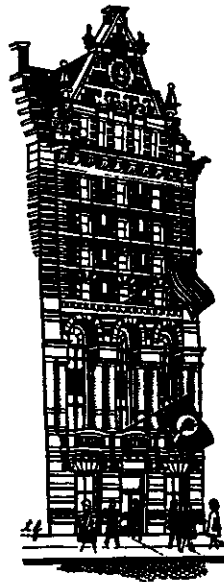


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A Survey of the Progress of Freedom in 1969 and the Legacy of the 1960's

The Annual Report of
The Public Affairs Committee
of Freedom House



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cost housing commitments. The ruling Christian Democrats were pressed to ease the social upheaval by reconstructing a center-left government, particularly after December bombings by left- and right-wing movements left 14 dead and the nation stunned.

Street action led to violence and death in Northern Ireland much of the year. The Catholic minority in Ulster demanded social, economic and political equality with Protestants. A British commission confirmed the injustice and English troops doused the flames that threatened civil war or a unilateral declaration of independence. The slow job of more equitable reconstruction began.

In the authoritarian regions of Western Europe, halting improvements were made for the second post-Salazar year in Portugal, though political apathy brought only a fraction of the citizenry to the polls; Francisco Franco named Bourbon Prince Juan Carlos as his eventual political heir, selecting technicians rather than ideologues for the transition, while surprisingly rejecting Falangists for his new cabinet; and Turkey's premier chose a post-election cabinet representing political middle ground.

Greece moved briefly toward and then away from freedom. Some civil rights and press curbs were eased early in the year, only to be restored later. Charges of torture of opposition leaders were heard repeatedly and confirmed by the European Commission for Human Rights, an agency of the 18-nation Council of Europe. When threatened with expulsion from the Council, Greece withdrew. Clearly, the ruling colonels' promise to restore freedom and democracy is unfulfilled.

In Asia: The increasing Soviet presence in Southern Asia and the military withdrawal of some United States forces this year stimulated regional economic and cultural cooperation, particularly through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). President Nixon's declaration at Guam early in the year reaffirmed America's existing commitments but called on Asians to assume greater responsibility for their own defense. The President offered continuing American economic aid while urging self-help and broader regional cooperation for national development and human progress. This policy was specifically applied to the Vietnam war by unilateral withdrawals of U.S. troops and their replacement by Saigon forces, based upon the ability of the South Vietnamese to defend themselves and the demonstration by Hanoi that infiltration of the south was minimized. At year-end, Saigon claimed to control 92.5% of the south's population. To the relief of every non-Communist nation in Southeast Asia, no precipitate American military withdrawal from the continent was envisioned, though U.S. bases and arms aid in Asia are being reexamined.

The first major test of the new policy outside Vietnam was the agreement to return Okinawa to Japan in 1972. The U.S. will retain access to Okinawa's military bases, free of nuclear weapons, but the anticipated rebuilding of Japan's defense system is beginning to arouse some concern among her East Asian neighbors. The Japanese, for their part, promised to liberalize import restrictions and expand their economic aid programs in Asia—a major boon from the world's third largest industrial power. Japan continues to average an annual economic growth rate of more than 10% a year—sufficient to equal the U.S. living standard by 1980.

At the April eight-nation Ministerial Conference for Economic Development of Southeast Asia, Japan played the leading role. While not yet promising specific new assistance, she sought to create a climate for cooperation and development, free of military commitments. Such actions and the return of Okinawa weakened the left politically and further stabilized the moderate Sato government.

Japan's increased trade with the Soviet Union—up more than 21% this year—symbolized the major shifts under way. Throughout the year, the Soviets thrust vigorously into Asia and the surrounding seas and islands. Most obvious, of course, was major Russian military aid continuing to flow to North Vietnam. The Soviets also sent heavy weapons to India and Pakistan, tractors to Malaysia, and hundreds of trade, intelligence and military advisers to other Asian nations. The Soviet Navy adopted new ports of call around the rim of Southeast Asia. Leonid Brezhnev, Soviet Communist party leader, declared in June the Soviet desire to create a system of collective security for Asia. For their part, the non-Communist, nine-nation Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC), while avoiding confrontation with the Communist states and advocating conciliation instead, sought economic rather than military cooperation. Later, however, the secretary-general of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) viewed increasing Soviet influence in Asia as a double threat to regional security. He said the Russian goal, under the guise of collective security, was to bring the area under Soviet political domination. This, in turn, would cause Communist China to step up subversive and insurgent movements. By October, at the very moment they were in Peking defusing their border dispute with the Chinese, the Soviets were also sounding out other Asians on a collective security conference—leap-frogging China's continuing efforts to establish its own primacy in Asia.

The Sino-Soviet border clashes, begun in the spring at Issuri, 600 miles north of Vladivostok where the Russians were vulnerable, later reached crisis proportions in the Ili Valley of Sinkiang, 3,000 miles west where the Chinese were weak. Sinkiang, the heartland of Asia and site

of China's nuclear installation, was no small prize. Chinese and Soviet propaganda intensified already heated blasts. Each accused the other of undermining Communism and aiding the United States. Premier Kosygin made a surprise visit to Peking to start discussions of the border-crisis which continue in secret.

Clearly, China was in no mood for intensified warfare in her homeland. The Cultural Revolution, brought to an end this year, had stunted three years of farm and industrial growth. The economy lost 400,000 teachers, doctors and other specialists who would have completed training if schools had been open. Millions of students and other city dwellers enrolled in the revolution were dispatched to rural areas this year to do manual labor. This political "reeducation," the resettlement of youth drawn to the cities the two previous years to "make revolution," produced one of the largest mass movements in history. The results of the revolution became apparent in April at the ninth congress of the Chinese Communist party. Two-thirds of the party's Central Committee had vanished, revolutionary fervor and bureaucratic reform had been purchased at the price of chaos. The congress adopted a new charter making Lin Piao the eventual successor of Mao Tse-tung. His first policy speech was fiercely hard-line, dedicated to permanent cultural revolution at home and unremitting hostility to both the Soviet Union and the United States. Maoists and moderates were included in the new Central Committee but the army clearly increased its control of the party and government. A crash military and defense buildup began almost immediately.

The Chinese did not respond directly to President Nixon's relaxing of the 20-year embargo on American trade with, and travel to, China. But Chinese and American envoys resumed Warsaw meetings in December. Earlier, on its twentieth anniversary, China surveyed the state of the revolutions it supports in South and Southeast Asia, paying tribute to the Communist parties linked to Peking in Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia and India.

Burma, long isolated from the west, suffered reduced propaganda attacks from China this year though Communist terrorists operated in northern Burma from sanctuaries across the border in China. The Burmese continued slowly to build a military-based socialist society—admittedly functioning badly—independent of the pervasive Chinese and remaining British and Indian influence.

The travail of India was reflected all year in the decline and fragmentation of the ruling Congress Party. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi moved farther left of center, nationalizing the 14 largest Indian banks. Communist parties of several hues increased their power throughout the country. Conservative forces in the Congress Party responded to Mrs.

Gandhi's shift by expelling her from the party. She faced the choice of forming a coalition with the leftist parties or calling new elections. The Congress remained the only national party in India. Though it was the spearhead of Indian independence in 1947, the party is accepted with indifference by most of 530 million Indians who grew up in the past 22 years. Though India has made great economic progress in that time it has been insufficient to match the rising birth rate. Mrs. Gandhi this year suffered the cumulative effects of lowering educational standards and inefficient mass communications throughout the sprawling land. Social stagnation and political fragmentation appeared inevitable. Two states, Kerala and West Bengal, were governed by Communist-led coalitions; Tamil Nadu, by a leftist state party; Nagaland, by a tribal state party; Punjab and Orissa, by right-wing coalitions; and Bihar, because of its instability, was administered by the central government.

Pakistan reflected initial disappointment and, later, guarded hope for those expecting a restoration of parliamentary rule after years of President Ayub Kahn's autocratic "basic democracy." The president in March declared martial law, resigned, and delivered the country to the army and General Agha Mohammad Yahya Kahn. The military budget was increased 7% over 1968 while the rate of economic growth which had risen to 7.5% last year dropped to 5.2% this year. Disorders in East and West Pakistan caused further drops in productivity. President Yahya partially restored the 1962 constitution in April, took another step towards restoring democracy in July, and announced in November that general elections would be held in October, 1970, on the basis of a "provisional legal framework." That includes "one man, one vote" and the reorganization of West Pakistan, too large and disparate for unified political control. One bright note, perhaps of longest-term importance, was the green revolution—the success of modern agriculture, largely aided by U.S. universities and foundations—which produced self-sufficiency in wheat, rice and other food grains. The specter of large-scale, unavoidable famine has been removed, though serious problems of distribution remain.

Postponement of democratic processes also troubled Indonesia this year. President Suharto had promised an election by July 5, 1971, but the federal assembly has been unable to complete an electoral law. Forms of parliamentary democracy have been developed since the armed forces effectively wiped out the Communist threat in the coup of 1965. Political parties, labor unions, student groups and others have seats in the legislature on a proportional representation basis, but the military—the only tightly knit organization—dominates. Economic development in the 3,000-mile, resource-rich arc of islands is promising indeed. To spark development, the U.S. last year provided a third of the aid

from foreign countries.

Across the strait, the departure of the British in 1971 from bases in Malaysia caused advance shock waves in that country. A combination of stepped up subversion directed from China and electoral setbacks for the multi-racial Alliance party produced bloody communal rioting in May and suspension of the constitution. Some 3.9 million indigenous Chinese, comprising nearly 40% of Malaysia's population, were targets of the spring riots. This, in turn, aided Communist Chinese guerrillas crossing the border from southern Thailand. By December, parliament was still suspended, the country was run by a council with supreme powers, and the citizenship status of 250,000 Malaysians of Indian and Chinese descent was being questioned.

Singapore, at the tip of the Malaya peninsula, and Malaysia both developed trade and diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries while remaining basically sympathetic to the West. Despite their theoretical socialism both encouraged private enterprise and foreign investment. They were particularly suspicious of Chinese Communists but did not want to invite further Peking subversion by allowing U.S. naval forces to replace the departing British.

Thailand this year came increasingly under attack from North Vietnamese communist guerrillas. Trained agents infiltrated into northern Thai provinces to organize warfare against the government. Other Communist guerrillas operated along the southern border against both Thailand and Malaysia. With U.S. help, farm-to-market roads were built, water facilities drilled, and medical teams circulated throughout the northwest. The oldest independent nation in the area is moving slowly from benign authoritarian rule toward political reform.

Neighboring Laos this year felt the full crunch of the Vietnam war. Neutralist Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma reported in September that 50,000 North Vietnamese troops had infiltrated his country. Some 20,000 Chinese constructing roads in Laos raised fears in Thailand of their ultimate objective.

Cambodia was invaded by another 40,000 North Vietnamese. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, long a neutralist, was shocked to discover the depth to which the Communists had penetrated his country this year. At a time when U.S. troops were being withdrawn, he urged a continued American military presence in Asia, though not in Cambodia. Economic and social improvements for his countrymen, he said, must await the end of the Vietnam war and the releasing of international development funds.

Vietnam remained the eye of the storm. The nature of the conflict was altered by the beginning of U.S. troop withdrawals and ending of "search and destroy" missions. Heightened interdiction of north-to-south

infiltration made more difficult the replacing of northern troops in the south. Encouraged by the Thieu government, 90% of the villages elected their leaders and allocated their own funds. A land-division program was begun in earnest. The southern cities had long been under central government influence. A people's self-defense corps and a better trained Regional Force and Popular Force supplemented the army. Vietcong consequently found it increasingly harder to recruit guerrillas. From 60 to 70% of fighters in larger Vietcong units were said to be North Vietnamese regular forces.

The death of Ho Chi Minh this year was a major event of the war, with many implications still unknown. It left Hanoi with a troika in command, outwardly committed to Ho's policies. In Saigon, the government was slowly but increasingly accommodating itself to vocal opposition in the Senate and, in establishing an independent Supreme Court, was preparing for eventual judicial disputation. The trend reflected significant democratization for an embryonic system developing amidst war and insurgency.

The inherent brutality of war was thrust upon Americans and the west, late in the year, with the allegation of a massacre of possibly several hundred South Vietnamese civilians by U.S. troops early in 1968. Americans, from the President on, unqualifiedly disclaimed such acts as abhorrent, a breach of military conduct, and an isolated incident. The beheading and slaughter of 3,000 civilians at Hue by North Vietnamese and Vietcong was boastfully reported in official Hanoi documents around the same time.

Off the Asian mainland, democracy continued to be under test in the Philippines, where President Marcos won reelection, but it remained in the shadows on Taiwan, despite increasing affluence. Nationalist China, increasingly successful in wooing African nations, had diplomatic relations with 21 African countries and provided economic aid to 19. Red China had ties with 14 and aided 10.

South Korea approved a constitutional amendment permitting President Chung Hee Park to seek a third term in 1971. Popular support was understandable for his regime which has produced unparalleled national stability and economic growth under a constitutional system.

In Africa: Through the common tie of Islam, North Africans this year joined their sister Muslims of the Mideast in helping to widen Soviet political, if not ideological, influence. Promise of more equitable distribution of wealth sparked coups in Libya, Somalia and Sudan, swinging the political pendulum to the left in these geographically strategic nations. The Libyan king was replaced by a "socialist" government. Democracy had not been gaining fast enough under the monarchy, particularly in