

# Protest Effectiveness in Southeast Asia

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**In developing nations** such as those in Southeast Asia, political protest is a highly visible and often effective form of political participation, as opponents of regime policies tend to organize and express their demands outside established parliamentary and electoral systems (van der Kroef, 1979: 621). By analyzing the outcomes of 175 protest incidents occurring in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand during the period 1960 to 1978, this study seeks to contribute to our theoretical understanding of the determinants of protest effectiveness in developing nations.<sup>1</sup>

Although there is a rich body of literature providing theoretical explanations of political protest and violence (see, for example, Gurr, 1970; Taylor and Hudson, 1972; Hibbs, 1973; Tilly, 1975), there are few empirical studies explaining protest effectiveness. Those studies that have focused on protest outcomes have thus far provided little basis for broad generalizations about the conditions of effectiveness. For example, the use of violence by protesters has been found to *enhance* protest effectiveness for durable American "challenging groups" active between 1800 and 1945 (Gamson, 1975) and for contemporary Soviet dissident groups (Kowalewski and Schumaker, 1981). However, violence has also been found to *reduce* protest effectiveness among Italian strikers between 1878 and 1904 (Snyder and Kelly, 1976) and among urban protest groups in the contemporary United States (Schumaker, 1975, 1980). Such diverse findings suggest that the determinants of protest effectiveness vary according to the political and economic context in which protest occurs.

Although Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand are at the same approximate level of economic development, their political variations

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provide a useful opportunity to examine the determinants of protest effectiveness under relatively democratic and authoritarian conditions. Indeed, the fact that Philippines and Thailand each experienced both democratic and authoritarian periods during the time frame of this study enables a comparison of protest effectiveness under different regimes within these countries. For the Philippines, the democratic period runs from the beginning of our study in 1960 to the imposition of martial law in September, 1972; from that date until the end of our study (1978), Marcos's "emergency regime" provides a relatively authoritarian context for the study of political protest.<sup>2</sup> For Thailand, the democratic period runs from October 1973 to October 1976, when it operated under a parliamentary system; its more authoritarian period covers the years 1960 to 1973, when it had a military regime, and following the right-wing coup in October 1976. Malaysia provides a context of limited democracy. It had elections throughout the time frame of the study, but issues were strictly limited, the press was often censored, and parties operated more through consensus than through competition.<sup>3</sup>

By studying the effectiveness of protest in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, we hope to contribute to the resource mobilization approach to collective action (Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1975). Protest is defined as collective acts by private citizens that are outside the institutionalized procedures established by the state for influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or policies.<sup>4</sup> Protest is thus viewed as rational political action designed to alter the cost-benefit ratio associated with a given policy for political authorities. By increasing the costs of pursuing a policy for authorities, protesters hope to induce authorities to reconsider the policy under protest. Given limited resources, protest groups need to select their most economic strategy—that strategy achieving maximum benefit at minimum resource cost with a high probability of success. However, this cost-benefit calculus is poorly understood by activists or scholars (Gurr, 1978: 305). We hope to contribute to a better understanding of this calculus by showing that less violent strategies have more favorable cost-benefit ratios in relatively democratic regimes within developing nations.

### **PROTEST EFFECTIVENESS: DEFINITION AND HYPOTHESES**

Protest is effective to the extent that the benefits gained exceed the costs incurred. Although protest may have certain non-policy-related

benefits (for example, the transformation in public consciousness about protest demands or the development of organizational resources for future political action), our concern here is with policy benefits. Thus the benefits of protest increase as authorities respond positively to the explicit demands of protesters along two dimensions. First is the stage in the policy process in which authorities respond to protesters. Schumaker (1975: 493-495) has presented the following continuum of increasing responsiveness in this policy process by authorities:

- (1) access responsiveness—the extent to which authorities are willing to hear and discuss protest grievances
- (2) agenda responsiveness—the extent to which protester concerns are placed on the policy agenda of authorities
- (3) policy responsiveness—the degree to which authorities adopt legislation or policy congruent with the manifest demands of protest groups
- (4) output responsiveness—the degree to which targets carry out and/or enforce responsive legislation
- (5) impact responsiveness—the degree to which responsive outputs succeed in alleviating the grievances of protesters

Second, the extent of concession to protest demands at each of these stages of the policy process can vary along the following continuum:

- (1) no response
- (2) minimum response (for example, token gestures)
- (3) compromise response (that is, providing protesters with some of the benefits they seek)
- (4) complete response (that is, providing protesters with all of the benefits they seek)

Thus minimal benefits accrue to protesters when their demands receive no more than a sympathetic hearing or when targets offer little more than token responses. Greater benefits accrue to protesters who achieve compromise or complete responses at the policy or output stages of the policy process.

The costs of protest are of three kinds: (1) resources (such as time and money) expended in pursuit of protest goals, (2) repressive actions taken by authorities to curb protest (such as arrests, seizures, assaults and bodily injuries, or suspension of civil liberties), and (3) the enactment of retaliatory policies that leave protesters in a more disadvantaged situation than that prior to their protest. Since we have no data on the first category of costs, we focus here on the repressive actions and policies of authorities.

Effectiveness, or net benefit, is thus assessed by comparing the positive responses of authorities to protester demands with the repres-

sive actions taken against protesters. Because it is not possible to provide scalar comparisons of benefits versus costs, our summary measures of effectiveness are necessarily judgmental (Gurr, 1972: 98). The following six-point scale was used as a benchmark in making judgments about protester effectiveness:

- (1) no benefits-some costs
- (2) no benefits-no costs
- (3) modest benefits-some costs
- (4) modest benefits-no costs
- (5) high benefits-some costs
- (6) high benefits-no costs

A complete explanation of variations in the effectiveness of protest groups requires an analysis of the political, social, and economic settings in which protest occurs, the structure of social support for protesters, the characteristics of protest targets, and the demographic, structural, and behavioral characteristics of the protesters. To limit our analysis, we have focused on a single setting variable—the democratic or authoritarian nature of the political regime—and on several “protester-controlled variables” (Schumaker, 1975) concerning the structural and behavioral choices available to protesters who seek to maximize their cost-benefit ratios.

Although theory about the effects of political, social, and economic settings on the frequency and intensity of protest behavior is well established (Oberschall, 1973: 64-71), little is known about the effects of setting variables on protest outcomes. Kowalewski and Schumaker have initiated theory and research in this area by drawing upon the distinction between polyarchies and hegemonies (Dahl, 1973: 1-25):

Polyarchies are open pluralist systems where institutions are structured to facilitate widespread citizen participation in the policy process. Hegemonies are closed, monistic systems where extensive controls are placed on the organization, representation, and expression of citizen preferences. Unlike pluralist regimes, hegemonic regimes claim a monopoly of political truth and hence are less likely to tolerate dissenting groups. Thus protest groups are likely to win fewer concessions and suffer more repressions when making demands on hegemonic rather than pluralistic regimes [Kowalewski and Schumaker, 1981: 57-58].

In addition to hypothesizing that regime type has a direct impact on the effectiveness of protest groups, Kowalewski and Schumaker suggest that regime type is an important specification variable affecting the

relationships between protester-controlled variables and effectiveness. Drawing on Schattschneider (1960), Lipsky (1970), and Oberschall (1973: 28-29), protest in polyarchies is viewed as an "N-player game," in which protesters must behave in ways that gain the support of key "third parties" (principally active interest groups having access to authorities) and informed publics. In contrast, protest in hegemonies is viewed as a "2-player game," in which third parties and the public are much less relevant to the resolution of protester-regime conflict. In such settings, protester behavior is more effective when it directly coerces targets than when it achieves third-party and public support.

Drawing upon this theoretical perspective, our hypotheses thus concern the relationships between protester-controlled variables—their demands, their organizational characteristics, and their activities—and effectiveness. We are chiefly concerned with how the effectiveness of protester choices varies when the political setting is relatively democratic or authoritarian.<sup>5</sup> Four major hypotheses are specified.

(1) *The more moderate are protester demands, the greater will be their effectiveness.*

Drawing on the work of Ladd (1966), Matthews and Prothro (1966: 186-200), and Schumaker (1975: 542), moderate demands can be characterized as *non-zero-sum* (they pose few threats to the welfare of other politically relevant actors), *material* (they concern concrete economic benefits rather than symbolic or status goals), *specific* (the costs of meeting demands are calculable), and oriented toward the *maintenance of status quo*.<sup>6</sup> In democracies, moderate demands are more likely than militant demands to gain the support of key third parties and publics. Since authorities in polyarchies are highly sensitive to the attitudes of such third parties and publics, moderation in demand making should enhance effectiveness for protesters operating in relatively democratic settings. In authoritarian regimes, the responsiveness of officials to militant demands is probably dependent on their ideological orientation. If authorities are radical and seek to bring about extensive changes in society, they may be more receptive to militant than to moderate protest group demands. But if authorities in authoritarian countries are conservative or reactionary, protester effectiveness should be reduced by the making of militant demands. Since the authoritarian regimes in the Philippines and Thailand during the time frame of this study have been conservative, we would thus expect that moderation in demands enhances protester effectiveness under both democratic and authoritarian conditions observed in this study.

*(2) More permanent groups are likely to be more effective than less permanent, ad hoc groups.*

According to Gamson (1975: 91), "Bureaucratic organization helps a group with the problems of pattern maintenance." If groups possess a written document specifying their internal operating procedures (as well as their purposes), a formal list of members, and a differentiated hierarchical structure (leaders, subleaders, rank and file, and so on), they are thought to have a "higher readiness for action," enabling them to be more successful than ad hoc protest groups lacking bureaucratic organization (Gamson, 1975: 91; see also Jackson and Stern, 1971). In polyarchies, organizational permanency is thought to be especially important for developing close, mutually supportive relationships with government authorities (Bellush and David, 1971; Lipsky, 1970). Authoritarian leaders have also been found to be responsive to permanent groups (Kelly, 1972), but there is no clear theoretical basis for thinking that they are more responsive to permanent groups than to ad hoc groups.

*(3) In democracies, larger protest groups are likely to be more effective than smaller groups. However, under authoritarian regimes, smaller groups are likely to be more effective than larger groups.*

Larger groups are thought to have inherent advantages over smaller groups in polyarchies, since authorities who are accountable at election time are sensitive to the numbers of votes controlled by protest groups (Gamson, 1975: 60; Schumaker and Billeaux, 1978: 291). In authoritarian countries, the importance of group size is perhaps more problematic. It can be argued that "only very large groups can apply sufficient pressure on official targets (in hegemonies) to induce them to respond favorably" (Kowalewski and Schumaker, 1981: 60). But it can also be argued that larger protest groups pose only a threat to authoritarian order and not an opportunity to increase elite support for coming elections. Such groups should be targets of repressive actions rather than beneficiaries of responsive policies.

*(4) In democracies, protest groups that utilize constraints are likely to be less effective than protesters that employ more moderate actions. Under totalitarian governments, protest groups that utilize constraints are likely to be more effective than more moderate protesters.*

Constraints are negative inducements employed by protesters that threaten the state's maintenance of order and stability. Protesters can

forgo disruptive actions and employ only persuasion and positive inducements to attain positive responses from authorities.<sup>7</sup> Alternatively, protesting can employ a continuum of threatening behaviors, the underlying dimension of which is what Kaase and Marsh (1979: 44) call "violence proneness": engaging in physical group actions (such as marches and rallies), using obstructive tactics (such as sit-ins and boycotts), and employing violence (such as damaging property and inflicting personal injury).

The evidence is thus far inconclusive about the effectiveness of constraints. However, prevailing theory suggests that in democracies, a major determinant of protester effectiveness is winning the support of third parties (Lipsky, 1970). Such support declines, however, as protesters employ activities that are violence prone (Marsh and Kaase, 1979: 61-79). Thus some research suggests that protesters who avoid the use of constraints have been more effective than more threatening groups in polyarchies (Schumaker, 1975).

However, in authoritarian countries, where third parties play little role in the resolution of protest, moral suasion may fail to activate public pressure on targets to respond positively to protesters and the use of constraints may not have a significant "backlash" effect of mobilizing third parties against protesters. According to Kowalewski and Schumaker (1981: 60):

In the 2-player conflicts occurring in hegemonies, an effective political resource can be the use of constraints. By applying or threatening to apply such costly contingencies on protest targets as disruption, property damage or personal injury, protesters can create a situation where it becomes rational for targets to minimize costs by responding to the protesters favorably.

## DATA

Data to test these hypotheses were obtained by coding protest incidents reported to have occurred in Malaysia (1963-1978),<sup>8</sup> Philippines (1960-1978), and Thailand (1960-1978) in which citizens engaged in protest behaviors against national authorities. A protest incident—the unit of observation and analysis for this study—occurs when a group of private citizens articulate a demand upon political authorities by engaging in an activity generally considered to be outside the governmentally prescribed or legitimated rules of the game for interest articulation. The

case begins with the protest incident. The case ends when authorities respond positively or negatively to the demands, or when no action is taken within one week of the time that the initiating group disengages. Operationally, a case of protest occurs when it is reported "at least once in a publicly available source" (Azar et al., 1972).

Data on the relevant variables were coded from articles listed in the *New York Times* and *London Times* indexes or the *Far-Eastern Economic Review*. This resulted in over 300 cases. However, a large number of cases contained missing information. *Keesings, Facts on File*, and *Asian Recorder* were then consulted for the Malaysian cases in an attempt to minimize the amount of missing data; these sources were not used for the other two countries because they failed to yield significant additional information. Finally, *Asian Survey*, *Pacific Affairs*, and the *Far-Eastern Economic Review* yearbooks were examined for additional information. These procedures resulted in 175 cases with sufficient data to permit analysis: 54 cases from Malaysia, 80 cases from the Philippines, and 41 cases from Thailand.<sup>9</sup>

Our dependent variable—protest effectiveness—and our independent variables regarding protester demands, organization, and actions were measured on ordinal judgmental scales, such as the previously discussed six-point effectiveness scale. Reliability in coding these variables was enhanced by the use of multiple coders and the development of fairly extensive coding instructions. Checks for reliability revealed no systematic measurement error. Some random measurement error was present in the coding of all variables; such error should have the effect of reducing the strength of observed relationships and reducing our proclivity to accept our specified hypotheses.

These data were then analyzed using a variety of correlational procedures. Because our measures do not form interval scales, we report Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficients in the results section below. Recognizing the possibility that substantial correlations among our independent variables could produce spurious relationships in the bivariate Spearman's measure of associations, multivariate procedures were also employed in the analysis of the data. Since various models tested through multiple regression analysis did not yield results significantly different from those attained from the Spearman's statistics, these results are not reported here.



## RESULTS

In Table 1, some descriptive data regarding the political protests in our sample are presented. These data suggest that protest in Southeast Asia is a diversified phenomenon, as it is used by a variety of sectors of these developing societies to pursue grievances in a variety of issue areas. The protesters in our sample have also employed a variety of actions in pursuit of their grievances, as some groups have avoided the use of constraints entirely (limiting themselves to nonconfrontational public airing of grievances), while others have turned to violence. While the more extensive use of constraints (employing obstruction and violence) appears to be especially prevalent in Malaysia, constraint utilization does not appear to be related to regime type. In the Philippines, the use of constraints by protesters was much more prevalent during the democratic era than during the authoritarian era. However, in Thailand this relationship is reversed; during the period of military rule, the use of constraints was more likely than in the period of democratic rule.<sup>10</sup>

That protest is often effective can also be seen from Table 1. In the Malaysian cases, 43% ended with some benefits for the protesters. Benefits were obtained in 35% of the Philippine cases and in 71% of the Thai cases. In general, regime type is not strongly related to protest effectiveness. As expected, protesters achieved somewhat higher net benefits during the democratic period in the Philippines. But in Thailand, protest groups were not more successful during the 3-year period of democratic rule.

It is interesting to note that in both the Philippines and Thailand, protesters were most effective during the era when the use of constraints was most prevalent. One might be tempted to infer, therefore, that the use of constraints enhances effectiveness, regardless of regime type. Drawing such an inference may, however, be an ecological fallacy. While the use of constraints may be positively related to effectiveness at the aggregate or societal level, such a relationship does not hold generally at the case (protest incident) level, as we shall see shortly. What may occur is that the use of constraints by a panopoly of protest groups in any regime provides a context in which targets feel required to respond to *some* protester grievances. Rather than responding to those groups that employ constraints, however, targets may deliberately

TABLE 1  
Sample Described and Compared by Country and Regime

	Malaysia % (N = 54)	Philippines			Thailand		
		% Pre-Martial Law (N = 48)	% Post-Martial Law (N = 32)	% Total (N = 80)	% Military Rule (N = 10)	% Democratic Rule (N = 31)	% Total (N = 41)
<b>Issue Categories</b>							
Civil liberties <sup>a</sup>	25 (13)	10 (5)	41 (13)	23 (18)	33 (3)	3 (1)	10 (4)
Ethnic claims <sup>b</sup>	35 (18)	2 (1)	0	1 (1)	0	7 (2)	5 (2)
Nationalist <sup>c</sup>	19 (10)	33 (16)	0	20 (16)	11 (1)	23 (7)	20 (8)
Government performance and structure <sup>d</sup>	21 (11)	54 (26)	59 (19)	56 (45)	56 (5)	67 (21)	65 (26)
<b>Occupational Status of Participants<sup>e</sup></b>							
Students	66 (33)	87 (40)	45 (14)	70 (54)	80 (8)	69 (20)	72 (28)
Labor	16 (8)	43 (20)	45 (14)	44 (34)	20 (2)	7 (2)	10 (4)
Peasants, farmers	12 (6)	28 (13)	16 (5)	23 (18)	10 (1)	28 (8)	23 (9)
Professionals, white-collar workers	12 (6)	9 (4)	19 (6)	13 (10)	30 (3)	7 (2)	13 (5)
Religious	0	4 (2)	81 (25)	35 (27)	10 (1)	3 (1)	5 (2)
Lumpenproletariat	14 (7)	9 (4)	23 (7)	14 (11)	10 (1)	14 (4)	13 (5)
<b>Extent of Constraints</b>							
Public airing of grievances only	17 (9)	10 (5)	44 (14)	24 (19)	0	7 (2)	5 (2)
Physical action	24 (13)	50 (24)	50 (16)	50 (40)	40 (4)	55 (17)	51 (21)
Obstructive action	35 (19)	23 (11)	3 (1)	15 (12)	50 (5)	28 (8)	32 (13)
Violent action	24 (13)	17 (8)	3 (1)	11 (9)	10 (1)	13 (4)	12 (5)
<b>Effectiveness</b>							
No benefits-some costs	33 (18)	25 (12)	38 (12)	30 (24)	10 (1)	10 (3)	10 (4)
No benefits-no costs	24 (13)	35 (17)	38 (12)	36 (29)	10 (1)	23 (7)	20 (8)
Modest benefits-some costs	15 (8)	8 (4)	9 (3)	9 (7)	0	0	0
Modest benefits-no costs	6 (3)	13 (6)	3 (1)	9 (7)	0	10	7

(continued)

	Malaysia % (N = 54)	Philippines			Thailand		
		% Pre-Martial Law (N = 48)	% Post-Martial Law (N = 32)	% Total (N = 80)	% Military Rule (N = 10)	% Democratic Rule (N = 31)	% Total (N = 41)
<b>Effectiveness (continued)</b>							
High benefits-some costs	9 (5)	6 (3)	0	4 (3)	30 (3)	3 (1)	10 (4)
High benefits-no costs	13 (7)	13 (6)	13 (4)	13 (10)	50 (6)	55 (6)	54 (22)

a. Includes demands for freedom to express dissent, freedom to organize, habeas corpus, the right to strike for labor demands, and against arrest for violating laws prosecuting those activities. Does not include, however, demands for change in constitutions.

b. Includes claims for privilege based on ethnicity or against privileges enjoyed by others of different race or ethnic backgrounds.

c. Includes protests against agreement with other countries and interference by other countries.

d. Includes demands for better government performance in the economy, reduction of poverty, against corruption, police or military abuse of power or authority, changes in the government structure or preservation of the existing structure.

e. Refers to the number and percentage of incidents in which some members of each occupational status were reported as participants. Percentages apply to nonmissing cases only. Total percentages will not equal unity since participants in an incident may include individuals from more than one occupational category.

choose to be most responsive to the least militant groups. In this way, targets can demonstrate that they are responsive—obviously an especially important quality for authorities subject to democratic accountability—without reinforcing militancy by rewarding those specific groups employing constraints.

Table 2 shows the results of the tests of our four hypotheses concerning the effectiveness of various protester demands, organizational characteristics, and action. The first hypothesis—that moderation in demand making enhances effectiveness—is generally supported by the data. Each of our four measures of the level of moderation of demands is coded with moderation at the low end of the scale and more militant demands at the higher end of the scale. Since all of the reported correlation coefficients concerning the relationships between demand characteristics and effectiveness are negative, it appears that less moderate demands achieve lesser net benefits for protesters. Although authorities in the Philippines appear to be especially unresponsive to more militant demands, regime type does not significantly effect the results. In both democratic and authoritarian regimes, moderation in demand making enhances the net benefits achieved by protesters.

The second hypothesis—that organizational permanency enhances effectiveness—is, surprisingly, supported for the Thailand subsample only. Indeed, in Malaysia ad hoc protest groups have attained significantly more net benefits than have permanent organizations. Although we are reluctant to generalize extensively from such mixed findings, these data can be interpreted as supporting the view that bureaucratic organization is frequently overemphasized as an important group resource. In developed nations, as well as in developing nations, significant percentages of citizens believe that ad hoc informal groups can be an effective means of influence (Verba, 1970), and many public officials believe that their role requires them to be as responsive to ad hoc groups as to more permanently organized interests (Eulau and Prewitt, 1973: 427).<sup>11</sup>

The data in Table 2 also show that the relationship between the number of participants involved in protest (that is, group size) and effectiveness varies by regime type. We hypothesized that larger group size would lead to greater net benefits in democratic systems, as elites who are subject to relatively open, periodic, contested elections would be especially sensitive to the potential influence of large groups at the polls. We also thought that in authoritarian systems, where elites are not subject to electoral accountability, the relationship would be reversed,

TABLE 2  
 Correlates of Protest Effectiveness, by Country and Regime (Spearman's correlation coefficients)

	Malaysia		Philippines			Thailand		Total
		Pre-Martial Law	Martial Law	Military Rule	Democratic Rule			
Demand Characteristics								
Zero-sumness	-.17	-.26*	-.31*	-.27*	-.29	-.26	-.27*	
Status-material	-.17	-.48*	-.30*	-.43*	-.44	-.20	-.28*	
Lack of specificity	-.02	-.33*	-.39*	-.28*	-.18	-.21	-.23	
Status quo change	-.19	-.47*	-.43*	-.47*	-.45	-.26	-.31*	
Group Characteristics								
Organizational permanency	-.35*	-.16	.15	-.01	.21	.32*	.28*	
Group size	.07	.35*	-.16	.11	-.83*	.66	.46*	
Action Characteristics								
Extent of constraints	-.28*	-.03	.11	.08	.05	-.65*	-.50*	

\*Statistical significance  $\geq .05$ . This is indicated only so that the reader may gauge the importance of the relationships, since the "sample" is not random.

since large groups pose a threat to order and appeasing such groups would provide no dividends in future elections. In both pre-martial-law Philippines (where Marcos was the only president elected to a second term) and democratic Thailand, protests with a large number of participants produced greater net benefits than those with a small number. And, in the same countries, the relationship between size and effectiveness is negative for authoritarian periods lacking electoral accountability. In Malaysia, where elections exist but lack national party competition, group size and protest effectiveness are not significantly related.

Our final hypothesis concerns the effectiveness of constraint utilization: We argued that constraints could more effectively be applied by protesters in authoritarian regimes than in democratic ones. The data in Table 2 provide some support for this notion—but the relationships are often weak and do not conform precisely to the expected patterns. The use of constraints indeed appears to have been most effective during the authoritarian periods in Philippines and Thailand. While the weak positive relationships between constraint utilization and effectiveness during these periods are not significant statistically, they nevertheless imply that the protesters in our sample using constraints had slightly better success rates than those who avoided constraints. Contrary to our expectations, there is no relationship between constraint utilization and effectiveness in democratic Philippines. But, as we hypothesized, the use of constraints does appear to have reduced group effectiveness significantly in democratic Thailand and in Malaysia. In these regimes having alternatives to disruptive and violent protest, the use of constraints may have been viewed by influential publics as illegitimate.

## CONCLUSIONS

In order to better understand the effectiveness of political protest in developing nations having both democratic and authoritarian political regimes, we have analyzed 175 protest incidents occurring in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand during the period 1960-1978. In order to produce findings with prescriptive value, we have focused on the determinants of effectiveness that can be manipulated by protest groups themselves: their demands, their organizations, and their actions.

Our findings suggest that protest effectiveness in democratic regimes is enhanced by making moderate demands, increasing group size,

and avoiding the use of constraints. Our data also suggest that effectiveness in authoritarian regimes—at least those in Thailand and the Philippines—is enhanced when protesters make moderate demands, reduce group size, and perhaps, make strategic use of disruptions and violence. Such findings, however, should be treated cautiously.

One reason for caution is that we have focused only on the policy effectiveness of protest. While we found no significant and consistent relationship between the permanency of protest organizations and policy effectiveness, organizational stability may nevertheless be an important resource for protesters whose objectives transcend the attainment of their immediate policy objectives—for example, attaining “combat readiness” (Gamson, 1975: 89-109) for bringing about more fundamental and revolutionary changes in the regime. For example, while the well-organized Catholic Church may not be especially effective in protesting against Marcos’s policies, it may play a much more significant role in a possible future collapse of that regime (Neher, 1980: 167).

Another reason for caution is that our analysis has been conducted at the “protest incident” level. Such analysis suggests that authorities in democratic regimes are not normally responsive to militant protest groups. But this finding should not be interpreted as meaning that militancy generally, and the use of constraints specifically, has no role in achieving social change in democratic developing nations. As suggested in the discussion of our aggregate-level descriptive data, the use of constraints by some groups may well provide a context in which targets are especially responsive to less militant protesters.<sup>12</sup>

A third and related reason for caution is that our analysis has been static rather than dynamic. We have not examined the role of militancy on organization building or the effects of high levels of militancy in the long run. As a consequence, we have not addressed such important tactical questions as whether the use of more militant tactics can provoke overreactions by social control agencies. Indeed, police and army violence against students in Thailand (October 1973) and the Philippines (January 1969) resulted in enhanced support for those students.

Nevertheless, the results seem to conform to the theoretical notion that protest in democratic nations is an N-person game, in which effective protesters avoid militancy to secure the support of important third parties and informed publics. This finding suggests that the logic of

protest in developing democracies is much like the logic of protest in more developed democracies.

### NOTES

1. Protest incidents in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand are analyzed because they had more reported cases of political protest than other Southeast Asian countries (Taylor and Hudson, 1972), and because the foreign press had relatively high access to officials and protesters and thus extensive coverage of protest in these nations.
2. Although Marcos began relaxation of martial law numerous times after 1972, these steps were largely cosmetic (Machado, 1979: 131).
3. Parliamentary government and civil rights were temporarily suspended in Malaysia between May 1969 and February 1971 because of racial tensions. However, Means (1975) argues that throughout this period, Malaysia remained a limited democracy as its restrictions were necessary to prevent open ethnic warfare in Malaysia's multiethnic society. In Malaysia potentially divisive issues are removed, by law, from the public arena to the secret, informal process of intercommunal bargaining between leaders of the communally based political parties within the current electoral alliance. For a comparison of opposition patterns among all countries in the region, including Malaysia, see van der Kroef (1979).
4. The theoretical implications of this definition of protest are developed in O'Keefe (1980). In brief, this definition implies that political protest: (1) involves social conflict over scarce resources (Oberschall, 1973: 33); (2) is targeted at governmental authorities recognized as having the final legitimate decision over the authorization allocation of values (Huntington and Nelson, 1976: 5); (3) is "unconventional" participation that over spills "the bounds of institutionalized social interaction" (Gurr and Duvall, 1976: 142) and that implicitly registers "dissatisfaction or opposition to the procedural consensus established by society" (Jackson and Stern, 1971: 266); (4) may be violent, although violence is not a defining characteristic (Tilly, 1975); and (5) is undertaken by private citizens whose activities are "intermittent, part-time, and usually avocational or secondary to other social roles" (Huntington and Nelson, 1976: 5).
5. During the time frame of this study, neither the Philippines nor Thailand experienced the degree of governmental control implied in the definition of hegemonies. Perhaps they can best be characterized as having "limited authoritarian" governments during their military periods.
6. These four dimensions of protest demands are more fully defined in Schumaker (1975) and O'Keefe (1980).
7. Such actions may nevertheless be protest as defined in this study because the groups engaged in a public airing of grievances only may be raising issues and taking actions (such as violating censorship laws) that are clearly proscribed by law.
8. Because we are interested in the responsiveness of national authorities to protest, it is inappropriate to sample protest incidents in Malaysia before it achieved full independence on September 16, 1963, with the merger of Malaya with Singapore,

Sarawak, and Sabah. Singapore is included only while a member of the federation of Malaysia (until August 9, 1965).

9. Snyder and Kelly (1977) have presented two problems associated with the analysis of such reported events data. The first concerns the probability of an event being reported. The second concerns media bias. The probability of an event being reported is a function of media sensitivity and event intensity (size, duration, and violence). Through the use of multiple sources, both problems are minimized; however, the reduction in the number of cases due to missing information highlights Snyder and Kelly's observations. Thus the conclusion drawn by Azar et al. (1972: 374) concerning the source coverage problem must be kept in mind: "The deductions from events data research are strictly a function of the universe of events generated from publicly available sources." In this study, there is reason to think that protest occurring outside the national capital is underreported. Stockwin (1973) notes that "there have been demonstrations galore in numerous distant provincial and district towns" in Thailand after October 1973, but few of these are reported in any of the sources used. Most of the cases reported for which there were insufficient data occurred in the Philippines between January 1969 and September 1972.

10. Caution must be exercised in comparing regime types in Thailand, as we observed only 41 cases of protest in this country, with only 10 cases observed during its more authoritarian periods.

11. In addition to the possibility that the bureaucratic organization of groups has little impact on protester effectiveness, two other alternative explanations of our null findings here and elsewhere (Schumaker, 1975; Schumaker and Billeaux, 1978) can be presented. First, the data sources used may not provide reliable measures of organizational structure, and random error in the measure of this variable may reduce the "true association" of bureaucratic organization and effectiveness. Second, organizational permanency may be more important when looking at group effectiveness over the lifetime of groups than when looking at single incidents as we have in this research. Since Gamson (1975) was concerned with protester effectiveness over a long period of time, this aspect of his design may account for his findings that bureaucratic protest groups are more effective.

12. See Walker (1963) for an interesting analysis of how a combination of militant and moderate protest leadership can be especially effective.

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