

class-conscious society, who had gone through the grammar schools and pulled himself up by the bootstraps to get to the top; she herself is a grocer's daughter. The rather gentlemanly, school-tie flavor of the Tory party began to change. Mrs. Thatcher's is a more abrasive party. Significantly, it cuts across a broader social range and is now the vehicle for a middle class in evolution.

The Labor party, meanwhile, was coming to the end of its long march. Born of a desire to work major social reform, to provide free health care for all, to bring such basic industries as coal and steel into public ownership, it was the party of the unions and largely funded by them. But with the achievement of many of its aims, Labor inevitably lost much of its sense of purpose. The working classes were no longer the clothcaps of old, struggling for justice. Education and broader opportunity had created a larger property-owning meritocracy and social divisions had blurred. In the much-publicized Bermondsey by-election last year, the militant left-wing candidate found to his chagrin that he had been harboring a romantic view of the old working class. It had vanished; he lost the election.

As if the decline of purpose and identity were not enough, there were other problems for Labor. The entry of left-wing militants in growing numbers had already driven some moderates to split and form the Social Democratic party, which eventually made an alliance with the Liberals to create a third force in a traditionally two-party system. Within Labor there were serious ideological differences on nuclear defense and membership in the European Community. The party leader, Michael Foot, was sincere, decent, and honest, but old. When Mrs. Thatcher called the election, Labor looked a mess, uncohesive and uncertain. Even its own people saw its election platform as a kind of suicide note.

In fact, the election issue was not unemployment. It was essentially Mrs. Thatcher herself. In the 650-seat House of Commons she won 397 seats, a majority of 144 over Labor and the SDP-Liberal alliance. Thus Britain voted for more of the same—for firm government with a strong Right emphasis.

Mrs. Thatcher's legislative program for the next eighteen months indicates that she will persist in attempts at keeping inflation down by squeezing public spending and resisting wage increases. She will not be deterred by still-growing unemployment; the road is rough, she says, but it is still the right one. She will keep her pledge to denationalize the mighty state-owned telecommunications corporation. The property-owning class will be enlarged as government-built homes are sold to the tenants.

Conservatives have longed for the chance to tame the unions and will now set about teaching them democratic manners by enacting laws requiring secret ballots for union-leader selection and the calling of strikes. They may attempt to pass legislation barring strikes by workers in essential services. If the unions want a fight, Mrs. Thatcher surely will not shrink from it. She, and the Labor party, will have noted that many of the unemployed, the skilled working class, and even trade unionists voted for her.

She will also try to revive the controversial proposal to give the police more power to search and detain suspects. There may also be an attempt to bring back capital punishment, eighteen years after its abolition, although Britain's judiciary largely opposes it.

In many areas Mrs. Thatcher shares the outlook of Mr. Reagan. She has underscored her strong commitment to United States and NATO defense strategies. She supports the plan to base Pershing and cruise missiles in Europe. She believes that her election, following on Chancellor Kohl's in Germany, has strengthened the Alliance and has improved the prospect of progress in arms talks.

She is deeply committed to the European Community but equally determined to see that Britain pays no more than its fair share. She has made it plain that the costly "Fortress Falklands" policy will be maintained.

With her massive mandate, Mrs. Thatcher looks unassailable. Labor, on the other hand, will elect a new leader in October, who will have the arduous task of reshaping a shattered party. The trade union movement, too, has a crisis of identity and is in for an agonizing period of reappraisal. Although it would be premature to write Labor's obituary, for the moment the SDP-Liberal alliance seems to have greater credibility. The new alliance received 25 per cent of the general election vote, Labor a mere 28 per cent; the Tories commanded 42 per cent. It will be fascinating to see how opposition politics develop.

Mrs. Thatcher believes herself amply rewarded for trusting her instincts. But there is a difference between attitude and policy, and even Mrs. Thatcher's instincts may fail her on occasion. She is tough, but will she also be flexible? Will she listen to others when the going gets tough, as one expects it will when employment rates rise even further? She is hardly likely to amend her style. As she once said, "The lady's not for turning." She is not for wavering either.

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## EXCURSUS 2

### Gerald Hyman on A LARGER ROLE FOR JAPAN

Two items have dominated talks between the United States and Japan in the past two or three years, and the meeting between the prime minister of Japan and the president of the United States a few months ago was no exception. First and foremost was the huge—and growing—trade imbalance between the two countries—at least \$17 billion last year. Second was Japan's defense posture in general and its defense role in Asia in particular. The Reagan administration was unusually enthusiastic about the prime minister's visit. The newly elected Yasuhiro Nakasone was said to be willing to make concessions on the former issue and, on the latter, to hold views that were consistent with, even identical to, those of the administration. Himself once the head of the Self-Defense Forces, Nakasone has long advocated a more certain build-up of the armed forces and a more forceful international political role for Japan.

Though Nakasone served in the Imperial Army, he is perhaps the first real postwar prime minister and is thought of as a "new generation" leader, or at least a transition to such leadership. Less consumed by the need to guarantee Japanese economic power and less scarred by the defeat in World War II, he is willing on Japan's behalf to play an international role commensurate with the country's actual strength. He is also less likely than previous postwar premiers to wilt and defer to others in public forums. Yet the vagaries of the Japanese election system—the fluidity of its coalitions and the political and monetary debts that are incurred in its campaigns—mean that Nakasone's main concern for the foreseeable future will be to consolidate his own power, taking care to avoid a misstep. The recent Upper House elections will certainly strengthen the prime minister's hand in his Liberal Democratic party.

Within both the Diet and the electorate he faces substantial opposition to an enhanced role in world affairs. Since the war the Japanese have reached a consensus on limiting Japan's role abroad, focusing attention instead on domestic, and particularly economic, problems. There are critics of many aspects of the Constitution "imposed" by MacArthur after the war, but Article 9, which renounced a military capacity and resort to war, remains popular. When the prime minister compares Japan to "an unsinkable aircraft carrier ... a bulwark of defense against the [Soviet] Backfire bomber," as he was reported to have done in Washington, his countrymen become more than a little nervous.

The second obstacle to an enhanced Japanese role in world affairs is the ambivalence of Japan's neighbors. For those who experienced the brutal wartime Japanese occupation, memories die hard. Those memories fueled a seemingly minor and domestic Japanese issue—the revision of some high-school history textbooks—into an international controversy only a few months before the Nakasone election.

In Japan, as elsewhere, textbooks undergo periodic revision, and in the course of this one the events and policies of the prewar and wartime period were recast. The new version offered a more benign view of Japanese policies toward and behavior on the Asian mainland.

Reaction was swift. There were anti-Japanese demonstrations in Korea, and the Korean Government demanded Japan reinstate the old text. The Chinese Government made its point even more forcefully, mounting photographic exhibits about the Rape of Nanking and elevating the "textbook problem" to the status of a Sino-Japanese crisis. Former Prime Minister Suzuki's trip to China was placed in jeopardy, and when it finally did take place, much of it was taken up by discussions of the tension the revisions had caused. Indeed, in anticipation of the China trip, several Japanese Foreign Ministry officials and Dietmen were dispatched to Seoul and Peking in an attempt to calm the waters. Prime Minister Suzuki promised a revision of the revision the next time around, if not sooner.

In Southeast Asia the reaction was more muted, but the anti-Japanese riots during former Prime Minister Tanaka's trip to Jakarta in 1974 were never far from mind.

No doubt this tension will pass. The textbook revision does not touch on anyone's vital interests; its resolution one way or another has no material or geopolitical consequences. But in another, perhaps more fundamental sense, it will not pass, for it is symptomatic of a more serious problem: the fear of Japanese hegemony.

In the Philippines and Indonesia there is deep concern over an expanded Japanese military role in Asia, and both governments are particularly anxious about the U.S. proposal that Japan assume responsibility for the defense of a zone radiating a thousand miles from the center of Japan—a zone that would include the edge of the Philippine Sea at the tip of Southeast Asia. China, on the other hand, has in recent years changed its position about a stronger Japan, particularly toward the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty. Previously hostile to any such arrangement, China has now begun to encourage both an American and a Japanese presence in Asia and has endorsed the U.S. link with Japan. Further, the prime ministers of Singapore and Malaysia have inaugurated "learn from Japan" campaigns, and Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew has often voiced the need for U.S. and Japanese involvement in Southeast Asia, primarily as a balance to the growth of the Soviet Navy in the area. Thus, while a substantial, constructive role for Japan is crucial to the balance of power in Asia and fundamental to its future, the uncertainty of Japan's neighbors makes it difficult for them to agree upon just what sort of

role that should be.

Their own aversion to an enhanced military capability apart, the Japanese are understandably perplexed about their neighbors' views. Urged to show themselves as more than economic animals, they confront ambivalence whenever they talk about doing so. If a tentative government and an even more tentative public meet opposition each step of the way, they are likely to continue concentrating on economic matters and limiting their international activities, as now, to relatively small contributions to U.N. agencies. It is obvious that the other Asian nations will soon have to come to terms with their own ambivalence if the Japanese are to be encouraged to overcome a preference for the status quo.

In resolving this ambiguity, the United States could play a useful role. We could encourage Prime Minister Nakasone's impulse for engagement, signaling to the Japanese public our desire for Japan's participation as a major international player and ending its postwar parole. The signals would have to be substantive as well as symbolic: joint international ventures; clear, public, regular consultations between Cabinet members; a more visibly central role—again, substantive as well as symbolic—at international forums such as the Williamsburg "economic summit" just past. Militarily, we might mitigate regional fears by linking Japanese forces with our own—for example, conducting joint exercises or offering an incipient version of our relation with Australia and New Zealand. Most important, perhaps, the two nations could play a complementary role, with each undertaking constructive steps in areas in which the other is less welcome. In the subcontinent, where our relations with Mrs. Gandhi's government are shaky at best, there is an obvious opportunity for Japan to do what is difficult for us, namely, balance the influence of the Soviets. The same might be true in Iran or even in Angola—places where anti-Americanism is virtually part of the state ideology. Economically, there is plenty of opportunity for burden-sharing. At present, Japan does not carry its proportional share of international obligations at the U.N., at the World Bank, at the IMF, and elsewhere.

Beginning, for domestic reasons, where Japan now has a clear national interest and, preferably, some experience, the idea is to draw Japan more deeply into the web of international relations, to nurture for Japan the same kind of role and the same kind of obligations we ourselves have undertaken. In setting the pattern for growing Japanese participation in international affairs, one that would more accurately reflect Japan's strength and resources, we would be able to shift from our own shoulders a number of commitments that are becoming increasingly onerous and unrealistic for the U.S. to bear.

All in all, an appropriate role for Japan—one acceptable to the Japanese public and to Japan's neighbors—ought to be an item high on the Pacific agenda.

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## EXCURSUS 3

### Walter C. Clemens, Jr., on A STRATEGIC PRECEDENT

Two decades have passed since a landmark event in U.S.-Soviet relations—President Kennedy's "Toward a Strategy of Peace" address at American University on June 10, 1963.