

**OTHER NATIONS**

*Moscow's Good Neighbor Policy*

"The Last Years of Peaceful Coexistence: Soviet-Afghan Relations 1963-1978" by Alvin Z. Rubinstein, in *The Middle East Journal* (Spring 1982), 1761 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

During most of the 1960s and '70s, Afghanistan seemed a perfect "good neighbor" to the Soviet Union: officially non-aligned, yet grateful for Soviet aid and apparently deferential to Moscow's wishes in every important matter. Why was that not enough to preserve Afghanistan's independence? Rubinstein, a University of Pennsylvania political scientist, examines what happened.

Former Prime Minister Muhammad Daoud Khan inadvertently triggered Afghanistan's troubles by taking part in a 1973 leftist military coup that dethroned his brother-in-law, King Muhammad Zahir Shah, and returned Daoud to power. Gone with the King, says Rubinstein, was the only institution that held the country's rural tribes together. The Soviets did not engineer the coup, but they probably knew it was imminent—and they chose not to tell King Zahir.

As President, Daoud loudly asserted Afghanistan's claims to Pakistani territory—despite Moscow's coolness to the idea. And he gave only lip service to the Soviets' proposed Asian "collective security" plan involving Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

Later during the mid-1970s, the autocratic Daoud faced increasing economic and political difficulties at home. He invoked his "royal and tribal heritage" and replaced leftists in his regime with friends and relatives. To lessen his country's dependence on the Soviet Union, Daoud revived the traditional Afghan foreign policy of *bi-terafi* ("with-



*Muhammad Daoud Khan (inset) seized power in Afghanistan in 1973. His erratic policies over the next five years paved the way for the Soviet invasion of 1979.*

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out sides"). He sought improved relations with Pakistan. He also agreed to take \$2 billion in credits from the anti-communist Shah of Iran and got financial commitments from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, as well.

The prospect, however faint, of a Teheran-Kabul-Islamabad coalition of Muslims began to worry the Soviets. Daoud seemed unreliable. His April 1977 visit to Moscow to sign a treaty providing for more Soviet aid was marked by "frankness" rather than cordiality. One year later, leftist Afghan military officers, encouraged by the Soviets, seized power in Kabul. They slew Daoud and replaced him with a communist, Nur Muhammad Taraki, who soon stirred tribesmen's ire with his Marxist "modernization" efforts. [In 1979, Taraki was succeeded by another communist, Hafizullah Amin, who proved too independent for Moscow. Late in 1979, the Soviets intervened in force and replaced him.] Ambitious but inept, Daoud had started his country on the road to disaster.

*Asia's Fat  
'Little Dragons'*

"Pacific Optimism: Parts I and II" by Donald K. Emmerson, in *UFSI Reports* (nos. 4 and 5, 1982), Universities Field Staff International, P.O. Box 150, Hanover, N.H. 03755.

Since the late 1970s, American intellectuals and journalists have engaged in a round of "Pacific optimism." *Business Week*, for example, saw Japan and the other non-communist nations of East Asia as "the stars of the developing world." Milton and Rose Friedman, in their best-selling *Free to Choose* (1980), lauded Japan, Malaysia, and the four "little dragons" (South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan) as models of democracy and free-market prosperity.

Emmerson, a University of Wisconsin political scientist, suggests that Americans' "Pacific optimism" may be a kind of psychological compensation for the U.S. defeat in Vietnam. Moreover, he adds, the Friedmans and other analysts who go on to attribute the Asian success story to laissez-faire economics and democracy are seriously mistaken.

The six nations cited by the Friedmans *are* prosperous, averaging a \$3,000 income per capita as compared with \$253 in China and \$204 in India. But a comparison of all 26 Asian nations, communist and non-communist, shows no link between prosperity and limited government. The poorest countries devoted 19.2 percent of GNP to government spending, the next poorest 24.8 percent, and the richest 22.6 percent. "The virtues of the private sector," Emmerson observes, "are most apparent once a nation [lifts] itself out of dire poverty."

How do these 26 governments spend their money? The poorest countries spend more on the military (up to 19.3 percent of expenditures) than do the richest (13.7 percent). Outlays for education, however, progress from 11.8 percent of the budget among the poorest nations to 16 percent among the wealthiest. But Emmerson argues that the armies in less-developed nations serve to train manpower and build infra-