

On many occasions, joint seminars held by the Vietnamese Institute for International Relations and the Centre for International and Strategic studies in Jakarta have contributed, as did the visit of Nguyen Co Thach to Indonesia in March 1984, to establishing contacts between the two countries; these are viewed by others with great suspicion. The Vietnamese have also tried at various times to get the Indonesians to adopt positions similar to their own and this has sometimes caused the latter obvious embarrassment. This was the case when Nguyen Co Thach declared at the close of his visit to Jakarta that "the long-range threat to Southeast Asia is China and [we] must work together to meet the long-range threat."⁸⁹ President Suharto of Indonesia was forced to declare publicly that this was in fact a manoeuvre to create dissension within ASEAN.

Thus, for quite different reasons, none of these three attempts at mediation has produced any tangible results. All of them have given rise to controversy and have been subject to manipulation by the Vietnamese leaders. These attempts have been made by countries whose interests were too peripheral compared to those really involved in the conflict. They had no hope of succeeding without the support of either China or the Soviet Union, the only outsiders who have real influence.

⁸⁹ Leszek Buszynski, "Vietnam's Asean Diplomacy: The Assertion of a *Fait Accompli*," *The World Today*, vol. 42, no. 4, April 1986, page 65.