

Union had also made it clear that it intended to see the conflict brought to an end.

CONTROVERSIAL ATTEMPTS AT MEDIATION

One cannot conclude any analysis of this important phase of the conflict in Indochina without referring, albeit briefly, to those who have tried to revive negotiations between the principal opponents. Many states have intervened; India, France and even Romania have either taken the initiative or else been asked to involve themselves, but these attempts have never lasted very long. Three other interventions, however, have been of greater significance — those of Japan, Australia and Indonesia. All three are worth a brief mention ending with the most important one, that of Indonesia.

This is not the place to attempt a detailed analysis of the deeper motives which lie behind these diplomatic initiatives, since they originate in the complex nature of three quite different foreign policies. It is worth noting, however, at the risk of over simplification, that Japan has always believed that it can keep political issues distinct from economic considerations in its conduct of foreign affairs in Asia. Indonesia has always seen the influence of China as more of a threat than that of Vietnam. And as for Australia, since the Labour Party came to power in March 1983, Australia has tried to work out a foreign policy which attaches regional priority to Asia but at the same time reflects a change in its ideological approach.

In July 1984, after consulting the leaders of ASEAN, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs proposed that the conflict in Kampuchea be dealt with in three phases. Shintaro Abe suggested that first of all the Vietnamese troops should withdraw; second, withdrawal would be followed by free elections under the supervision of an international peacekeeping force; and finally, a large-scale international aid programme should be set up to provide the three states in Indochina with economic and financial assistance.⁸² Japan declared itself ready to play an active role in this process if the proposal was accepted.

⁸² Justus M. Van der Kroef, "The Kampuchean Conflict: Edging Toward Compromise?" *Asian Affairs*, vol. 12 no. 1, Spring 1985, page 15.