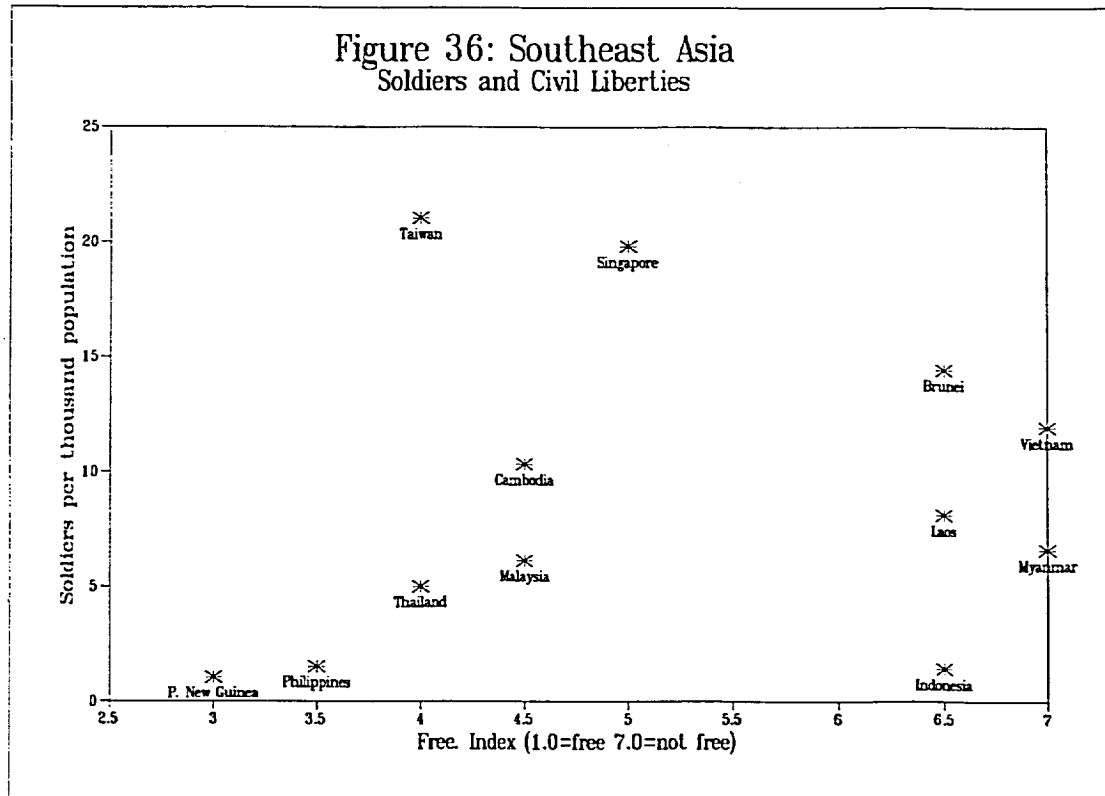


building processes, these states might be candidates for demobilization or demilitarization programs, and Cambodia and Vietnam have in fact been downsizing their forces in recent years.⁹



Two states emerge as potentially carrying an excessive military burden from this overall picture of Southeast Asia: Laos and Myanmar. Both are very poor, economically weak, political unfree, and have either high levels of military spending (as percentage of GNP, in the case of Laos), and/or low levels of social welfare spending (probably in both cases). Other states of some concern would include Cambodia and Vietnam, which have relatively high levels of military presence in society (as measured by the number of soldiers per citizens), and may have overly-high levels of spending as well. Indications are, however, that these two states are reducing their military burdens, although this process is unlikely to continue much further in the absence of international pressures and incentives.

⁹ Vietnam's armed forces shrunk from 1.2 million to about 850 thousand soldiers since 1989. Cambodia's forces have gone from about 135 thousand in 1992 to about 90 thousand in 1995. The Laotian armed forces dropped from 53 thousand to 37 thousand in 1992, but has since remained at that level. United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Armed Transfers, 1993-94; Military Balance 1995/96*.