
OTHER NATIONS

Japan's Dilemma

"The Role of Korea in Japanese Defense Policy" by James H. Buck, in *Asian Affairs* (Mar.-Apr. 1977), American-Asian Educational Exchange, 88 Morningside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027.

Although a peaceful and economically healthy South Korea has been a major goal of Japanese foreign policy for the past 20 years, Japan has depended largely on the United States to achieve that end. Now, in the wake of apparently weakening U.S. commitment to Korean defense, Japan faces an array of disquieting choices.

Armed conflict on the Korean peninsula, writes Buck, a military affairs specialist at the University of Georgia, would expose Japan to unpleasant foreign policy alternatives and painful internal strains. If it sides with the United States in a Korean struggle, it will alienate China and the Soviet Union; if it refuses to aid the United States, it will damage the basis of its own defense under the U.S.-Japanese mutual security treaty. And reaching either decision in a country which lacks a popular consensus on Northeast Asia policy could well upset the fragile internal political balance. In realistic terms, only the status quo represents Japan's best interests.

Because of its own minimal military establishment—a 250,000-man non-nuclear force on which it spends less than 1 percent of its GNP—as well as the bilateral nature of U.S.-South Korean defense agreements, Japan lacks any significant ability to influence the situation. As Korea's major trading partner and source of investment capital, Japan has a vital stake in Korean stability. Nevertheless, says Buck, Japan has little choice save to remain "an interested, but essentially powerless bystander."

Nikita Who?

"CPSU History Re-Revised" by Kenneth A. Kerst, in *Problems of Communism* (May-June 1977), Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

There has been considerable debate in recent years over trends in Soviet control of intellectual life under the government of Leonid Brezhnev. While some analysts believe that Soviet writings now reflect a greater range of opinion than during Khrushchev's rule, others view the Brezhnev regime as especially repressive.

Kerst, a retired State Department official and former Guest Scholar at the Wilson Center's Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, suggests that, while there is still some room for innovative and imaginative thought in contemporary Russia, "it is equally obvious that some periodicals enjoy less freedom of discus-