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SPEECH BY MR S. RAJARATNAM, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AT A MASS RALLY HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEOPLE'S ACTION PARTY AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 1980

I would like to begin by stating four laws to help us see through what may be the most crucial decade of the 20th century. These apply as much to foreign policy as to domestic policy. There are other laws but they will fall into place if we adhere firmly to these four laws.

Law No. 1: The meek will not inherit the earth. They are more likely to lose their pants as well.

Law No. 2: The lamb which seeks safety by lying down with the lion will have a prematurely short life expectancy.

Law No. 3: When saints go marching on in the Eighties it will be out of this world.

Law No. 4: The Good-time-Charlies if they work hard at it will eventually end up having a bad time.

I offer these four laws for survival in the Eighties to non-communist nations, both big and small. The communist nations, and in particular the Soviet nation, do not need this advice because they have consistently and unwaveringly operated on the basis of these four laws. At the same time, they encouraged non-communists, if these needed encouragement, to believe that the meek would inherit the planet, that hungry lions were convinced vegetarians and that the Good-time-Charlies were the salt of the earth.

The consequence is that after 35 years Soviet power has grown while that of the non-communist powers has declined. The British, French, Dutch, Belgian, Portuguese and American empires have been progressively liquidated. The Soviets, quite properly cheered and supported the liquidation of Western empires.

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But we now know that this was not because the Soviets and their communist camp followers were against the idea of imperialism and great power dominance as such. Western imperialism had to be destroyed merely to pave the way for a Soviet empire and Soviet global dominance. Their theory of empire is called international proletarianism. Under it a communist country must accept the Soviet Union as the overlord of world communism. In other words for all practical purposes the ideals of communism is used as cover for Russian world dominance. In essence there is no difference between the defunct Western imperialism and the emerging Russian version. Only the Russians have been cleverer up to now.

It is a tribute to the skill of Soviet propaganda and the gullibility of non-communists that the proposition I have stated will not find ready acceptance among non-communists. Empire building and great power dominance, serious and sincere non-communists have maintained, are peculiarly capitalist vices and incompatible with the aims and ideals of communism. Only anti-communist, cold-war warriors utter such dangerous heresies. The capitalist lambs can lie down with the communist lions and reach a detente whereby each side promises not to eat up the other.

Well let us take a look at the balance-sheet over the past 35 years. As I said the Western empires have vanished. As against this half of Europe is under Soviet control. Cuba, Ethiopia, South Yemen and now Afghanistan are loyal members of the emerging empire. The vacuum left behind by American withdrawal from Indochina was within the short space of three years filled by the Soviet Union. At the moment they are fuelling a war in Kampuchea. It is again a tribute to the skill of Soviet propaganda that we continue to describe it as a Vietnamese war when in fact it is a Soviet war through a Vietnamese proxy. Conventional wisdom has it that the war in Kampuchea is being fought by a Vietnamese army which defeated the Americans and therefore, as the Vietnamese have hinted, the most powerful after the Soviet Union. The fact that this mighty power is, after more than a year, being bogged down in Kampuchea by the not very impressive and ill-equipped Kampuchean resistance forces, should tell us an important aspect about the Kampuchean war which has been overlooked in the hue and cry over its humanitarian aspects.

It is a Soviet war because everyone knows, especially the Vietnamese, that the war would come to a grinding halt the day the Soviets switch off supplies. Vietnamese military power is borrowed strength. Take away that strength, which a few months ago was estimated at US\$2.5 million a day, and Vietnamese military power becomes a myth.

The Vietnamese are not winning the war in Kampuchea, not because they do not want to win it but because of a number of constraints, including Soviet constraints.

The Soviets are not forking out US\$2.5 or more million a day just to help the Vietnamese achieve their petty dream of an Indo-chinese federation and overlordship in South-east Asia. The Soviets have far bigger and far more important ambitions which override those of its Vietnamese proxy. The war in Kampuchea, as far as the Soviets are concerned, is one of many Soviet distractions to facilitate crucial moves elsewhere.

In December 1976 the Vietnamese moved into Kampuchea and the Soviets saw to it that it moved no further. They did not want to spend too much money on a diversion or have to directly intervene to rescue an overzealous and overstretched proxy.

In December 1979 the Soviets intervened in force in Afghanistan. This was the real target. This fits in with the Soviet and Russian style of expansion. Being a land power they consolidate power by moving from one contiguous area of control to the next. This should give a clue as to where the next Soviet major targets would be.

In the Eighties and beyond this method of propulsion may change as naval power and air technology make new advances.

So the war in Kampuchea is for the Soviets a minor move to cover up a major move.

My authority for making this conclusion is from impeccable sources - the communists themselves. One thing that always astounds me about non-communist analysts and commentators is the complex mental contortions they go through trying to discern the motives and objectives of communist nations. Their technique is not unlike that of sorcerers reading entrails to discover what this or that action really signifies.

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I have often wondered why the non-communists mess about with or trials when the communists make no great secret about their aims and methods of operation. They are all there in their official declarations, in their journals, in the Marxist and Leninist texts and scriptures with which they indoctrinate their young, their people and their followers. For example, many non-communists complain bitterly that the communists have no compunction about about lying and deceiving their enemies.

But if you read Lenin you will discover that he enjoined all good communists to use deception as a necessary part of communist technique.

Let me give you two quotations from Lenin to back this.

"We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the class struggle ... Our morality is deduced from the class struggle."

The second quotation relates to infiltration and capture of non-communist trade unions but is equally applicable to foreign policy operations as well.

"It is necessary," he wrote, "to agree to any and every sacrifice and even if it needs be, to resort to all sorts of stratagems, manoeuvres and illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges in order to penetrate trade unions, to remain in them and to carry the communist work in them at all costs."

Lenin's writings are holy scripture to all good communists. Every child in communist countries is weaned in his philosophy. And his works are freely available.

The communists are honest enough to tell us openly that, if they can, they will try and deceive their non-communist enemy in order to achieve their openly proclaimed goal of making the world safe for communism.

So why indignant outbursts of astonishment over the fact that communists time and time again succeed in their deception, especially when they tell us that is what they intend to do.

It is the gullibility of non-communists which I find incredible.

That is why I am inclined to give greater credence to how the communists analyse the war in Kampuchea than to the meanderings of those who try to unravel mysteries by contemplating their own navels.

How for example do the Vietnamese see the war in Kampuchea? Is it as they tell us non-communists a high-minded effort on their part to save that devastated country from the deprivations of Pol Pot and us non-communists from the hegemonistic ambition of Peking which for nearly 30 years the Vietnamese themselves, including their present leaders, praised to the skies as the saviour of mankind and who fed off the boundless charity which Peking so happily extended to them and which they clearly now regret?

Is the war in Kampuchea, as the Vietnamese now tell us, being fought to ensure the peace, prosperity and integrity of Asean countries?

So I decided the best way to get at the truth is to find out how the communists project the Kampuchean war to their own peoples and to fellow communists. I work on the not unreasonable assumption that though they have a revolutionary responsibility to deceive us non-communists they will not lie to their own people and comrades-in-arms.

So I turned to the Nhan Dan of January 1. The Nhan Dan is for all practical purposes the official mouthpiece of the Vietnamese government and party. I take it that it will not be so bold as to deceive its party and government. It came out with an editorial to herald in the New Year and the Eighties. It is a long editorial but the paragraphs relevant to us goes as follows:

"The Seventies, to the Socialist community, led by the Soviet Union, were a period of vigorous and all-sided development. They gave full scope for the factor which is deciding the evolution of history and which constitutes the bulwark of peace and world revolution. The socialist system has never ceased to expand on all continents,

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eloquently proving that scientific socialism has become a new world and reality in many countries and is the immediate objective of nations.

"Revolution is sweeping all continents ... The forces of revolution have become definitely stronger than imperialism and are firm in their position of strategic offensive."

Consider carefully the key ideas. In the Seventies there has been all-sided development led by the Soviet Union. It possibly cannot refer to peaceful economic development within Vietnam because there has been none. It clearly relates to the Soviet global offensive to "expand .. the socialist system" and "world revolution".

That this Nhan Dan editorial was not a slip of the pen is reinforced by the joint communique issued by the Indochinese foreign ministers on January 5. It is even longer but the significant paragraph goes as follows:

"The biggest, most significant common victory of the three peoples has been their ever-strengthening militant solidarity. This solidarity, closely linked to the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, has become invincible. It can perfectly beat any aggressors and change the balance of forces more in favour of peace, national independence and social progress in South-east Asia."

So the cat is now out of the bag. The Vietnamese know and accept the fact that they are proxies for the Soviet Union to bring the world under a socialist system - which simply means the Russian system. The communique openly declares that this alliance is for the purpose of changing the balance of forces in South-east Asia to bring about national independence and social progress presumably because none of these now obtain in South-east Asia.

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So when the Vietnamese meet us non-communists they tell us not to worry - Thailand is safe, Asean is safe because they are going to save us from Peking and the Americans and the Western imperialists. There can be peaceful co-existence between Asean and communist Indochina.

But what they tell their own people and their comrades is a different story -- and that story we had better believe if we are not to go the way of Kampuchea and Laos and Afghanistan in the Eighties.

We had better believe it because communists are not in the habit of deceiving one another - at least most of the time, as Amin of Afghanistan must have realised when he requested Soviet forces to come to his rescue. But as far as the non-communists are concerned they must be deceived most of the time.

So the question for the Eighties is: Has the non-communist world reached the limits of gullibility?
