	975	1,165	1,310	1,660	2,205	2,315	2,175	2,160
Kampuchea/Laos	0	0	0	0	15	30	20	35	60	130	160	185
Mongolia	160	165	255	370	490	620	690	685	835	815	870	870
North Korea	80	70	100	100	65	45	35	75	260	145	130	65
Vietnam	155	350	350	310	405	470	565	865	1,050	1,225	1,015	1,040
<b>Non-Communist</b>	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indonesia	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<sup>a</sup> Figures shown are actual deliveries; these are same as commitments.

<sup>b</sup> Estimated.

**Table 2**  
**Soviet Presence in East Asia, 1972-83**

	Official <sup>a</sup>		Economic Technicians		Military Presence	
	1972	1983	1972	1982-83	1972	1982-83
<b>Total</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>1,395</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>6,100-7,500</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>3,100</b>
<b>Communist</b>						
Kampuchea	72	12	—	300	—	100
North Korea	27	22	NA	300-500	NA	NA
Laos	62	92	—	500	—	500
Vietnam	55	78	NA	5,000-7,000	NA	2,500
China (PRC)	75	120	NA	NA	—	—
<b>Non-Communist</b>						
Australia	50	95	NA	—	—	—
Indonesia	193	164	—	—	—	—
Japan	219	438	—	—	—	—
Malaysia	56	57	—	—	—	—
New Zealand	43	69	—	—	—	—
Philippines	2	70 <sup>b</sup>	—	10	—	—
Singapore	49	62	—	5	—	—
Thailand	82	116	—	—	—	—

Note: Dash indicates that no one belonging to the occupational specialty listed could be identified. NA indicates no data are available.

<sup>a</sup> Official numbers vary from month to month; these are best estimates.

<sup>b</sup> Increase due to establishment of diplomatic relations in 1976.

21. An examination of the trends reveals other important features:

- Major changes in the military and political situation in Indochina account for most of the dramatic changes in Moscow's Asian presence. The Soviet presence in Vietnam—and Indochina generally—has expanded dramatically since the late 1970s.
- Despite a striking increase in Soviet representation in Japan—a doubling of personnel between 1972 and 1982—the perception of Moscow among the Japanese is substantially more negative than it was a decade ago. Elsewhere, for example the Philippines, large proportional increases are explained by the virtual absence of any diplomatic relations or cultural contacts until the late 1960s.

22. During the period of this Estimate, the Soviet presence is likely to remain a limited instrument for political influence in non-Communist East Asia for a variety of reasons. These include, among others:

- Asian suspicions of Soviet intentions and diplomacy. These have been reinforced by such events

as the invasion of Afghanistan, Soviet support of Vietnam's drive for hegemony in Indochina, the shootdown of the Korean Air Lines plane, and Soviet threats of retaliation. Such threats have been direct (against Japan in January 1983) or indirect (the remarks in Singapore in April 1983 by Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kapitsa suggesting the option of Vietnamese aid to insurgents in ASEAN countries).

- The perception—by Communist and non-Communist Asian nations alike—of the Soviets as "outsiders" racially, culturally, and politically.
- The ability of non-Communist nations in the area to obtain military and economic assistance from the West, and their disinclination to turn to Moscow for this purpose.

23. The relatively small leftist political elements in non-Communist East Asia are neither politically influential nor responsive to Soviet wishes. Nonetheless, on occasion they engage in local actions that further Moscow's own goals in the region:

- In Japan, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) has been openly critical of both Moscow and

Beijing. Despite signs of an agreement to hold "high-level" talks this summer on a coordinated antinuclear campaign, the visit in April by a Soviet party delegation produced hardline Soviet rhetoric on the Northern Territories that probably angered the JCP and encouraged it to renew its open criticism of Moscow this summer. The Japanese Socialist Party (JSP) has moved more quickly to repair its ties to Beijing and Washington than it has to improve relations with Moscow. The sponsorship of the antinuclear campaign in Japan by the JCP and JSP in response to US Tomahawk deployments parallels to some extent Moscow's propaganda campaign aimed at exploiting Japanese pacifist sentiment.

- Moscow also lacks strong ties to leftist opposition groups in other non-Communist states of the region. The Soviets consequently believe that their interests are better served by cultivating state-to-state contacts, which they have developed over the past two decades. In the Philippines, despite indications of growing ties between the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA) and some anti-Marcos opposition groups in the wake of the Aquino assassination, we have no reliable evidence of Soviet material assistance to the CPP/NPA.

24. The Soviet Union will continue to expand its propaganda effort and use of active measures there to disrupt US relations with friends and allies and to promote Soviet interests. Clandestine radios such as "Ba Yi" will try to promote discontent with the United States and China. The Soviets will promote disinformation with respect to US nuclear weapons deployments in East Asia to create animosity toward the United States in Japan and other countries. Moscow on occasion will also continue to engage in certain other illegal and subversive activities to promote instability and exploit regional vulnerabilities, but with limited success.

#### East Asian Perspectives on Soviet Power

25. The Soviet military buildup has reinforced a pervasive sense of suspicion of the USSR on the part of nearly all East Asian countries. With varying degrees of concern, they believe that Moscow is intent on becoming an East Asian power by using its military capabilities to build political influence.

26. While Sino-Soviet relations have improved in recent years, the Chinese regard the Soviet Union as

the principal threat to their own security. They view the steady buildup and modernization of Soviet forces in the region as consistent with these objectives. Nearly half of China's conventional forces—about 1.5 million men—are deployed toward the Sino-Soviet border and opposite Mongolia where Soviet armored forces pose a direct threat to Beijing. We believe that most, if not all, of China's small nuclear missile force is also targeted against the Soviet Union. China's defense doctrine, while currently designed to fight a long war of attrition against the USSR's better equipped conventional forces, will gradually change over the period of this Estimate as modernization of the Army occurs.

27. Opposition to Soviet expansion probably will remain the keystone of China's strategic policies. As a result, the Chinese are unlikely to reduce their military support for Afghan rebels, and are increasing their support for the insurgents fighting against Moscow's Vietnamese ally in Kampuchea. They see these as cheap ways of keeping pressure on the Soviets and helping to isolate Moscow politically. Beijing almost certainly will continue to insist that the Soviets accommodate Chinese security concerns in at least one critical area—such as withdrawing support from Vietnam in Kampuchea or reducing Soviet forces along their mutual border—before political relations can improve appreciably. Incremental improvements in trade and cultural affairs will probably continue, but, in general, Beijing remains highly skeptical that Moscow is prepared to meet its demands.

29. Japan's response to the buildup of Soviet power over the last few years has been to tighten alliance relations with the United States, improve relations with China, and gradually strengthen the Self-Defense Forces.

30. South Korea's bitter memories of Moscow's support for Kim Il-song's invasion of the South in 1950 keeps Seoul wary. This distrust of the Soviets is fed by Moscow's moves outside the Peninsula, including its support for Vietnam in Kampuchea and the invasion of Afghanistan. Expanded Soviet naval capabilities in Asia present a potential threat to South Korea's access to resources and export markets. Seoul also has focused attention recently on Soviet SS-20 deployments within range of South Korea.

31. P'yongyang probably is ambivalent regarding the Soviet buildup because it wants to maintain good relations with both Beijing and Moscow. We believe that it derives reassurance from the challenge Soviet activity presents to the United States and its allies. The North Koreans, however, do not want any Soviet buildup to provoke an even stronger US presence in Northeast Asia, to strengthen US military ties with South Korea and Japan, or to encourage China to deepen its strategic ties with the United States.

32. The ASEAN states are less concerned with global aspects of the Soviet military buildup than they are with Moscow's support for Hanoi and the growing Soviet naval presence in the region. The ASEAN leaders do not believe the Soviets will apply pressure on the Vietnamese to compromise on the Kampuchean problem. ASEAN thus far has supported Thailand as the frontline state working with the Chinese to provide military and political support to the Kampuchean resistance forces.

#### Prospects for the Future

##### The Most Likely Scenario

33. We believe that Soviet policy toward East Asia will continue to emphasize improvement of military capabilities. The Soviets have strengthened their military position but have thus far been unable to translate it into intimidation sufficient to develop substantial political influence. We expect this shortfall to continue over the next five years. The achievement of greater Soviet political influence will depend on better use of other instruments of policy besides military power. We do not expect to see this shift over the next five

years. A negative East Asian reaction is likely to continue to undermine Moscow's efforts:

- With varying degrees of concern, East Asian countries will continue to believe that Moscow is intent on becoming an East Asian power by using its military capabilities to build political influence.

- In the coming years, non-Communist Asian countries and China will probably opt for increased defense capabilities or closer ties with Washington.

34. We expect limited increases in the Soviet non-military presence. They now probably have a presence sufficient to support a more activist policy in many places, but opportunities for further expansion may be somewhat constrained by Asian governments as well as by other Soviet priorities. Likely areas targeted for growth are:

- Japan, where the Soviets will seek to bring in as many official personnel as they can, and where their aggressive efforts in the area of active measures and illegal technology transfer will undoubtedly continue.

- The ASEAN nations, with increases in diplomatic and trade mission personnel and cultural exchange programs to the extent possible to create sympathy for Soviet goals.

- Indochina, in part targeted on the direct provision of economic and military assistance to Laos and Kampuchea. The joint Soviet-Vietnamese oil exploration program will also bring in additional Soviet technicians.

- The island nations of the South Pacific, where they will redouble their efforts to spur the growth of the antinuclear movement.

- The Soviet Union probably will seek to expand its regional influence through increased merchant shipping and other commercial activities within Asia and to expand Soviet access to ship repair and resupply facilities in areas distant from the USSR.

35. We anticipate persistent Soviet efforts to detract from the US and Western influence in East Asia. The components of such an effort, which would probably rely heavily on the use of both coercion and inducements, might be:

- New diplomatic initiatives designed to show Soviet flexibility, for instance: vague proposals

for a political settlement in Indochina; efforts to establish diplomatic relations throughout the South Pacific; an increase in the level of delegations to events in South Korea; higher level diplomatic contacts with Japan, including a Gromyko visit to Tokyo.

- Encouragement of pacifist, antinuclear, anti-Western sentiments, especially in Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Similarly, Moscow will encourage stronger Asian participation in the Nonaligned Movement. The growth of Soviet active measures (see footnote on page 5) to foster these trends is to be expected.

- Implicit (and on occasion explicit) threats regarding targeting of Soviet SS-20s and other nuclear forces, linked to regional arms control proposals, confidence-building measures, and other collective security plans.

- Economic inducements, including offers of economic assistance to developing countries, as well as proposals for joint resource development and industrial projects. At the same time, Moscow may seek to develop modest leverage over trade in key commodities as a means of applying economic, and hence political, pressure.

36. The general East Asian desire to avoid closer political and economic links with Moscow should persist as long as Asian leaders perceive a credible US deterrent to Soviet military power.

37. We further believe the Soviets will focus much of their attention on the United States as the key obstacle to increasing their power in the region because they feel threatened by the prospects of increased US conventional and nuclear weapons capabilities there. Moreover, problems in Sino-US relations have not resulted in greatly improved Sino-Soviet relations, and there seems little prospect that Sino-US cooperation in economic, technical, military, and other fields will soon dissipate.

38. We do not foresee any major reevaluation of Soviet East Asian policy by the top leaders over the next few years. Equally important, the two recent successions have given no indication that the degree of influence of second-level officials in the Soviet party and Government charged with the conduct of Moscow's Asian policy has changed. Meanwhile the existing group of policy advisers and second-level officials is still relatively young by Soviet standards, is likely to be around for some time to come, and shares a core of early career experiences that apparently crystallized its hardline thinking on East Asia.

39. We expect the Soviets to continue their emphasis on qualitative rather than quantitative military improvements. However, increases in the number of theater nuclear forces in the Far East will be an integral part of the Soviet buildup throughout the 1980s. We expect a continued trend toward improved mobility forces, more out-of-area force deployments, and better operational integration of force elements. The Soviets will continue to focus on efforts to control access to the Sea of Okhotsk. Accordingly, we do not believe the Soviets will give up their military positions on Japan's Northern Territories.

40. We expect to see increased Soviet use of facilities at Cam Ranh by naval and naval air units, including increases in the level of submarine operations, during the period of this Estimate. These deployments will represent a growing threat for other countries in the region, especially China. In addition, we believe the Soviets will seek access to other military support facilities throughout the region, while seeking to limit US access.

#### Alternative Scenarios

41. *Closer Ties.* We regard it as possible, but unlikely, that the Soviet political position in East Asia will be substantially strengthened during the period covered by this Estimate. But, even if changes are unlikely, it is worth flagging those areas where they are most possible.

42. Developments that would favor increased Soviet influence include, among others:

- The growth of antinuclear sentiment in the region, and concern over vulnerability to a nuclear strike by countries hosting US forces, could further the Soviet objective of "neutralizing" the area.

- *Sino-Soviet Relations.* Substantial improvements in Sino-Soviet relations could increase pressures on non-Communist East Asian nations to reach accommodations with the Soviets.

- *Indochina.* Escalation of Sino-Vietnamese hostilities could increase Hanoi's dependence on Soviet military assistance. In return, Moscow would almost certainly demand and receive further military concessions from Hanoi, including additional base rights.

- *Philippines.* Continued political and economic instability in the Philippines could provide Moscow with new opportunities to curry favor with



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either the Philippine Government or the opposition.

— *Korean Peninsula*. Markedly improved relations between P'yongyang and Moscow could increase Soviet pressure against China and could intimidate Japan.

43. *Deteriorating Relations*. Alternatively, Moscow's relations with various East Asian nations might suffer decisive setbacks under different conditions:

— *Regional*. A continuing Soviet military buildup—combined with certain other developments such

as Soviet aid to local opposition movements—could produce a dramatic hardening of East Asian perceptions of Soviet intentions.

— *Sino-Soviet Relations*. A sharp rise in the level of tension between Moscow and Beijing could lead to a major rupture in relations, and US-Japanese-Chinese cooperation could improve accordingly.

— *Indochina*. A Sino-Vietnamese rapprochement could prompt Hanoi to decrease its dependence on the Soviet Union with a commensurate reduction of Soviet presence.

## ANNEX A

### Soviet Policymakers on East Asia

1. The Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union makes major foreign policy decisions, with inputs from other party and state organizations. Other institutions involved in shaping Soviet foreign policy include some Central Committee departments, government ministries, the military, and academic specialists.
2. Within the Central Committee, the International Department (which deals with nonruling Communist parties), the International Information Department (which handles foreign propaganda and promotes Moscow's image abroad), and the Liaison Department (which handles relations with Communist countries) play the most prominent roles. Two of the three department chiefs sit on the Party's Secretariat. The departments provide much of the staff work on which the Politburo and Secretariat base their decisions. They also tap various academic research institutes for input on foreign policy questions.
3. Certain officials within the Central Committee, by virtue of their positions and expertise, appear to play a key role in shaping Asian policy. These include Oleg Rakhmanin (a China expert who is first deputy chief of the Liaison Department) and Ivan Kovalenko (a Japan expert who is a deputy chief in the International Department).
4. Within the Foreign Ministry, the influence of Asian specialists is strong. Mikhail Kapitsa, the most prominent China expert in the Foreign Ministry, was promoted to the post of Deputy Foreign Minister shortly after Andropov became General Secretary, reportedly having impressed Andropov with his expertise. L. Ilichev, the other Deputy Foreign Minister with the responsibility for Soviet relations with Asia, has had substantial experience negotiating with the Chinese. A China specialist, S. Tikhvinsky, has been in charge of the Foreign Ministry's diplomatic academy since 1980.
5. We believe that Soviet military requirements play a major role in shaping Soviet policy toward the region. Nevertheless, the role of specific military organizations in the policymaker's process is not well understood.
6. Some academic research institutes and members of the Soviet academic community specializing in Asian affairs serve as advisers to Soviet policymakers, but we are uncertain of their influence. The Institute of the Far East, headed by M. Sladkovskiy, serves as the Academy of Science's chief body for research on current political and economic development in the Far East, especially on China and Japan. The Oriental Studies Institute, which probably plays a lesser advisory role, is headed by Ye. Primakov and focuses on other areas in addition to Asia. Neither of the two institutes appears to have substantial research components dealing with Southeast Asia or the Koreas.
7. Soviet Asia analysts share certain basic assumptions, but we have recurring evidence of differing views on relations with Asia, especially on the prospects for closer ties to China. The extent and significance of these differences are unclear. In any event, it appears that the hardliners continue to have the ear of the top Soviet leadership.

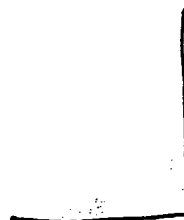
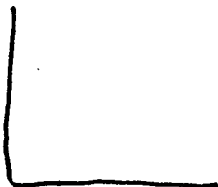
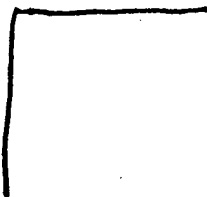
## ANNEX B

### Trend Indicators for Soviet Policy in East Asia <sup>1</sup>

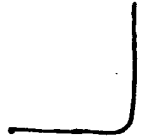
Supporting the Estimative Judgment	Indicating a Change in Soviet Priorities	
	More Aggressive	More Conciliatory
<b>Political</b>		
New diplomatic indications designed to show Soviet flexibility; increase in delegations and diplomatic contacts.	Escalation of support for Hanoi in Sino-Vietnamese dispute—demand more base rights.	Substantial improvements in Sino-Soviet discourse.
Growth of active measures and propaganda to encourage pacifist, antinuclear, and anti-Western sentiments.	Increased aid and support for opposition groups in the area.	Adoption of much less belligerent tone toward Japan on territorial and other issues.
Implicit and explicit threats regarding targeting of nuclear forces linked to various peace and security proposals.		Resumption of arms control talks dealing with IRBMs worldwide.
Modest growth in nonmilitary presence.		
<b>Economic</b>		
Offers of economic assistance and proposals for joint resource development and industrial projects.	Demand more political concessions in return for aid.	Greater emphasis on economic ties with China, Japan, and Southeast Asia without commensurate demand for political gains.
Efforts to get increased access to repair facilities for commercial and naval vessels.	Greater pressure for access tied to economic aid.	
<b>Military</b>		
An improvement in military capability, emphasizing qualitative changes; an up-to-100-percent increase in SS-20 deployments.	Increases in military assistance to Vietnam and North Korea.	Significant slowdown in rate of deployment of SS-20s and other nuclear forces.
Increased use of Cam Ranh Bay by naval and air units.	Developing Cam Ranh Bay facilities further to make it much more formidable in the event of war.	Drawdown in military strength deployed to Vietnam and adjacent to Sino-Soviet border.

<sup>1</sup> These flag possible shifts in Moscow's *strategy* in East Asia and do not signal alternative outcomes. As the text demonstrates, increases/decreases in Soviet influence depend heavily on Asian and US reactions that lie beyond the scope of this Estimate.

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