GUNS, BUTTER AND TUNA: ALTERNATIVE SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC ISLAND STATES*

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Security, whether it be personal or national, is something to which we all feel attraction, although it often proves to be an illusive, if not impossible goal. The end of the Cold War has brought some dramatic changes to the security environments of many countries, regions and peoples of the world, leaving some relieved and others increasingly concerned. For those of us lucky enough to be able to indulge in theoretical pursuits, this time of change has given us an opportunity to broaden our definition and understanding of security to something beyond the confines of national security in cold war strategic terms.

The present paper focuses on security as it is seen from the perspective of what are traditionally viewed as some of the least secure members of the international community — the very small or micro-states of the Pacific. Through adopting a largely endogenous [1] and environmental perspective, security can be seen as being an important underlying factor in any discussion of development and/or social issues in the region, and thereforeessential to any consideration of the role of the Pacific Islands in the world-system as a whole.

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1 For a discussion of endogenous security see Ronni Alexander. *Putting the Earth First,* Honolulu: Spark Matsunaga Institute for Peace, University of Hawaii, forthcoming. In Japanese, see ロニー・アレキサンダー著 『大きな夢と小さな島々…太平洋島嶼国の非核化にみる新しい安全保障観』(国際書院, 1992年)。

This paper is composed of four parts. The first is an introductory section dealing with the definition of the region to be discussed. The second section addresses the question of nuclearism and nuclear security during the Cold War, and proposes an alternative approach to security in the region. Part III takes up the security issues which are of most concern to the Pacific Island Countries-economic development, cultural integrity and environmental sustainability. The paper concludes with a section addressing areas for consideration with regard to security in the future, and addresses the need for a new definition of the concept of political sovereignty.

PART I: INTRODUCTION — DEFINING THE PACIFIC

The term 'Pacific' has many different interpretations, and it is important at the outset to establish some geographical parameters for our discussion. The reason for this is clear, for while this paper is concerned primarily with the Pacific Island Countries, it is hardly necessary to point out that there is a bit of confusion as to what exactly is meant by that term. In Japan, for example, 'the Pacific' generally tends to be synonymous with the *Asia-Pacific*, and little or no attention is paid to either the island countries of the Pacific Basin or the Pacific countries of Latin America. Generally, the Asia-Pacific region is defined as being composed of Asia, or at least southeast Asia, the countries of the northern Pacific Rim plus Australia and New Zealand, and the Pacific Basin.

This paper takes a somewhat broader view of the region which can, for lack of a better term, be called the 'Greater Pacific'. Here, the countries of the *Pacific Rim* are those which border on the Pacific Ocean, and are not necessarily confined to Asia or to the Northern hemisphere. The *Pacific Basin* and/or *Pacific Island Countries* refer to the South Pacific Forum countries and the non-independent island entities in the region, with the exception of Australia and New Zealand. To the extent that Papua New Guinea (PNG) defines itself as a Pacific Island Country, it will be included in the usage of that term, although due to its large size, it will not be included in references to small or very small island countries in the region. The countries of Asia which do not lie on the Pacific are beyond the scope of this paper.

In considering the 'Greater Pacific Region', is perhaps useful to think in terms of three broad groups. There are, first of all, the Pacific Island Countries. Many of these very small countries have become almost entirely dependent on foreign economic assistance for even their basic necessities. At one end of the scale are dependencies such as Tokelau or associated states such as the Cook Islands or Federated States of Micronesia.

At the other end are the large Melanesian countries, which are relatively well endowed with natural resources and physically much larger than their Micronesian or Polynesian counterparts. Among these Melanesian countries, PNG is of course exceptional in terms of its size and potential wealth. At the same time, PNG differs from its neighbors in Southeast Asia not only in terms of its present level of economic development, but also in terms of its colonial history, and its self-identity as a Pacific Island Country. In modern historical terms, PNG is perhaps closer to its Pacific neighbors than to those in Southeast Asia.

The second group of countries are those on the Southern Rim of the Pacific Basin. These are the countries of Asia and of Central and South America which border on the Pacific, as well perhaps those which maintain a primarily Pacific focus. When viewed from Japan, the Latin American countries do not appear to be a part of the Asia-Pacific region, and perhaps the same is true for countries like Indonesia when viewed from the other side. Yet, as the United States works to cement its economic relations with its neighbors and increase its overall presence on the American continent through the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), we can see two groups emerging in the 'Greater Pacific Region'. One group consists of the Latin American countries with the US at the center, and the other of the Asian Pacific countries, especially the NIEs or JapaNIEs,[2] which center on Japan. Regional organizations such as PECC or APEC incorporate both of these groups, and even go so far as to include the ASEAN countries in the Pacific region, or perhaps include the Pacific in Asia. Understandably, with the great cultural, geographical, economic and political differences in the Pacific, groupings and divisions occur within these large regional organizations. It is entirely possible that future relations in the Pacific, both organized and otherwise, will center on cooperation and competition between the American Pacific on the one hand and the JapaNIEs on the other.

The final cluster of Pacific countries are the industrialized and industrializing countries of the Northern Pacific Rim. At one end of the spectrum are Japan, the US, Canada and very soon South Korea; at the other end are China, DPRK (North Korea) and Siberia. With the possible exception of Siberia, these countries form the economic and political center of the region, and in spite of their vast political and economic differences, they are moving to solidify their rela-

2 Kinhide Mushakoji. "Japan, the JapaNIEs and the Japanese in the Post-Cold War Asia Pacific Region." Paper presented to the XII International Colloquium on the World Economy: "Asia in the World Economy", Tokyo, December 11, 1993, pp.3-5.

tions and position of centrality in the region. One example of this trend is the move to form a free trade area comprised of CIS, China, both Koreas, Japan and the United States.

What is the role of the Pacific Island Countries in this tri-partite division of economic and political power in the Pacific? Clearly, the very small Pacific Island Countries are on the periphery of any model we create, although it is important to note the great diversity among the Pacific Islands themselves. I would suggest that both historically and in the present context, the significance of the Pacific Islands lies not in the islands themselves, but rather in the access they offer to the sea and its resources. Historically speaking, the islands have been used for different purposes in different eras, but while certainly colonization and economic enterprise did take place, particularly in the smaller islands it was more for the purpose of staking a claim to the ocean than for the sake of possession of the islands themselves. Moreover, in keeping with 18th and 19th century European world views of the seas as being without limit and having an endless capacity for absorption, the islands and the seas around them were used throughout modern history as a "garbage dump" for the world system – a place where the unwanted and/or dangerous aspects of "modern" society could be disposed of without fear of harming the disposing society. Unfortunately, increased knowledge and new ideas about the limitations of, and joint responsibility for the global commons in this century have done little to change the the reality of this 'garbage dump' role. The most dramatic examples of this in its modern form are of a military nature: war and/or weaponry, nuclear tests and nuclear waste.

It would certainly be going too far to suggest that all of the very small Pacific Island States are nothing more than populated garbage dumps, yet in terms of the system as a whole with its heavy Western bias and emphasis on size, this may be uncomfortably close to the truth as it is perceived in places like Washington or Tokyo.

It is, therefore, perhaps not unreasonable to suggest that a distinction be made between those island countries which play a passive role in the world-system and those which play a more active one. The passive role can be seen as a sort of "gasoline station" function; important if and when one is in need of gasoline, but otherwise duly charted and ignored or forgotten. For these countries, a prerequisite for economic development has been to put themselves on the map. In the Cold War context of the 1970s and 80s, this often happened more in a strategic, as opposed to an economic, way through providing access to the ocean and/or as a result of

the perception on the part of outside powers of the "strategic significance" of the island states. Unlike countries such as Fiji and PNG which have become directly incorporated into the capitalist world-economy in an economic as well as a strategic/political way, the incorporation process for these small islands has been primarily strategic, and has led to a qualitatively different role in the world-system itself. I would suggest that in this regard, the former can be seen as being a part of what in world-system theory is generally referred to as the 'periphery' or, in this context, the *inner periphery*, while the latter belong to a separate grouping which can be called the *outer periphery*. This distinction between the inner and outer peripheries is extremely fine, perhaps indistinguishable, and can change according to economic and political conditions. An important difference can, however, be seen in the way these groups of states conduct their relations with other countries; the further "out" one goes, the more relations are conducted directly with, and confined to, countries in the center. In this sense, the term "outer periphery" may just be a euphemism for a modern version of strategic colonialism and if, in fact, this distinction makes any sense, then the end of the Cold War should make a difference in the role of these so-called strategically significant states. It is suggested that this distinction is important both in a theoretical sense, and also in a practical one, because it helps to clarify the nature of the relationship between strategic and economic issues in the analysis of very small states.

PART II: NUCLEARISM AND SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

No discussion of security issues in the present-day Pacific can ignore China and the two Koreas, specifically the instability on the Korean Penninsula, including the question of the nuclearization of North Korea, and the increasing importance and prominence of China in the region. Both China and the two Koreas are at a crossroads, and whatever the final outcome, the stability of the two Koreas, united or separate, affects that of the entire region. In addition, the future of the Chinese experiment in building a socialist market economy is of crucial importance in not only regional terms, but in a global sense as well. While acknowledging that these are issues of great interest and importance, for reasons of space and focus, the present discussion will be limited to the security of the Pacific Island Countries, and thus the question of China and the Korean Penninsula will not be addressed directly here.

From a historical standpoint, security in the Pacific has been linked with nuclearism in all its forms since the first use of nuclear weapons. Not only were the first atomic

bombs to be used in warfare dropped on a Pacific country, Japan, but the military base which enabled the United States to drop those bombs was located on Tinian Island in the northern Mariana Islands. That island was wrested from the Japanese at great cost to not only the Allies and Japanese directly engaged in the fighting, but also to the inhabitants of the Marianas.

Unfortunately for the Pacific, its involvement in nuclearism and nuclear politics did not end with Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Uranium mining, nuclear testing and nuclear waste disposal were conducted in the region and geo-political factors ensured that the Pacific region would continue to be involved in Cold War politics as three of the five established nuclear powers (US, former USSR, China) border on the Pacific, and both France and Britain had territories and/or close ties with the region.

(1) THE COLD WAR PACIFIC: NUCLEARISM AND US-USSR RELATIONS

With the defeat of Japan in WWII, the US ruled supreme in the northwest Pacific. The establishment of a strategic trust territory in Micronesia was part of a US strategy to keep others out of the region, and this originally applied to economic activities as well as nuclear and conventional military ones. One part of the American strategic agenda was of course nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands, and it is significant to note that while the Trust Territory Agreement which officially put those and the other Micronesian islands under US control was not signed until 1947, nuclear testing was begun in the Marshalls in 1946.

This early nuclearization of the northwest Pacific set the stage for later nuclear competition in the region, and clearly geo-political conditions served only to make things worse. In the period before the establishment of the Partial Test Ban Treaty (1946-1962), both the United States and Britain tested nuclear warheads in the Pacific, although after the signing of that agreement, both countries moved their tests underground and changed the location to the continental United States. In spite of the Test-Ban Treaty, France began atmospheric testing in the Pacific in 1966, and only switched to underground testing in 1975. At this writing, France is cooperating with the global moratorium on nuclear testing, although there are frequent reports indicating a strong desire on the part of the French military to resume testing.[3]

3 In reference to France's nuclear testing, see for example "French Tests Needed", *Pacific News Bulletin*, Vol.8, No.12, December, 1993. In addition, with regard to nuclear tests, it is interesting to note the recent information coming out on US testing. For example, in December, 1993, the Department of Energy released documents which revealed 204 previously unknown tests, some of which were conducted in the Pacific. (*WISE News Communique* 407, February 25, 1994, p.7).

The Pacific has been used for testing more than just nuclear warheads. The US, USSR and China have all used the Pacific for missile testing and the United States maintains one of its most important military facilities on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands – the Kwajalein Missile Testing Range. This facility is used for testing missile, communication, tracking and delivery systems. It played an important role in the development of the high-tech weapons used with such fanfare during the Gulf War, and is expected to play an expanded role in post-Cold War American strategy and defense.[4]

From the end of the war to the mid-1980's, the Pacific was for all practical purposes an American lake. External security arrangements in the region linked the United States, Australia and New Zealand in the ANZUS Treaty and the United States and Japan in the US-Japan Security Treaty. The only other major presence in the region was France, which maintained bases in New Caledonia and French Polynesia, the primary purpose of which was the conducting and support of nuclear weapon testing. Unlike the US and France, China and Japan had no foreign bases in the region, and the only direct Soviet access was through the Vietnamese bases at Camranh Bay and Da Nang. The only major power with substantial military bases and facilities in the region was the United States, which had, and continues to maintain, major installations on two Pacific islands, Hawaii and Guam, subsidiary installations on a number of islands in the north Pacific and important bases in Japan, Korea, Australia and, until recently, the Philippines. The United States engaged in massive military exercises such as RIMPAC and TEAMSPIRIT with its allies in the region, and also provided nominal defense assistance. In addition, training programs such as the American International Military Education and Training Program (IMET) which fostered American values such as democracy, capitalist economic development and civilian control of the military were available for foreign civilian and military personnel from 'friendly' countries.[5]

The overall strategic situation in the Pacific changed somewhat in 1984, when the newly-installed Lange Labour Government in New Zealand announced it would not allow any ships into its ports unless it was certain that they carried no nuclear weapons. Mr. Lange's position led to the eventual with-

4 Regarding Kwajalein, refer to Radio Australia, 13, 14 May 1993. Also see for example "SDI is Dead-Long Live GPACS!", *Pacific Report*, August 1993, p.26; *Pacific News Bulletin*, Vol.8, No.6, May, 1993; and "Star Wars Reverts to Maiden Name", *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol.49 No.6, July/August 1993, p.8.

5 Henry S. Albinksi. "America's Future in the Pacific Islands Region". *Journal of the Pacific Society*, No.61 (Vol.16, No.4), January 1994, pp.133-134.

drawing of New Zealand from the ANZUS Treaty, and helped to create the impression that the non-nuclear ripples on the American nuclear lake were turning into seriously anti-nuclear waves. This impression grew with the signing of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty at the South Pacific Forum held in Rarotonga the following year.

Fuel was added to this fire on 28 July 1986, when Mikhail Gorbachev announced his perception of the Soviet Union as a Pacific power. While acknowledging the legitimate interests of the United States in the region, Gorbachev criticized the "militarized triangle" of Washington-Tokyo-Seoul, and stated that he was "prepared to expand ties" with Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Brunei, the Republic of the Maldives and the micro-states of the Pacific. It is interesting to note that Papua New Guinea was included among the micro-states, India mentioned elsewhere in the speech and Pakistan, South Korea and Taiwan left out entirely.[6]

Gorbachev's speech marked an important turning point in Soviet involvement in the Pacific, and in the mid-80's there was indeed an undeniable expansion in the Soviet Pacific forces. For example, as of 1989, the Soviet Pacific fleet was comprised of 75 major surface combat ships and two aircraft carriers, 80 attack submarines and 30 strategic missile submarines, and according to the US, the Soviet ships and submarines in the Western Pacific were already carrying cruise missiles. There were also some 50 Soviet divisions deployed in the Soviet Far East, Siberia and Central Asia, as well as 35-40% of the Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). A major submarine base was located at Petropavlovsk on the Kamchatka penninsula, and deployments of troops in the Northern Territories (Kurile Islands) were increased.

In addition to a higher military profile, the Soviet Union also increased its political and economic profile in the region in the 1980's. Talks to improve relations were opened with China and Japan. Among these Soviet initiatives, perhaps that which caused the greatest stir was the signing of a fishing agreement with Kiribati in 1986. The agreement gave the USSR fishing rights in Kiribati's EEZ but did not grant access to its territorial seas (within 12 miles of the coast) or to its ports. The agreement was not renewed after expiration, and the Kiribati government refused to agree to a Soviet demand for a reduction of $300,000 in license fees due to the fact that fishing yields did not meet the inititial expectations. Another agreement, one which did

6 Gill in John Ravenhill. *No Longer an American Lake?* Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989, p. 115.

include landing rights, was made with Vanuatu in 1987, but it also ended after one year.

In terms of formal relations, throughout the 1980's, the Soviet Union maintained ties with all of the states on the western Pacific Rim, with the exception of South Korea and Taiwan. (Relations were established with South Korea in 1991). The Soviet Union also established relations with Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Nauru, Tuvalu, Western Samoa and PNG, and Soviet embassies in Canberra and Wellington served the South Pacific Islands region.[7] In addition, unlike the US and France, the USSR signed and ratified the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty and expressed its support for that agreement.

The increased Soviet presence in the Pacific provided the impetus for warnings of a Soviet threat in the region, which was in turn used to justify an American naval build-up. The Soviet response to American accusations was to claim that the build-up was necessary for national defense in the event of war, as well as for containing a rearming Japan and for protecting Soviet shipping through the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

Whatever its size, the Soviet presence in the Pacific could hardly compare with that of the United States. In the 1980's, the US deployed its 3rd and 7th Fleets in the region. These were composed of 87 warships, 6 carriers, 44 attack submarines and 10 strategic missile submarines. In addition, the deployment of a new generation of cruise missiles, the Tomahawk, carrying a 200 kiloton warhead with roughly sixteen times the destructive capability of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima is indicative of the intensity of the nuclear arms race in the Pacific on the part of the United States.

It is clear from the above that the Pacific has been the focus of both American and Soviet strategic interest, particularly for the past 10 or 15 years. Why? The answer lies on the one hand in strategic concerns about not only the USSR but stability in Asia as well. At the same time, the US has economic concerns. "In contrast to the island states' focus on economic security, the United States, Australia and New Zealand – as well as Japan and other East Asian allies and friends – attach high strategic importance to the region. The island states and territories straddle or are proximate to the air and sea lanes of communication that link the rim nations; these lanes carry nearly one-half of all American foreign trade, and connect the United States to five of its seven alliance relationships. Preservation of freedom of navigation and the security of these trans-Pacific routes thus is a vital national interest for nearly all the Pacific rim nations – but also for the is-

7 *ibid.*, p.119.

land states dependent on export-import trade."[8] At the same time, it must be noted that even according to one of the most conservative US foreign affairs analysts, "the Soviet Union, except for submarine warfare, has little in the way of either present or potential capabilities to mount offensive operations in the South Pacific, and (at least for the foreseeable future) has no prospects for regional port or other military access. The primary Soviet threat in the region is thus political – their efforts to accomplish denial to the United States of that which is not available to Moscow."[9]

(2) SECURITY FOR WHOM?

Thus far, we have looked primarily at the American and Soviet military presence in the Pacific during the Cold War. According to US strategic thinking, that military presence was there to protect both US and Pacific interests – in other words, to make the region more secure. While this assumption may have validity from the point of view of the United States, it warrants further consideration before it can be applied directly to the Pacific Islands.

In a world of nuclear weapons and transnational corporations, it is difficult to find a conceptualization of security wearing a human face. The temptation to count guns, or ODA dollars or even cans of tunafish is almost overwhelming. In the Pacific, however, these kinds of counting exercises are of limited, but unfortunately growing value. This is in part due to the fact that economic considerations such as ODA or tuna are often viewed as legitimate aspects of island security, whereas anti-nuclear activities are definitely not. What follows here is an attempt to turn this view of security around, and to look at the whole question of security from the point of view of those who are to be secured.

In the usual conception of relations among states, there exists on the one hand, the idea that all states, large and small, are equal and on the other, that large and militarily powerful states are more equal than others, especially when it comes to deciding what is and what is not secure. Most of the prevailing definitions of security, particularly those created since the beginning of the Cold War, have centered on the idea of military strength as the basic element of security. Militarily weak countries are seen as being unable to protect their borders and thus as being vulnerable, and vulnerability is equated with insecurity. If, however, one were to define security in terms of the reduction of those elements which threaten the people of a given country or make them feel insecure, then

8 Vasey in John C. Dorrance, et al. *The South Pacific: Emerging Security Issues and U.S. Policy.* Brassey's (US) Incorporated, 1990, p. 99.

9 *ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

security might look very different indeed.

Taking this kind of approach requires that two aspects of security be given particular attention. One has to do with what 'being secure' means, and the other concerns who benefits from security policy. For the present purposes, 'being secure' is conceptualized in terms of the degree of 'insecureness'; the reduction of insecurity is believed to result in the enhancement of security. This conceptualization of security differs from the usual strategic approach in that it defines security from within, rather than in terms of outside threats. Moreover, it is assumed that the degree of security is fundamentally related to the degree to which a given state is able to control and manipulate its political, economic and strategic environment. The feeling of 'being secure' is enhanced by greater control over one's environment, while the loss of that control inevitably leads to feelings of insecurity. The first requirement of an endogenous approach to security is thus that it takes as its point of departure the reduction of insecurity, and that it aims at enhancing control of the security environment.

Talking about security also requires that we define both the actors (implementors) of security policy and the beneficiaries (those who that policy is supposed to be protecting). Generally, states are assumed to be responsible for the security of their citizens, and state governments are the usual institution for the formation and implementation of security policy. In other words, states are the actors, while the people or citizens of that state would be the beneficiaries. The realities of interdependence are such, however, that in fact, security for one state is often guaranteed by another. One example of this would be the relationship in which Japan relies on the US for its external defense. Another example, and one of relevance to the Pacific Islands, is that of associated statehood or free association in which the Island state is not the primary actor responsible for security policy.

There is an inherent risk in the kind of security guaranteed under free association or associated statehood because there is always a possibility that the interests of the two states might become contradictory. The most dramatic example from the Pacific Islands would be that of nuclear testing. The United States, Britain and France all conducted nuclear tests in the Pacific in the belief that the possession of nuclear weapons enhances security. Even if this were in fact true (and I believe it is not), it is virtually impossible to argue that nuclear weapons are a benefit to the people of Bikini or Moruroa Atoll, let alone any of the other people in the Pacific Islands who live in fear of, or suffer from the effects of nuclear contamination. To the ex-

tent that nuclear testing and nuclear defense benefit the people of France, for example, it may be seen as being endogenous for the French. At the same time, as that same policy originates completely outside of French Polynesia, it can be seen as being exogenous for the people of those islands.

For the people of the Pacific, nuclearism in general and nuclear testing in particular are examples of exogenous security, measures taken in the name of national security which come from, and primarily benefit, a third party. An exogenous analysis of nuclear security would consider Cold War strategy first, and focus on the significance of the islands in terms of that strategy. An endogenous approach would begin with an examination of the feelings of security of the people of the islands, rather than those outside. In the process of sorting out endogenous and exogenous sources of insecurity, one finds that it is not possible to equate security merely with military prowess; one must take a more holistic approach, looking at peoples' lives and the environments in which they live.

There is of course a large gap between the ideal of 'being secure' and the everyday reality of security politics. We must in fact think in terms of a 'security continuum' which spans from the completely endogenous to the completely exogenous. Each security policy has elements which are relatively more endogenous and those which are relatively more exogenous. In general, those approaches which aim at enhancing autonomy and giving the people greater say in the formation of security policy can be seen as being relatively more endogenous; those which leave security matters in the hands of military elites (foreign or otherwise) are relatively more exogenous.

The concept of endogenous security is useful because it provides an alternative to military security, a concept which is focused almost exclusively on strong states and built around logic in which 'strong' is a prerequisite for 'secure'. In our highly militarized society, this logic can be very convincing, particularly if one limits one's considerations to the states at the center of the world-system. It is precisely because of the attractiveness of the military security paradigm that it is important to seek new security alternatives in places where the logic of military security does not work, such as the very small Pacific Island states. In such an analysis, one must on the one hand consider whether very small states such as those in the Pacific are weak because they are peripheral or, on the other, whether their peripherality makes them weak. The discovery that very small states are not merely tiny copies of the super-powers gives credence to the concept of endogenous security, and allows for the possibility that the

meaning of security may be different for different countries.

The collapse of the Soviet Union makes it tempting to throw away the rule books for international relations and start all over again. Yet, in the course of our search for understanding of what has changed, it is essential to also identify that which has stayed the same. In this respect, we must be careful not to allow the magnitude of events in Europe to disguise the fact that to a certain extent, the current focus on East-West chumminess can in some ways be seen as merely the inverse of East-West animosity.

In the Pacific, American Cold War policy was based on the assumption of a 'Soviet threat', although we have already seen that even some US military analysts did not give that military threat much credence. The primary objective of US policy in the Pacific has been, and remains, the protection of sea lanes. The 'threat' of Soviet interference provided a good concrete enemy, and perhaps now a new one will have to be found. For a time, Libya was a good candidate, as was Iraq; more recently, the growing presence of China has been receiving increased attention. Increased drug trafficking and human rights violations in countries like Fiji and PNG also provide attractive targets for American security policy. The importance of the Pacific as an economically dynamic region is growing, not shrinking, and lanes of shipping and communication are concomitantly important. It is the sea, not the islands, which is of such great concern, and thus it would not be going too far to say that in many respects, the security problem in the Pacific lies not with the potential threat so much as with the potentially threatened. If this is in fact the case, the existence or non-existence of the Soviet Union should not make very much difference.

How do Pacific island countries view their own security? Suliana Suwatibau suggests that for Pacific Island peoples, there are three groups of "major security issues: issues of political independence, issues of economic development with social well-being and issues of cultural integrity, resource conservation and environmental stability."[10] Each of these issue areas presents a challenge to conventional conceptions of military security because they neither rely on the use of force, nor do they require it. Moreover, rather than focusing on political institutions such as governments and states, they take as their point of departure the lives of the people in the individual countries. In this sense, they are examples of an endogenous approach to

10 Suliana Siwatibau. "Disarmament, Security and Co-operation in the Region: An Overview of the Main Security Concerns of the South Pacific." Keynote address presented to ASPAC 1990, Melbourne, Australia, July, 1990, p.5.

security beginning from within, rather than an exogenous one from without.

PART III. NON-MILITARY CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

(1) POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AND MILITARIZATION

Siwatibau's first group of issues pertains to political independence. In the Pacific, there are still a number of territories which are not independent and which have not been allowed to exercise their right to self determination. The first step to security for these peoples is the freedom to determine their own political future. Security, however, can not be determined by political status alone, for without the freedom to determine their own identity in cultural, economic and social terms, a people can not be said to be secure. Unfortunately, the metropolitan powers with the responsibility for providing for the exercise of true self-determination are more interested in promoting their own strategic and political objectives, and as a result, the peoples of territories such as New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Guam remain under foreign rule. The question is then whether, or to what degree, the end of the Cold War has changed the perceived threat to regional stability posed by the independence of the non-independent Pacific Island countries.

Military strategy, as it pertains to the Pacific, has two elements which relate to independence issues in that region. One is that with the reductions in land-based weapons and weapon systems, the sea has become perhaps more important than ever. Considering the fact that the Pacific covers about one-third of the globe and that it contains sea lanes linking some of the most dynamic regions of the world, it is hard to imagine that the United States would be interested in any significant differences in the hardware of the present security 'status quo'. Bases have been withdrawn from the Philippines, and those in Hawaii and Guam may be run on lower budgets with fewer troops, but there is no indication they will disappear. Moreover, the end of the Cold War and easing of tensions has added at least one new alternative to the list of US military options in the Pacific – Belau, and increased activity at another – Kwajalein.

Disarmament has also led to a new threat in the Pacific in the form of pollution. At least some of the destruction of chemical weapons and perhaps others has already taken place at the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Destruction System (JACADS). The Bush administration pledged that limitations would be placed on the use of the facility, and the Clinton administration seems to be upholding those pledges, but the pressures for disposal of weapons of mass destruction are

great. On a happier note, Japan's about-face on the subject of nuclear waste disposal at sea is encouraging. The dumping of nuclear waste in the Sea of Japan by Russia prompted indignation and forced Japan to change its stance and join the London Dumping Convention ban on ocean dumping of nuclear waste. Unfortunately, it does not seem at this writing as though Russia will follow suit. This is really ironic, because Japan was an avid promoter of the safety of ocean dumping...until it happened in its own backyard.[11]

The other strategic consideration is that perhaps weaponry, and the infrastructure which goes with it, will not disappear from the region due to the current increased emphasis by the US military on low intensity conflict (LIC). The resolution of East-West tensions has led not to complete disarmament but rather to partial disarmament and a change in targets. For example, a recent US report suggested that the strategic nuclear weapons remaining after the current reductions be redirected toward areas of the Third World considered to be unstable, and also suggested that they be used to ensure that Japan and Germany do not develop nuclear capabilities of their own.[12] The current North Korean nuclear situation adds a further dimension and underscores the importance of the Pacific in US strategy.

Perhaps the most significant implication of the end of the Cold War from the perspective of the Pacific Islands is the possibility that they will no longer be viewed as having strategic significance. As long as there were two powers competing in the Pacific for influence (or at least as long as it was believed that such a struggle was going on), the Pacific Islands could play one side against the other, essentially commodifying that perception of their strategic importance. Belau, for example, used this in negotiating with the United States for more and more aid money in return for military options. If the vacuum created by the disappearance of the 'Soviet threat' is not filled by a new threat, then the 'commodification' of perceived strategic significance becomes impossible, and would result in less interest in, and no doubt less aid for the smaller Pacific Island countries.

While not a direct threat to political independence in and of itself, the continuing foreign military presence in the Pacific also affects the independence and autonomy of the Pacific Island Countries through the process

11 A permanent ban on dumping nuclear waste at sea came into force on 21 February 1994. The 72 signatories to the London Dumping Convention had 100 days to opt out of the ban, and the only country which did so was Russia. The Russian government claimed it could not ratify the ban but would "endeavor to avoid pollution of the sea by dumping wastes and other matter." ("Russia Rejects Law Banning Nuclear Waste Disposal at Sea" *The Japan Times,* Wednesday, February 23, 1994, p.12).

12 *Asahi Shimbun,* 7 January 1992.

of militarization. Militarization is defined as "the process whereby military values, ideology and patterns of behaviour achieve a dominating influence on the political, social economic and external life of the state and as a consequence, the structural, ideological and behavioural patterns of both society and government are 'militarized'."[13] This can be seen in external relations, such as the US reaction to New Zealand's nuclear-free stance or the rapidity with which France approached Fiji with promises of aid and plans for a naval facility after other countries pulled out in 1987 in response to the coups.

Militarization is not a phenomenon limited to external relations. In the past few years, there has been increasing internal unrest which has been accompanied by physical violence and military control. The coups in Fiji are clearly one example, but there are many more – violence and shootings in Belau and New Caledonia and war in Bougainville, just to name a few. These events have caused the external and regional powers to take another look at their involvement in the region, and are resulting in increasing linkage between political and/or strategic activities and concerns and economic assistance. Internally, military strength is being used to reinforce unjust class and racial structures, pitting people and families against one another and exacerbating ethnic, religious and cultural differences. Military exercises, military facilities, training, testing, and other military activities are the physical evidence of militarism in the region. This militarism has been created with the express purpose of enhancing the security of the region, but in fact the reverse has happened. Militarism has spread throughout the Pacific, but "it has not resulted in increased security for the region for it has engendered a greater sense of insecurity evident in growing militarization of Pacific societies."[14]

Military security, particularly nuclear security, has produced a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby the presence of military hardware and personnel has created a situation which lends itself to military solutions. Eventual reductions in tensions and/or reunification on the Korean Penninsula, resolution of the Northern Territories dispute between Japan and Russia, reduced military spending, closing of bases in the Philippines and reductions elsewhere on the Pacific Rim may serve to reverse some of the trends toward militarization in the Pacific Islands, but only if the Islands themselves are not used as substi-

13 op cit., Siwatibau, p. 3.

14 *ibid.*, p. 9. For a discussion of militarization in the Pacific, also see Anthony Payne, "The Politics of Small State Security in the Pacific", *The Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics: Special Issue on Size and Survival*--The Politics of Security in the Caribbean and the Pacific, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, July 1993.

tutes for bases elsewhere. Considering the fact that the first objective of the new US regional defense strategy is "to prevent the reemergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere,"[15] it is somewhat difficult to be optimistic about the possibilities for a demilitarized and autonomous region.

(2) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WELL BEING

The issues of economic development and social well being are perhaps the most important issues pertaining to security in the region today. Most of the Pacific Islands have achieved political independence, but are also heavily dependent on foreign aid. The introduction of cash into the subsistence economies of the Pacific Islands Countries has done as much to undermine their autonomy as political independence has done to promote it.

As long as the countries of the region are dependent on external powers for the meeting of even their most basic needs, they can never be truly independent, particularly because they are vulnerable to conflicting external influences as well as to overt political manipulation. Island countries thus often behave in accordance with the wishes of the donor nations in the hope of getting more aid, and donor countries use aid as a way of buying friends and promoting their interests in the region. A good example of this is Japan, a country which prior to meeting with strong opposition to its plan for dumping low-level nuclear waste in the northwest Pacific gave almost no aid to the region. Japanese unpopularity grew with the driftnet fishing issues, and although Japan no longer uses driftnets in the South Pacific region, distrust and suspicion remain. Needless to say, the tendency of Japan to export waste and waste-producing industries, increased levels of real estate purchasing and development and Japanese tourism development all help to make the Japanese presence felt, often in less-than-positive terms.

The overall security interests of Japan are inextricably linked with those of the United States, and external defense is left to that country. The strategic interests of Japan vis a vis the Pacific Islands lie in resource procurement, ocean resources (fish) and timber. In addition to the conflict over driftnetting, tuna fisheries in particular are a source of conflict, as local fisheries are increasingly interested in gaining a foothold in the profitable Japanese *sashimi* (raw fish) market. While environmentalists worry about the disappearance of bluefin tuna, people in the fishing industry are rushing to develop air freight routes to Tokyo to get the dwindling supplies to the Tsukiji Wholesale Fish Market just a little bit faster and a little bit fresher. Simi-

15 *Asahi Evening News,* 9 March 1992.

larly, as political restrictions and depletion of supplies make logging in Southeast Asia more and more difficult, Japan has turned to PNG, Fiji and the Solomon Islands as sources for tropical timber. Indiscriminate felling in those countries has led to flooding and soil depletion, disrupting the lives of the local people and dessimating some of the world's last tropical forests.

In the mid-1980's, in the face of both growing anti-Japanese sentiment on the one hand, and calls for Pacific cooperation on the other, Japan increased its official development assistance (ODA) to the Pacific Islands region to exceed one percent of its total ODA budget (1.6% in 1990), and has maintained that level ever since. In real terms, this is a relatively small amount of money for Japan, but it has massive implications for the small economies of the Pacific Island Countries. The question of the use and propriety of aid is beyond the scope of this paper. It should be noted, however, that all aid is inherently political in nature, and in the case of very small economies such as those in the Pacific, particular care must be taken to avoid what in the vernacular is known as the 'aid-dependence syndrome'. In the Pacific, where the level of ODA per capita exceeds that of the GNP for some countries, there is ample cause for concern.[16]

With or without ODA, self-reliance is desirable but in reality extremely difficult for many of the Pacific Island Countries. The prospects are brightest for the Melanesian states – PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia and Fiji – because they are composed of large volcanic islands which are rich in natural resources, have relatively large populations and good soil. The Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa and Tonga have good soil, but limited land area and natural resources. These countries are already heavily dependent on aid, imports greatly exceed exports and economic self-reliance is perhaps possible but in reality would be very difficult. The remaining small island states such as the Marshalls, Kiribati, Cooks, Niue and Tuvalu, perhaps the real outer periphery, are dependent on aid, and imports average five times exports. For these countries, self-reliance as modern states is highly unlikely. A more detailed breakdown of groupings is shown below.[17]

CATEGORY 1 Self-Sufficiency: Fiji.

CATEGORY 2 Potential Self-Sufficiency:

New Caledonia, PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu.

16 Motohiko Sato. "Aid-Induced Dependency Syndrome in the South Pacific" in Yukio Sato, ed. *Prospects for Demilitarization in the South Pacific.* IPSHU Research Report, No.16. Hiroshima University, August, 1991, p. 97.

17 Jeremy Carew-Reid. *Environment, Aid and Regionalism in the South Pacific.* Pacific Research Monograph No.22. National Centre for Development Studies, The Australian National University, 1989, pp. 18-19.

CATEGORY 3 Micronesia Public Sector Bloat: Guam, Belau, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands.

CATEGORY 4 Subsistence Affluence: American Samoa, Western Samoa, Tonga, French Polynesia.

CATEGORY 5 Resource Scarcity: Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Cook Islands, Niue, Wallace and Futuna, Pitcairn Islands.

CATEGORY 6 Expiring Resource Boom: Nauru.

While the above categories are useful for making generalizations about the Pacific Islands, they are of course at best subjective assessments of relative potential. In fact, it is said that the most optimistic scenarios for the Pacific Island countries lie in the promotion of the so-called MIRAB economy, MIgration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy. The solution to unemployment for many island countries is migration, made easy in many cases by associated statehood. The remittances from those who have gone abroad to work are an important source of income and foreign exchange. At the same time, aid helps the employment problem through enabling the maintenance of disproportionately large government bureaucracies with plenty of paying jobs.

The above descriptions all neglect an extremely important element of the island environment – the sea, particularly the use and control of pelagic and seabed resources, and maritime spaces. The exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the Pacific Island Countries cover approximately 30,000,000km^2 of ocean, much of which is very rich in living resources and perhaps a source of seabed minerals as well. The islands, acting independently or in unison, thus have control over an immense area of very valuable resources. While the exploitation process is still too costly, the day is not far off when the presence of cobalt-rich manganese nodules in the seabed will be of not only potential but actual strategic value. Fisheries and fishing rights are bringing in more and more revenue, and are also a source for badly needed foreign exchange. Furthermore, the judicious manipulation of control over maritime spaces can do a lot to further the position of states such as Kiribati with little land area but vast EEZs.[18] With the wealth of the ocean in their control, it is essential to the security of the Pacific Island states that the marine environment and its living resources be protected. Moreover, it is crucial that the wealth of the sea not be taken from the Island states by overly eager external and regional powers who move in before regional and local

18 Jim Anthony in Lim Teck Ghee and Mark J. Valencia, eds. *Conflict Over Natural Resources in South-East Asia and the Pacific.* United Nations University, 1990.

protective measures are fully in place. This protection of the marine environment should be seen not as individual environmental protection and/or economic policies, but rather as part of an endogenous approach to the enhancement of the security environment of the islands, both individually and collectively.

(3) CULTURAL INTEGRITY, RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The final group of issues mentioned by Suwatibau is those of cultural integrity, resource conservation and environmental sustainability. The coming of the cash economy has done much to break down traditional family structures and roles in the Pacific, just as it has in other developing countries, and those who suffer most as a result are women and children. The struggle to balance traditional values and roles with the demands of the cash economy is occuring throughout the life with serious implications for the future of Pacific cultures.[19]

Families and traditional power structures and roles are not the only values being threatened. In spite of the brilliant range of cultural diversity in the region, most Pacific cultures share a strong tie to the land and the natural environment. This hardly surprising in a world where land is scarce and surrounded by vast reaches of ocean. Pacific peoples have traditionally viewed themselves as caretakers of their environments and, through a complex system of taboos and religious rites, managed to guarantee both that the resources are not consumed beyond their ability to be replaced and that population does not exceed the ability of the environment to sustain it.[20] In a sense, the Pacific Islanders were practicing sustainable development long before that term was invented. Western models of 'development' and 'modernization' have presented a challenge to the Pacific 'caretaker' approach, both in regard to the use of natural resources such as timber and minerals, and through the development of tourism. The ability of the Pacific Island Countries to successfully meet that challenge will to a great degree determine their future, both in terms of control over their own resources and in terms of the everyday lives of the people.

One result of global environmental abuse is the phenomenon known as global warming, or the greenhouse effect. It is now believed that a 2° C rise in average temperature and a four meter rise in sea level would result in severe or even catastrophic damage to many peoples, countries and communities, as well

19 Francis X. Hezel, SJ. "Culture in Crisis: Trends in the Pacific Today". *Journal of the Pacific Society, No.61* (Vol.16, No.4), January 1994, p.141.

20 *ibid.*, p. 142.

as agricultural and social systems in the Pacific. It is predicted that Tokelau, Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Line Islands and Kiribati would cease to exist and the economic zones of many of the remaining island countries would have to be redrawn, as many outlying islands would disappear.[21]

According to one newspaper article, the members of the Alliance of Small Island States "are doomed to ecological, social and economic catastrophe in the foreseeable future." Some islands are already feeling the effects of sea level rise, and even "a three-foot rise in ocean levels would render 72 million people homeless in China, 11 million in Bangladesh, and 8 million in Egypt, or four times the island states' entire population of 23 million."[22]

Needless to say, these changes in temperature and sea level would also have a devastating effect on the world's cultural heritage. While the entire Pacific region has a population of only 5 million people, it contains a rich cultural heritage, including one-third of the world's known languages in Melanesia alone. The inevitable changes in agricultural and water systems would lead to massive migrations of refugees to islands with more water and resources, putting pressure on the limited resources of those islands not directly affected by sea level rise. This would in turn lead to more environmental degradation and migration, creating a recurring cycle of refugees and environmental destruction.[23]

PART IV. CONCLUSION: WHERE TO?

(1) SECURITY CONCERNS IN THE PACIFIC IN THE FUTURE

The issues and problems mentioned in the last pages are examples of the kinds of issues which are truly affecting the security of the Pacific Island states today. They are threats which may have their origin in Cold War politics and competition, but which are also a product of the strong forces for Westernization and economic 'development' in keeping with demands of the capitalist world-economy to which even the countries of the outer periphery are not immune. These threats take different forms: political, economic, cultural and social disruption brought on by the increasing militarization of the region and its societies, dependence on foreign aid and disregard for environmental and cultural integrity. The threats are in a sense a product of the old world order, but they have not disappeared with the emergence of the new one.

In sum, things both have, and have not changed in the Pacific. It is fairly certain

21 Peter Hulm. *A Climate of Crisis: Global Warming and the Island South Pacific.* South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, 1989.

22 *International Herald Tribune,* 18 February 1992.

23 op cit., Hulm.

that independence and militarization, economic development and environmental concerns will continue to be at the top of the Pacific security agenda. There are, however, three aspects of the emerging world order which are likely to be of particular meaning for the Pacific Island Countries. These are (1) the dramatic increase in the number of small and very small states worldwide, (2) the growing tensions between North and South and (3) the growing awareness of the importance of environmental issues.

The first area for consideration is that of the implications of the creation of numerous new states for the already existing small and micro-states. This question can of course be framed in the context of the trends toward integration and fragmentation in world politics. It can also, however, be considered from the perspective of the political legitimacy of very small states. We have seen that while political theory allows for the existence of very small and weak states, strategic theory does not. Will the creation of a new generation of very small states mean merely the creation of a new variation on the old set of military alliances? Probably, but it may also lead to new ones which focus on a positive application of security, seeking to reduce insecurity rather than increase armaments.

The creation of new very small states also brings the problem of transnational corporations (TNCs) back to the fore. How are the relations between very small states and TNCs to be evaluated, when the resources available to the former far exceed those of the latter? How can TNCs be controlled, particularly when they are closely aligned politically and economically with the larger countries? What can very small states do to take advantage of the potential benefits of the TNCs without sacrificing all they have in return? As strategic concerns turn from questions of nuclear strategy to those of low intensity warfare, and concerns over Cold War ideology are replaced by those over economic differences, the control of the TNCs is a crucial issue for very small states wishing to maintain even a semblence of autonomy.

The remaining issue areas, North-South tensions and environmental concerns, are separate but related, centering on the one hand on the question of control over, and dependence on natural resources by the countries of the so-called Third World, and on the other, the objective importance of protecting and sustaining those resources. North-South tensions encompass a whole range of issues, some but not all of which are related to resource preservation and global environmental concerns. Similarly, some environmental concerns are global and involve the future of the entire human race, while others are very local and specific in nature. North-South

issues and environmental concerns would each exist without the other, but their mutual presence makes both more serious.

The contradictions inherent in the structure of the capitalist world-economy which create and maintain poor areas in the resource-rich 'south' and rich areas in the industrialized 'north' are nothing new. Until recently, the socialist 'south' in eastern Europe centered on the Soviet Union. Today, the new European 'south' includes, but does not center on, the CIS. This new 'south' presents a challenge to the developing countries of what has traditionally been known as the Third World or South, and the redirection of economic aid and political energy from the 'old south' to the 'new' increases these pressures. Moreover, the delineation of 'north' and 'south' no longer adheres to national boundaries, in part a result of the increase in internal divisions in countries of both regions. As a result, the affluent elements of both North and South are joined in opposition to the less affluent elements of both groups. Moreover, changes in the structure and role of the state and the increase in non-state actors in the world-system has served to further accentuate these trends and differences.

The military implications of the above trends have already been addressed; it is likely that the recent war in the Persian Gulf was just a taste of what is in store for the future. It of course goes without saying that the cost of military conflicts such as these is huge and the potential for both human and environmental destruction immense.

The non-military (at least for the present) component is the division between the resource haves and have-nots. If one assesses haves and have-nots on the basis of relative possession and/or access to wealth, then the North becomes the haves and the South the have-nots. If, however, one takes resource scarcity as the determining factor, then the positions are reversed; the South becomes the haves and the North the have-nots. This argument is relevant to the Pacific with regard to the protection and exploitation of pelagic resources and deep sea minerals, the control of marine spaces and the phenomenon of mineral-dependence.[24]

It is difficult to predict how these kinds of divisions will manifest themselves in the 'Greater Pacific'. It has already been suggested the Pacific be viewed as consisting of three parts: the Island Countries, Southern Rim and Northern Rim. In the tri-partite Pacific, the Islands lie in the periphery, with some on the inner-periphery and others, more removed from economic affairs of the world-system, on the outer-periphery. The coun-

24 William Ophuls. *Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity.* San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1977, p.212.

tries on the Southern Rim represent a range from the inner-periphery to semi-periphery, while those on the Northern Rim range from the semi-periphery to the center.

It has been suggested that by using the above groupings, it is possible to identify two potential sub-systems: one with the semi-peripheral Asian countries such as Korea and Singapore clustered around Japan and the other with those of Latin American clustered around the US. The creation of NAFTA and the proposals for a East Asian Economic Group (EAEG) tend to support this view, although clearly the role of China is of vital importance. Moreover, it is still unclear what umbrella organizations such as APEC will bring, although it is hard to imagine a very influential role any time in the near future.

The role of the Pacific Island Countries in the above grouping is unclear, although some Island Countries are clearly closer to the United States than others. Of the Pacific Island Countries, only PNG is a member of APEC, and there seems to be little interest on the part of the APEC countries to change that situation. It can be also be argued that with few exceptions, the alliances and leanings of the Island Countries does not make very much difference to anyone, with the possible exception of the Islands themselves.

With or without the Islands, one possible scenario for the future would be a vertical division along a more or less east-west axis which centered on Japan on one side and the United States on the other. A contradictory model would be a horizontal division which split the region around the equator. In this model, the developed countries such as Japan and the United States would be joined in the north in opposition to a united group of resource-rich countries such as Indonesia, Brasil and perhaps China in the South. The latter model would present a myriad of practical problems in terms of cultural, economic and political differences and would therefore most likely center on the use and control of 'common' resources such as those of the sea and tropical forests, with the 'southern' side stressing development and the 'north' stressing greater environmental protection.

Due to their 'gasoline station' role, the Pacific Island Countries are often not considered to be individual players in the Pacific power game, and in fact may not even be considered as a group. If the Island Countries are able to commodify perceived ecological importance as well as perceived strategic importance, they may be able to increase their visibility in the world-system. This could result in greater autonomy and more control over their destinies, or at least in an increase in the amount of economic assistance they receive. If, however, the perceptions of strategic and/or ecological significance fade,

it may be that whatever recognition the Islands were able to achieve by playing one side against the other during the Cold War will be lost, and they will again be forgotten by most of the rest of the world. The latter alternative may turn out to be a blessing in disguise, however, because it may mean that the Pacific Island States will be left alone to develop their own independent alternative in which may lie the key to an autonomous future.

(2) RETHINKING SOVEREIGNTY

The consideration of security in the Pacific Islands inevitably leads to the realization that a new way must be found for defining independence and sovereignty. Sovereignty, as a conceptual tool, involves complete control and/or authority of someone (e.g. the people) or something (e.g. the state) over something else (e.g. territory). Inherent in the concept is the ability for defense; state sovereignty, for example, has as a prerequisite the ability to defend one's borders. The contradictions inherent in this idea of sovereignty have been underscored by the realization that there is no defense from nuclear war. Even for states which are not extremely small or weak, it seems silly to think that military or any other kind of national defense can cope with the myriad of military and environmental threats plaguing global society. If, however, we are still to seriously consider the meaning of very small states in a world of military and economic giants, then it is inevitable that we reconsider what in fact we mean by the term sovereignty in today's world.

Security and sovereignty are of course fundamentally related concepts. When thinking about global environmental issues and ecocide, it has become popular to speak of ecological security, and some scholars are involved in creating legal and institutional frameworks for the implementation of ecologically secure regimes based on existing legal and political institutions.[25] At the other end of the spectrum, some propose that we begin by establishing a new vision of sovereignty which includes more than just humans in its frame of reference and is not thought of in fixed, territorial terms. Mische, for example, proposes that we must first recognize the indivisibility of ecological sovereignty in a global sense as an alternative to the political divisions which indicate political sovereignty in the international community of states.[26]

The redefinition of sovereignty is most threatening to those states for which the traditional concepts and definitions continue to be more or less useful: the states at the cen-

25 For example, see Alexander S. Timoshenko. "International Environmental Law and the Concept of Ecological Security". *Breakthrough*, Vol. 10, No.4; Vol.11, No.1 Summer/Fall, 1989.

26 Patricia Mische. "Ecological Security in an Interdependent World". *Breakthrough*, Vol. 10, No.4; Vol.11, No.1 Summer/Fall, 1989, p.10.

ter of the capitalist world-economy. Following this logic it is, or ought to be, least threatening for the newly independent states which are confined to peripherality by the present system.

The Pacific Island states are an example of the latter, making that region a good place to seek for an alternative approach. Moreover, the Pacific is a good candidate for this search because, traditionally speaking, it is a region composed of pockets of individual sovereignties (e.g. island states) in a vast area of global commons (the sea). When countries destroy their indigenous peoples along with their forests in the name of development, they are condemned for human rights violations and development racism. When companies or governments force communities in developing countries to accept toxic wastes which would never be allowed in the country of origin, they are accused of racism, 'ecological apartheid' or 'toxic terrorism'. Since these accusations and the acts which provoke them occur within the borders of individual countries and involve specific groups of peoples within states, they can be explained without adjusting our ideas about how states and sovereignty operate. If instead of individual groups, however, the targets of development racism or toxic terrorism are actually 'sovereign states', we must start changing either the definitions, or else the rules.

In sum, the Pacific Island Countries thus become a good place to begin thinking about new definitions for not only security, but sovereignty as well. The very small island states are too small and spread apart – and share too great a dependence on the ocean – to be able to protect their environment on their own. Joint efforts such as the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty and the Convention for the Protection of Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region as well as regional organizations such as the Forum Fisheries Agency demonstrate the role for collective action to protect the resources and environment of the region. Ultimately, the ability to do this effectively will be the key to the security of the states in the region and for that reason, taking a mutually-supportive endogenous approach to the establishment of regimes and institutions in the region is essential.

The Pacific Islands, in their 'caretaker' approach to the environment, have the basis for a uniquely Pacific approach to the Western concepts of sovereignty and security. The creative application of that approach in a collective, endogenous fashion may provide a way for the Pacific Islands to maintain their integrity and autonomy in dealing with security and other vital concerns in their region.