# Reading Zone 11

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. You can check your answers on page 247.

> The demise of the Soviet Union has, paradoxically, given Vietnam a strategic usefulness to the United States that it never had during a war in which fifty-eight thousand Americans perished. The Soviet collapse has created a power vacuum in East Asia. The American withdrawal from the Philippines and the shrinking of the United States military because of the end of the Cold War and economic troubles at home are contributing to the sense of a power vacuum. This may be more perception than reality, since the United States retains the air and naval capability to assert itself in East Asia, but perception has a reality of its own. The Chinese perceive it, and they are intent on filling the vacuum.
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> Southern China is an economic astonishment. Guangdong Province's economy, for example, grew at an average annual rate of fifteen per cent from 1981 to 1991. The Chinese are using their new wealth to make themselves the big military power in the region. They are creating a sophisticated Air Force, purchasing long-range Sukhoi-27 fighter-bombers, MIG-31 interceptors, and airborne surveillance- and-control planes from Russia. They are bringing their Army up to date with Russia's latest T-72 main battle tanks. Beijing is also building a "blue water" Navy to project force beyond China's shores, negotiating with Russia and Ukraine for an aircraft carrier that was under construction at a Soviet shipyard.
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> Like it or not, the United States is going to have to play the role of regional balancer—the guarantor of stability in the last resort—to keep China from unsettling East Asia in the post-Cold War era. There is too much to lose for us to refuse the role. Americans tend to view their current relationship with Asia as a one-way drain of cash to Japan. The street has lanes that go in both directions. American two-way trade with Asia and the Pacific exceeded $360 billion in 1992, and roughly 2.6 million jobs in the United

States are dependent on it. United States exports more to Singapore than it does to Spain or Italy, and American firms have about $66 billion invested in that part of the world.

Lifting the economic embargo, opening diplomatic relations, and backing the cause of economic reform in Vietnam to strengthen the country by quickening its development would serve the American need to counter Chinese regional ambitions. The relationship suits the Vietnamese, because big nations that do not threaten their independence, as the United States no longer does, are the kinds of friends the Vietnamese want. The Vietnamese assume, rightly or wrongly, that the more involved American business is in Vietnam, the more China will hesitate to move against them. Tom Vallely, a Harvard Vietnam specialist, who first went to the country as a nineteen-year-old Marine infantryman and is now trying to help the Vietnamese shift to a market economy, quipped "One Mobil oil rig in the South China Sea is worth the whole Seventh Fleet."

The looming threat of China propels the Vietnamese attempt to make peace with the United States. When Deng Xiaoping invaded Vietnam in 1979, after the Vietnamese drove China's Cambodian protégé, the homicidal Khmer Rouge, out of Phnom Penh, Vietnamese troops were able to halt the Chinese rapidly and bloody them badly, because they were in excellent fighting trim. Yet the ultimate checkrein on Chinese behavior that has since vanished was the threat of Soviet retaliation. The Vietnamese also relied on the Soviet Union for their weaponry. With their benefactors now history, Vietnamese armament has become outmoded.

While Vietnam has made peace with China and full trade and diplomatic relations have resumed, the Chinese seem to want more: they seem to want submission. The visit to Vietnam last December of Li Peng, the Chinese premier, went badly. Peng behaved as if he were visiting a tributary. China has so far been the winner in Cambodia, because its cat's-paw, the Khmer Rouge, has succeeded in sabotaging the United Nations peace plan and once again constitutes a menace to the Vietnamese.

1. Which of the following excerpts is not an opinion?
   (A) "[A] checkrein on Chinese behavior that has since vanished was the threat of the Soviet Union."
   (B) "Like it or not, the United States is going to have to play the role of regional balancer...to keep China from unsettling East Asia in the post-Cold War era. There is too much to lose for us to refuse the role."
   (C) "Lifting the economic embargo, opening diplomatic relations, and backing the cause of economic reform in Vietnam to strengthen the country by quickening its development would serve the American need to counter Chinese regional ambitions."
   (D) "One Mobil oil rig in the South China Sea is worth the whole Seventh Fleet."
   (E) "The looming threat of China propels the Vietnamese attempt to make peace with the United States."

2. Which of the following quotations is a primary fact?
   (A) "Guangdong Province's economy...grew at an average annual rate of fifteen percent from 1981 to 1991."
   (B) "American two-way trade with Asia and the Pacific exceeded $360 billion in 1992, and roughly 2.6 million jobs in the United States are dependent on it."
   (C) "When Deng Xiaoping invaded Vietnam in 1979... Vietnamese troops were able to halt the Chinese rapidly and bloody them badly."
   (D) "The Chinese are using their new wealth to make themselves a big military power in the region."
   (E) "[The Chinese] are purchasing long-range Sukhoi-27 fighter-bombers, MIG-31 interceptors, and airborne surveillance-and-control planes from Russia."

3. Which sentence best summarizes the author's argument?
   (A) The Chinese may attack Vietnam again.
   (B) The United States views Vietnam as a bulwark against Chinese aggression.
   (C) Both Vietnam and the United States would benefit from a normalization of relations.
   (D) Vietnam fears Chinese domination.
   (E) The dissolution of the Soviet Union has fundamentally changed the United States-Vietnam relationship.

4. According to the passage, all of the following contributes to the perceived power vacuum in East Asia EXCEPT
   (A) the American withdrawal from the Philippines
   (B) the shrinking U.S. military budget
   (C) the Vietnamese disarmament along Cambodian borders
   (D) the collapse of the Soviet Union
   (E) American domestic economic struggles

5. According to the author, which of the following is the primary reason behind Vietnam's attempt to make peace with the United States?
   (A) Investment opportunities in U.S. oil companies
   (B) The looming threat of China
   (C) Li Peng's ill-fated visit
   (D) The threat of the Khmer Rouge
   (E) China's annual economic growth rate

6. America's financial relationship with the East is
   (A) often misconstrued
   (B) dependent in both directions
   (C) valued at approximately 66 billion dollars
   (D) all of the above
   (E) none of the above

7. According to the passage, in the face of global demilitarization, China is
   (A) seeking most-favored nation trading status
   (B) ignoring human rights violations
   (C) aggressively pushing into Cambodia
   (D) rearming with modern weaponry
   (E) pursuing economic growth aggressively

8. The author's main reason for why the United States must "play the role of regional balancer" is inherently
   (A) economic
   (B) moral
   (C) political
   (D) military
   (E) social

9. We can infer from the passage that since 1979 Vietnam's relationship with China has been
   (A) improving
   (B) degenerating
   (C) satisfactory to China
   (D) satisfactory to Vietnam
   (E) satisfactory to both

10. What, according to the passage, would the United States gain from an open relationship with Vietnam?
   (A) A downsizing of the United States military presence
   (B) The capability to assert itself financially in Eastern Europe
   (C) A Vietnamese shift to market economy
   (D) A military presence in the Far East
   (E) Oil resources